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# Crossing Borders and Breaking Boundaries: A Comparison of the Films *Happy Together* (1997) and *The Edge of Heaven* (2007)

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**Abstract**—*Happy Together* (Wong Kar-Wai, 1997) and *The Edge of Heaven* (Fatih Akin, 2007) are two films that depict characters in intimate relationships that include geographical mobility. Though that is just one of the similarities they share, the two films reveal different attitudes toward life and death. *The Edge of Heaven* educates its audience through fear by portraying innocent people dying, while *Happy Together* could be interpreted more as a national allegory, given the depiction of a historical figure's death. Nonetheless, the aim of this research is to argue that the two films are similar in that they both tell tales about revealing the experiences of moving across borders and living in cosmopolitan places. Moreover, the characters in both films expect a change in the boundaries between people and wish for a new cosmopolitan world.

**Index Terms**—cosmopolitanism, hybridization, geographical mobility, intimacy

## I. INTRODUCTION

The borders of nations between Turkey and Germany; Argentina and Brazil are highlighted in *Happy Together* (1997) and *The Edge of Heaven* (2007) because borders provide separation between characters and divide the national cultures. In *The Edge of Heaven*, the communication discrepancies between couples, father and son, mother and daughter imply the importance of the border. Borders, on the one hand, split the narratives for disjunctive times and spaces. On the brink of the border, the filmmaking including the geographical mobility enables the filmmaker to contrast the cold and dark German scenes with the hot and bright Turkish ones. In *Happy Together*, Fai and his family are separated by the ocean.

On the other hand, borders serve as the cure to improve intimate relationships. In *Happy Together*, the transnational culture activities such as the intimate tango dance, playing soccer without rules, and travelling together to Iguazu Falls on a road trip demonstrate the intimate relationships between characters. The waterfall symbolizes the intimacy between separated people and cultures. In *The Edge of Heaven*, it is borders that enhance the characters' willingness to break the boundaries between beloved ones and of cultural difference.

This paper aims to elaborate the stories concerning borders and to investigate the diasporic experience of living across borders in both films. In the beginning, the research briefly introduces the tangled storylines of the two films. In Section III, the researcher argues that the two films' geographical mobility reveals the characters' state of living and thinking beyond one nation. Afterwards, Section IV discusses the intimate relationships that bond people together and extend far beyond national boundaries. The intimate relationships between characters in these films convey that people long for close connections and are eager to find belonging. Section V explores the different ways that the two films capture both the experience of death and of living far away from home.

## II. THE NARRATIVES OF THE FILMS

Before elaborating on the analyses of the specific motifs, the researcher will briefly engage the two films. Written and directed by Fatih Akin (2007), *The Edge of Heaven* is a film that portrays three families across two storylines. The first family is Nejat and his elderly father Ali Aksu; the second family is Yeter and her daughter Ayten; and the third family is Susanne Staub and her daughter Lotte. Moreover, the stories of these families intersect not only by coincidence but also through a tangled and common border separating Germany and Turkey. The separate family stories in *The Edge of Heaven* (Akin, 2007) run together into one narrative. The first storyline concerns the young professor Nejat, a Turkish immigrant living in Germany, and his elderly father, Ali Aksu. In the opening scene, Nejat stops by a gas station while his father wanders the red-light district, eventually encountering Yeter, also a Turkish immigrant, and a prostitute. Ali pays Yeter to have sex with him, and then makes her an offer to come live with him for the same amount of money she makes as a prostitute. Yeter accepts, but it turns out to be a terrible idea for all involved.

One day, Yeter tells Nejat how much she misses her daughter, Ayten. At the same time, Ali suspects that Yeter has had sex with Nejat. As a result, Ali and Yeter quarrel, and Yeter is accidentally killed during their argument. Ali is then jailed, causing Nejat much anguish, so much so that his grief compels him to travel to Istanbul to find Yeter's daughter.

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However, what Nejat doesn't know is that Ayten is active in anti-government movements in Turkey that force her to flee to Germany and look for her mother. Of course, Ayten has no idea that her mother is dead and believes her to be a keeper of a shoe shop somewhere in Germany. Indeed, Yeter's death is so hushed because she was an immigrant who could not make her voice heard.

While looking for her mother, Ayten falls in love, begins a relationship, and moves in with a German girl named Lotte, whose mother, Susanne, disapproves of their relationship. Nevertheless, when Ayten is later summoned to jail in Istanbul and forced to leave Germany, Lotte follows her back to Turkey to try and free her. There, she is tragically killed after she finds a gun hidden by Ayten, who asks her to bring the gun to her in prison. Lotte agrees, but on her way to visit Ayten, a gang of boys steals her purse. After chasing them, she finally catches up to them and demands they return the gun that the boys have found in her purse and are now inspecting. One of the boys points the gun at her and shoots her dead.

The second storyline depicts iconic German actress Hanna Schygulla, playing Susanne, the aged mother of Lotte. A German university student with idealistic beliefs, Lotte brings home Ayten, a homeless, illegal Turkish immigrant, to stay in her house, something her mother is highly opposed to. Here, the film would have the viewers believe that they are seeing a contrast between the strict, unempathetic mother and her rebellious, idealistic daughter. However, in a conversation between Lotte and Ayten, the film soon reveals that Susanne is not who we were told. Susanne was also a free spirit herself in her youth, once hitchhiking from Germany all the way to India. Thus, the audience sees a different Susanne from the one who tries to pass herself off as uptight and conservative today. Thus, the film undermines the viewers' perception in order to provide true insights.

Throughout the movie's intricate plot, Akin masterfully demonstrates just how entangled with one another these three families truly are. Nejat hopes to help Yeter look for her daughter Ayten, so he travels from Germany to Turkey. Instead of meeting Ayten, the German professor opens a bookstore in Turkey and meets Ayten's friend Lotte. Lotte dramatically becomes Nejat's tenant. The sophisticated complexity of these storylines allows viewers to enter the inner worlds of these characters.

*Happy Together* (Chun Guang Zha Xie) (1997) by Hong Kong filmmaker Wong Kar-wai is both his first film set outside of Asia and his first to depict homosexual relationships. *Happy Together* has three protagonists that share two narratives. The first storyline begins as the love story between a gay couple from Hong Kong, Ho Po-wing (Leslie Cheung) and Lai Yao-Fai (Tony Chiu-wai Leung).

After a recent breakup, Fai and Po want to start their relationship all over again, so they decide to visit Iguazu Falls on the Brazilian and Argentine border, as they had once promised each other they would do. However, on their way to the falls, they get lost and start arguing about the same things that they always argue about – their differing philosophies on money and life in general. As a result, they break up, continuing the cycle of separation and reconciliation that they have gone through many times before. This time, however, Fai ends up moving to Taiwan instead of returning to Hong Kong, and Po-wing, without money, is left alone in Argentina, where he becomes openly promiscuous with other men. This time, the love between Po-wing and Fai seems impossible to renew; however, like the endless waterfall, their love for one another and their desire to be together seem unstoppable.

The second storyline is between Fai and his new close friend Chang (Chang Chen), who he met while working as a cook in a restaurant that they both work at. When they are not working, they often play soccer and hang out. Chang once tells Fai about his plan to visit the southernmost lighthouse in Ushuaia, Argentina, because it is located at the end of the world. Fai is amazed by Chang's idea, and Chang eventually does leave Buenos Aires and continues his travels.

After having saved enough money, Fai goes back to Asia, stopping in Taiwan on his way back to Hong Kong. He eventually ends up traveling to Chang's hometown to visit his parents in the Liao Ning Night Market of Taipei. After stealing a picture of Chang from their food booth, Fai then reaches the "Zhong Xiao Fu Xin" (or "Revive Faith and Obedience"), and the story ends with Fai beginning the next leg of his journey.

A surface reading of *Happy Together* would tell a tangled story of the love and friendship of the three protagonists. However, compared to *The Edge of Heaven*, we can extract a much more sophisticated reading that reveals the complexity of the theme and hidden meanings beneath the surface.

### III. GEOGRAPHICAL MOBILITY

Geographical mobility in *Happy Together* and *The Edge of Heaven* plays a crucial role in addressing the theme of crossing borders. The opening scene of *The Edge of Heaven* shows when a car drives into a gas station. This event implies mobility. A man comes out of his car and invites the gas station attendant to fill up the tank. Stepping into the gas station grocery store, he picks up a chocolate bar and shares a casual conversation with the cashier about the song playing over the loudspeakers. The cashier tells him that the singer, Kazim Koyuncu, is Muslim but, unfortunately, died of cancer caused by fallout from the 1986 Chernobyl disaster at the same age as the man. The man pays for his groceries, and the scene ends. The scene lasts two minutes and is completely mundane. This could have happened to anyone. There is no tension, twist, or conflict. It foreshadows the characters in the film, including geographical mobility.

This opening scene of the film is demonstrative of the theme throughout the rest of the movie. The same scene is replayed at the end of the movie. But the difference is that the viewers know that the gas station is in rural Turkey and the man in this gas station is the main character, Nejat. Otherwise, the two-minute scene is totally the same.

However, the meaning of the scene changes over time because the spectators know the character Nejat and his stories when they watch the same scene at the end of the movie. If the opening scene seems unexpected and meaningless, the stories in *The Edge of Heaven* enhance the audiences' understanding of the role of geographical mobility in the film. That is, the symbolic meaning of traveling and crossing borders to the character Nejat when he drives to Turkey to help Yeter find her daughter Ayten fills the same scene that echoes the open scene at the end of the film with sympathy for immigrants, a great sense of tension, and an abundance of meaning.

*Happy Together* is also a film about geographic mobility. It starts with a gay couple driving to Argentina to visit Iguazu Falls. Unfortunately, they get lost along the way, losing their money and having no choice but to live and work in Argentina until they can buy plane tickets to go back home. In "World Cinema Goes Digital: Looking at Europe from the Other Shore", Gokturk (2012) compares *The Edge of Heaven* with *Y Tu Mamá También* (2002), asserting that "the coproducer Andreas Thiel makes an interesting comparison on the basis of the attitude toward life and death as well as the road movie perspective on landscape and the trip to the seaside" (Gokturk, 2012, p. 210). Like *Y Tu Mamá También*, *Happy Together* is a road trip movie that features the protagonists traveling to a waterfall with the couple from the latter on their way to Iguazu Falls on the border of Argentina. Similarly, *Happy Together* and *The Edge of Heaven* share geographical mobility and border crossings as a main attribute for each plotline.

In *The Edge of Heaven*, characters cross national borders surrounding the eastern Black Sea, going back and forth between Germany and Turkey. The location of the final scene, a seaside village with green hills growing tea sitting on the eastern end of the Black Sea, is a metaphor, where the seemingly endless sea symbolizes the unreachable boundaries, the separate people, and the divergent cultures. It demands the struggle of several generations to overcome the boundaries both geographically and mentally. As Homi K. Bhabha puts it:

No single explanation for sending one back immediately to a single origin is adequate. And just as there are no simple dynastic answers, there are no simple discrete formations or social processes. If, in our traveling theory, we are alive to the metaphoricality of the peoples of imagined communities—migrant or metropolitan—then we shall find that the space of the modern nation-people is never simply horizontal. The metaphoric movement requires a kind of 'doubleness' in writing; a temporality of representation that moves between cultural formations and social processes without a 'centered' causal logic. (Bhabha, 1990, p. 293)

The symbolic meaning of the Iguazu Falls bordering Brazil and Argentina in *Happy Together* is multi-faceted. Water not only changes over time, but it also shapes the landscapes that surround borders. That is to say, the boundary of a body of water is constantly changing. This symbolizes a potential cultural force that crosses borders and breaks boundaries. As the water has shapeless boundaries, the cultural borders of the imagined cosmopolitan community alter frequently.

The symbolic use of waterfalls in Chinese storytelling dates back to 497 BC in *Confucian Analects*. During the Qing dynasty, Confucius metaphorically uses a running stream to describe the wisdom he wants to pass on to his student: "The Master, standing by a stream, said, 'It passes on just like this, not ceasing day or night!'" (Legge, 1960). The analogy used here describes water perpetually moving just as time does.

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus also had a similar take on moving water. He suggests "*Panta Rei*", which can be translated as, "everything flows." Once, while lecturing his students, he put his foot into a river and said, "As they step into the same rivers, other and still other waters flow upon them. One cannot step twice into the same river, nor can one grasp any mortal substance in a stable condition, but it scatters and again gathers; it forms and dissolves, and approaches and departs... The soul is an exhalation that perceives; it is different from the body, and always flowing." (Kahn, 1981, p. 79) The reason a man cannot step into the same river twice is because both he and the river are in a process of becoming and constantly changing.

In *Happy Together*, Iguazu Falls may symbolize passing time in the same way—Po-wing, Fai, and Chang represent different eras in Hong Kong. Po-wing represents the past of Hong Kong that was colonized, while Fai represents the transformative period, and Chang represents the future of Hong Kong when it recovered from the colonized trauma and overcame its nostalgia. Like the waterfalls in *Happy Together*, the three men move on and continue to transform and are constantly changing all the while.

#### IV. HYBRIDITY AND INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS

Two other important themes of both *Happy Together* and *The Edge of Heaven* are globalized multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. Indeed, it is a cultural identity that crosses borders and breaks the national boundaries, while it also highlights the diasporic experience of living across borders and the feeling of confronting unfamiliar cultures that bonds people together.

*The Edge of Heaven*'s original title in German is *Auf der Anderen Seite*, meaning "on the other side," fittingly reminding the audience that politically constructed boundaries divide people into two groups. *The Edge of Heaven* painfully depicts alienation in diaspora felt by the former Turks now living in Germany and later the German girl Lotte in Turkey. There is also Ayten's political dissent, leaving her feeling alienated in her own country. Moreover, there is also this generational conflict between the father and son and the mother and daughter.

The intimate relationships between the characters of the two films demonstrate that people are longing for close connections and are eager to belong to a new cosmopolitan world. In *The Edge of Heaven*, the intimate relationship between Ayten and Lotte is exemplary of their longing for a close connection and belonging to the cosmopolitan identity.

However, *The Edge of Heaven* is also filled with other intimate relationships, such as that between the Turkish-German professor, Nejat, and his father, Ali, who are a hybrid between Turkish and German culture. Then there is the intimate relationship between Ali and Yeter that reveals Ali's inner desire to connect with someone from his motherland. Likewise, in *Happy Together*, it is Iguazu Falls, the waterfall lamp, and the tango dance that symbolize the desire to be intimate with other people and other cultures.

Lotte and Ayten's intimate relationship is brave and idealistic. Their meeting is accidental, but they are attracted to and loyal to one another. The two make out in a bar, and later, Lotte then follows Ayten to Turkey when she is sent to jail in Turkey. Lotte even reads Turkish law to try to help Ayten out. After Lotte's death, Lotte's mother comes to Turkey and is willing to make Lotte's wish come true to help free Ayten, thus proving the idea that intimate relationships bond people together even beyond national boundaries. Indeed, the intimate relationships between the films' characters convey that people are longing for close connections and are eager to belong to something. As Hall says:

The first position defines cultural identity in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective one true self, hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes that provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging, and continuous frames of reference and meaning beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. The oneness underlying all the other more superficial differences is the truth, the essence, of Caribbeanness, of the black experience. It is this identity that a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light, and express through cinematic representation. (Hall, 1990, p. 223)

The film indicates that Ali starts an intimate relationship with Yeter because Ali shares the same cultural identity and national identity as Yeter. The diasporic experience ties the two characters in *The Edge of Heaven* together. However, the intimacy between Lotte and Ayten is different in that the two women do not share the same history and ancestry. Lotte helps Ayten after their accidental encounter, goes out of her way to bring Ayten to her house, and loves her. What is the explanation for this intimate relationship? For the answer, we once again refer to Hall:

There is, however, a second, related but different view of cultural identity. This second position recognizes that as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference that constitute what we really are, or rather – since history has intervened – what we have become. We cannot speak for very long, with any exactness, about one experience, one identity... Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of becoming as well as of being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something that already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere and have histories. But like everything that is historical, they undergo constant transformation. (Hall, 1990, p. 225)

Though they are significantly different from their national identities, the two young girls are attracted to each other because they are both at critical points in their lives. Meanwhile, because of their many similarities concerning their care and love for one another, they have a tendency to share a new cultural identity. That is, it is a cosmopolitan cultural identity that is "a matter of becoming as well as of being" that breaks the national boundaries and crosses borders.

In *Happy Together*, Iguazu Falls, the destination that the couple planned to go to, along with the waterfall lamp, both symbolize this cosmopolitan cultural identity and the desire to be intimate with others. That is because waterfalls are rivers that drop off a cliff into another river and coalesce with one another.

The background of the story in *Happy Together* is about the historical immigration of Asians to Argentina from during the middle and late 1990s, creating what is now a Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires. By setting the film in Buenos Aires, about as far away from Hong Kong as one can get, Wong demonstrates that this is the best place for Hong Kongers to discover their identity. "In Argentina, because there are few Chinese communities in Argentina, especially in Buenos Aires, so I think these two guys have to live in a place with a lot of Argentinians, so this is the background of the story" (Kar-wai, 2008).

Looking at a world map, Argentina and China are separated by the Pacific Ocean and on the opposite sides of the Earth from one another. The film indicates that cultural hybridization, internalization, and repulsion happen in this geographical location. For example, Fai had trouble sleeping when he returned to Asia from Argentina. He says, "Watching TV, I realized that Hong Kong and Argentina are on the opposite sides of the Earth from one another. I wonder if Hong Kong looks upside down from the perspective of opposite sides of the world that alienate Hong Kong. The lives in Argentina for Hong Kong people are opposite" (Ltd., 1997). Here, he imagines Hong Kong from Argentina's perspective. The ridiculous and fantastic images he describes seemingly imply that it is difficult for Eastern and Western cultures to negotiate with each other. These feelings and the lifestyle of exposure to other cultures are common experiences for those who were exiled to other countries.

This new cosmopolitan cultural identity and cultural forms emerged from the hybridization of globalized multiculturalism. Taken from Edward Said's work, Homi K. Bhabha interprets this term in his own work. It is also known as cosmopolitanism, a desire to belong to the world. As Homi Bhabha states:

I have lived that moment of the scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering. Gatherings of exiles and emigres and refugees, gathering on the edge of foreign cultures; gathering at the frontiers; gatherings in the ghettos or cafes of city centers; gathering on the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues, or in the uncanny fluency of another's language; gathering the signs of

approval and acceptance, degrees, discourses, and disciplines; gathering the memories of underdevelopment of other worlds lived retroactively; gathering the past in a ritual of revival; gathering the present; and also the gathering of the people in the diaspora. (Bhabha, 1990, p. 291)

The gatherings of exiles, emigres, and refugees on the edge of foreign cultures form a new cosmopolitan culture. As we can see in *Happy Together*, the diaspora of Hong Kongers and Taiwanese living in Argentina enables them to cultivate a seemingly private but inclusive identity to belong to, as the waterfall lamp, the tango dance, and the soccer games symbolize this new cultural identity and cultural hybridization.

Po-wing teaches Fai how to tango dance. Their dance is very odd because they approach each other so closely and intimately that Po-wing's head leans on Fai's shoulder, in contrast to Po-wing and an Argentinian dancer at the end of the film. This addresses the intimacy between Po-wing and Fai. From the moment they are born, people start to look for their identity and long for belonging, no matter if what they are looking for is a person or their motherland. Although it is impossible for two people to converge into one, Po-wing and Fai in *Happy Together* are irreversibly and inevitably willing to make efforts to get together.

After he leaves Po-wing, Fai frequently hangs out with Chang, and the two often play soccer with their coworkers. However, they play casually and without rules. Sometimes they kick the ball, while other times they grab the ball with their hands. Fai also happens to play Mahjong a lot with his co-workers, so Chang knows where to easily find him.

Interestingly, the tango originated in Argentina, and records of soccer go back more than 2000 years to ancient China; however, today the sport is far more popular in Argentina than it is in China. Fai migrates to Argentina and lives within an Asian community. He is welcomed in the community when he takes up popular local activities. However, the ways they dance the tango and play soccer are hybridized, just as playing Mahjong in South America is.

Even though uprooting oneself to a totally different place is extremely difficult, it is still possible for people to get closer to understanding their past. The propensity for cosmopolitanism is revealed in the film. Art and culture are mobile. Although language is relatively still, like the river, art is always traveling, always changing.

## V. ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE AND DEATH

The emotional impact on viewers heavily underlies *The Edge of Heaven* and *Happy Together* because these films make statements about both life and death. *The Edge of Heaven* influences viewers' lives by taking a constructive stance on coincidental and complicated relationships, while *Happy Together* emphasizes jumbled and entangled space and time. In both films, death indicates a new start. A historical figure's death as the background of *Happy Together* implies that this is a new start for the intimacy between Po-wing and Fai, representing the end of the colonial history of Hong Kong. The deaths of Yeter and Lotte in *The Edge of Heaven* happen in foreign countries, thus illustrating the invisible effects of borders and the desire to shed new light on hybridization and cosmopolitanism.

Contingencies and coincidences frame the actions in *The Edge of Heaven*. Those actions are not irreplaceable since they are random. What happens in the film does not necessarily occur because the plotline relies on chance encounters and intersections between people and places. However, coincidental relationships and incidents lead to unexpected situations. For example, Ayten happens to encounter the German police, and she is summoned to jail in Istanbul. Yeter and Lotte could have survived their accidents. Also, Nejat could have met Ayten because Lotte happens to be his tenant in Turkey. This randomness highlights the possibility of sorrowful accidents befalling characters who live outside of their homelands.

*The Edge of Heaven* educates viewers through fear. Death in the film is hushed as immigrants seem invisible and cannot make their voices heard. For instance, both Yeter and Lotte's deaths both take place outside of their homelands, and both are killed unexpectedly and instantly. As immigrants, they risk their lives and make their own voices muted.

Sad events and the destruction of innocent people simultaneously bring fear and education to the audience. Yeter's death and Lotte's are very tragic because they are innocent immigrants without support from their compatriots. However, neither of these deaths is the result of themselves. The film leaves us to think for a moment, "Who is to blame?" After all, Lotte's death is not her own fault, nor is Ayten or her mother Susanne to blame. It is the same with the death of Yeter. Nobody was responsible for her death. Everyone is innocent here, but who kills Yeter and Lotte? The researcher argues that the invisible boundary between people and the two nations is what kills them. Contingency in the film showcases the necessity of breaking this boundary between couples and family members through tragedy. From the perspective of philosophy, death is relative. It is just the death of the body, but the spirit is immortal. Even though Yeter and Lotte died in the film, their spirits, from the perspective of philosophy, are immortal in real life. This is the power of tragedy.

Although *The Edge of Heaven* and *Happy Together* share the themes of life and death, *Happy Together* focuses on the transformative age of Hong Kong and how Hong Kong people perceive it. People have built their lives through space and time. However, space and time are entangled and jumbled in *Happy Together*. For example, the opposite of the Earth, the southernmost lighthouse, and upside-down Hong Kong. By moving away from their home countries, Po-wing, Fai, and Chang have tried to exile themselves from having a strong desire to go back home.

Meanwhile, time in this film is also disordered and discrete in addressing the geographical mobility. Before Chang returned to Taiwan from Argentina, he imagined the time gap between the two places: "The day is beginning as I leave. It might be night in Taipei now. I wonder if the Liao Ning night market has started" (*Happy Together*, 1997). Fai finds it hard to sleep after changing time zones back to the opposite side of the world.

However, when he gets to Argentina, he also cannot adapt to the local time zone and wishes to go back to Hong Kong time: “To boost my income, I’ve started working in a slaughterhouse. The pay’s much better, and the hours suit me fine. Work all night. Sleep all day. I’m back on Hong Kong time” (*Happy Together*, 1997). This sleep inversion is Fai’s individual experience of exchanging diurnal habits for nocturnal habits, but it also represents a collective experience of a seriously nerve-wracking time disorder for people who live outside of their homelands. Days and nights are reversed for Hong Kong people who live in Argentina because they feel like they do not belong, and they are adjusting to the local culture.

On the other hand, the main characters do not die in *Happy Together*. The only death shown comes from a television report on the death of Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping; yet, his death is an important clue implying that *Happy Together* is a national allegory. The three main characters in *Happy Together* represent China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, respectively. Notably, it was very important for the time period that the film was made. From Deng Xiaoping’s death, we can discern that the film takes place before Britain’s handover of Hong Kong to China on February 20, 1997. This scene appears at the end of *Happy Together* while Fai was back in Taipei, Taiwan. The historical event made Fai feel like he was waking up from a long sleep.

It is easy to figure out that, underlying Wong’s statement, this film is related to historical events. The emotional gap between Fai and Po-wing is symbolic of British colonialism imposing inevitable and unexpected consequences on Hong Kong, thus leaving an inevitable scar between mainland China and Hong Kong. By opening up about the intimacy between Fai and Po-wing, Wong is willing to reveal the desire of Hong Kongers to search for their identities by closing the gap between them and China. The impossible love of Po-wing and Fai in this film demonstrates that Hong Kong and mainland China both wish to “start over,” but the scar of the colonial past is hard to erase. As Wong interprets *Happy Together*: “In a way, I don’t have an answer about what happened after 1997 in [Hong Kong], but somehow at the end of this film I realized we have at least provided a wish, not an answer – that is *Happy Together*” (Kar-wai, 2008).

Wong insinuates the relations between Hong Kong, China, and Taiwan by addressing the intimacy between characters in the film, reflecting an individual’s difficulty in connecting with others and exploring whether there is a suitable way to get along well together between two men or two places. Hong Kong has first-hand experience with the “one country, two systems” policy and, hopefully, can provide more understanding about dealing with its postcolonial and diasporic experiences.

*The Edge of Heaven* uses the power of tragedy and educates viewers through the fear of watching innocent people die. On the contrary, in *Happy Together*, death represents a historical event and implies a national allegory. The experience of living outside of homelands and death in both films suggest a desire to improve the living condition of diasporas and to establish a new cosmopolitan world.

## VI. CONCLUSION

By comparing *The Edge of Heaven* (Fatih Akin, 2007) and *Happy Together* (Wong Kar-Wai, 1997), this paper attempted to find where and how each film differed from one another and where the similarities lied. By examining the two films, this paper argued that both films include geographical mobility and intimate relationships between characters. However, each film revealed different attitudes about life and death; thus, the study delved deeper into the themes of each of these films and analyzed the symbolic meanings of water as well.

Throughout each film, there were surprisingly unexpected revelations that challenged the expectations and perceptions of viewers, forcing the researcher to look at it from a new perspective. A surface reading of *Happy Together* reveals a story about three protagonists tangled up in love and friendship. However, compared with *The Edge of Heaven*, *Happy Together* is much more sophisticated. In Section III, by revealing complex themes and hidden meanings beneath the surface, the researcher posited that geographical mobility in the two films reveals the status of living and thinking beyond one nation. In Section IV, the researcher argued that the intimate relationships that bond people together go beyond national boundaries. That is, the intimate relationships between characters in two films convey a longing for close connections and the eagerness to belong to something bigger than themselves. Finally, in Section V, the researcher explored each film’s differing attitude towards life and death.

In sum, art is not for art’s sake but for life’s sake. *The Edge of Heaven* and *Happy Together* reveal new experiences of moving across borders and living in a cosmopolitan place. Both films put an emphasis on breaking the agonistic boundaries between characters in intimate relationships and hoping for establishing a cosmopolitan new world.

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# What Can One See if One Brings the Linguistic Concept Into a Panchronic View?

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**Abstract**—This paper takes a panchronic perspective to show that the evolution of a linguistic concept in a worldview embraces this concept's diachronic depth and this concept's diachronic variation. The diachronic depth of a concept is an archaic image (modal mental representation) that was prerequisite for this concept (amodal mental representation) to emerge; this image had formed perceptually in the human mind, through the direct visual experience humans had in perceiving the world, which accounts for this concept's embodiment. Mental image at this concept's diachronic depth and embodiment of this concept are the two facts that this paper assumes one can see when viewing this concept panchronically. This paper treats panchrony as the combination of diachrony of language with universal processes of human cognition, and suggests that the panchronic mechanism behind linguistic semiosis is the modal-to-amodal conversion that takes place in the human mind and has the inner form of the word as its panchronic product and the image-driven interpretation of the word as its emergent product. This mechanism operates at each stage in language evolution, determines the genesis of the word as that of a sign-symbol, and is universal for the speakers of language by virtue of their embodiment. This paper's theoretical commitments find application in the case of SIN in the English worldview: archaic image at SIN's diachronic depth is reconstructed using methodologies of etymological research, as the inner form of the word *sin* in English; SIN's content in diachronic variation is reconstructed using methodologies of cognitive linguistic research.

**Index Terms**—embodied cognition, linguistic concept, mental image, panchrony, word

## I. INTRODUCTION

The word is not a copy of the object as such, but reflects the soul's image of the object. In this sense, the words of different languages can never be synonyms – their meaning, strictly speaking, can never be encompassed in a simple definition which merely lists the objective characteristics of the object designated. There is always a specific mode of *signification* which expresses itself in the syntheses and coordinations underlying the formation of linguistic concepts. (Cassirer, 1955, p. 284; emphasis in the original)

This paper takes a panchronic view on human concepts manifested in language, and shows that linguistic concepts evolve, as the evolution of each such concept embraces this concept's diachronic depth and this concept's diachronic variation in the worldview this concept is part of. The paper treats panchrony as the combination of the diachrony of language with the universal processes of human cognition, and suggests that the cognitive mechanism that drives linguistic semiosis in panchrony is the conversion of human non-propositional into propositional thought, which is the conversion of modal mental representations (the non-conceptual content of the human mind, as in seeing the world) into amodal mental representations (the conceptual content of the human mind, as in understanding the world), and back.

This paper assumes that the diachronic depth of a concept is an archaic image that was prerequisite for this concept to emerge; this archaic image that had formed perceptually in the mind of a human being who sensed and cognized the surrounding world through interaction with this world, which *per se* accounts for this concept's embodiment in terms of those opportunities for conceptualization that the human body then afforded morphologically. The paper goes on to assume that all human concepts are embodied as long as all such concepts have their diachronic depths in the worldviews that these concepts constitute, and also in the minds of the people who inherit these peculiar worldviews as they come to speak their particular languages, with words manifesting concepts as lexical meanings coupled with forms.

SIN is chosen in this paper as an embodied linguistic concept whose evolution in the English worldview is traced from SIN's diachronic depth through SIN's diachronic variation, i.e. from the original information that once made SIN's content in the English worldview to the eventual information that therein has ever made its content, given that the noun *sin* acts as the name for SIN in the English language. The paper thus brings together the human language (*sin* (n.) is part of the linguistic worldview), the human mind (SIN is part of the conceptual worldview), and the objective world, with *sin* emerging as a phenomenon that is (near-)universally known by humans but only subjectively experienced by them.

The archaic image at the diachronic depth of SIN relates to mythical thinking, which as a stage in the evolution of human consciousness is pre-written. This image is in this paper shown via a diachronic semantic reconstruction, taking up the etymological analysis together with the image-driven etymological interpretation of *sin* (n.). Conceptualizations of *sin* in the English worldview are then delivered with respect to the major written periods in historical time, suggesting diachronic variation as the continuous transformations that SIN has undergone in its development. As SIN due to its Biblical prototype is rather invariant in Christian religious discourse, pieces of English secular discourse with SIN



manifested by *sin* (n.) were collected into a direct sample for the 14<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and then analyzed using cognitive linguistic methodologies of synchronic and diachronic research. This has filled with meaningful data the semantic continuum that stretches, as an evolution, in between SIN's origin and modern state.

This paper serves the lens through which the author looks at her earlier research in light of the experience she has so far accumulated towards reconstructing concepts synchronically and diachronically on the basis of linguistic data. The research has matured into a theory of how semiosis in language takes place, and into a methodology of how linguistic concepts may get reconstructed panchronically by virtue of their names, with respect to the cognitive mechanisms behind the process of linguistic semiosis. The precursors of this paper are Vaxovskaja (2011) and Vakhovska (2022, 2024) that are now transformed into a comprehensive view of linguistic concepts in their evolution.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### A. Panchrony as Diachrony of Language and Universal Processes of Human Cognition

What can be recognized in language as panchronic comes from <...> seeing language categories as ever-evolving derivatives of cognitive tensions. The very presence of cognitive factors in diachronic description is precisely the reason why instead of a linear succession of discrete language states in space and time (which is a broad definition of diachrony) we obtain a multi-directional progression of non-discrete categorization processes in language (which might be a working definition of panchrony). Unlike in diachrony, in panchrony language no longer functions in space and time, but it operates in human understanding of space and time. (Łozowski, 2022, pp. 47–48)

*Panchrony* as a mode of linguistic investigation suggests that language is independent, – and can and should therefore be studied independently, – from the restrictions of time and space (Łozowski, 2023, pp. 157–159). Panchrony has an inseparable link with synchrony and diachrony that do put such restrictions, each in its unique way: *synchrony* focuses on the static state of language, whereas *diachrony* looks at the dynamic change that language undergoes in its development.

Structuralist views of language explain panchrony in terms of *linguistic universals* (general rules and principles regarding language make-up that exist independently of concrete linguistic facts and also of individual language speakers) and suggest that panchrony is impossible due to the fact that language is an autonomous system of *arbitrary signs* (de Saussure, 1983), which divides synchrony and diachrony sharply, hides causality in language change, and precludes the possibility to simultaneously study language from the generalized synchronic and diachronic, i.e. from the panchronic, point of view (Łozowski, 2023, pp. 159–162). Synchrony (simultaneous co-existence of linguistic signs) and diachrony (chronological succession of linguistic signs) are dichotomous for structuralists, with synchrony dominating their research, due to the psychological realism that language enjoys among its speakers in its current static state. On that, the structuralist belief is that extralinguistic factors, i.e. time and space that are given in the world and construed in the human mind, must not enter into the scientific investigation of language *per se*.

Functionalist views of language explain panchrony in terms of *functional universals* (cognitive and experiential patterns of human behavior, culture included) and suggest that panchrony is possible, and even imperative, due to the fact that language is not an autonomous but a cognition- and culture-dependent system of *motivated signs*, or symbols of human experience (Łozowski, 2023, pp. 153–157). This introduces the extralinguistic factors into linguistic research, highlights causality in language change, unites synchrony and diachrony, now treating them on a par, and includes the possibility to simultaneously study language from the generalized, i.e. panchronic, point of view, owing to the cognitive processes that drive the genesis of language. Views on panchrony have developed continually in cognitive linguistics, where panchrony is(was) understood in terms of universal laws, of omnipresence of history, of cognitive universalism, and, ultimately, of diachrony plus cognition (Jarosz, 2020, pp. 53–57), following which we in this paper assume that the *combination of the diachrony of language with the universal processes of human cognition* constitutes panchrony.

Panchrony we think is less an independence of language from the restrictions of time and space but a peculiar sort of this dependence, as synchrony is now and here, diachrony is then and there, and panchrony is always and everywhere, each assuming a particular relation of language to time and space. This relation does adopt a dependence of language on time and space, as language is hardly thinkable in terms of never and nowhere, and still less in terms of being unfindable of its own self. Rather, the peculiar dependence of language found in panchrony is that language is grounded in time and space, and in the cognitive processes that run always and everywhere and drive the genesis of language, as linguistic phenomena are products of these cognitive processes in their functioning. This peculiar dependence of language makes it possible to liberate linguistic research from the dichotomy of synchrony and diachrony, as it is this dichotomy that would otherwise be of a restricting sort.

The cognitive mechanism behind linguistic semiosis that we suggest is panchronic is the conversion of human non-propositional into propositional thought, which is the conversion of mental images as modal mental representations (seeing the world) into word meanings as amodal mental representations (understanding the world), and back (Vakhovska, 2024). We believe that in the genesis of language cognitive processes and their products are not isolated; we mean that *functional universals produce linguistic universals*, as in the evolution of life first there appears a function and it is this function that eventually requires that an organ appear to fulfill this function. On this view, panchrony must be defined first with reference to the universality of cognitive mechanisms behind language, and then with reference to the universality of linguistic phenomena that become the products of these mechanisms in action. While in this paper we

work with the modal-to-amodal conversion (a cognitive mechanism; one that regulates the process of linguistic semiosis) and with the word as a sign-symbol (a linguistic phenomenon; one that becomes the product of this cognitive mechanism), we may suppose that pairings of this kind are potentially many, setting the stage for congruous panchronic research.

*The modal-to-amodal conversion occurred* at the moment when the word was created and emerged into language, *and has* the inner form of the word as its first, – and panchronic, – product (Vakhovska, 2024, pp. 52–53). The inner form of the word is a fragment of this word's meaning (Zhabotynska, 2013) that at its own time motivated the emergence of this word in its peculiar outer form into language (Potebnja, 1892). (The outer form of the word is the phonemic and graphemic container for this word's meaning, as Zhabotynska, 2013). The inner form of the word is an archaic image that has pictorial resemblance to the referent of the word, in view of how this referent emerged into the consciousness of man who gave this referent its name (Vakhovska, 2024, p. 52). The image in the human mind represents the respective thing in the world, and is this thing's symbol.

*The modal-to-amodal conversion occurs* at the moment when the word is used and processed by the speakers of language, *and has* the image-driven interpretation of the word as its continuous product (Vakhovska, 2024, p. 52). Whereas it is impossible for individual speakers to change the inner forms of words in their language, as these archaic images are inherited together with the worldview (the magic circle from which there is no escape, as per von Humboldt, 1836) and re-imagining them can only touch but not take them (on touching and taking, see Weber, 2005), the interpretations of words of language by its speakers are fluid, emergent, and variable, owing to individual experiences and cognitive styles as to how individuals (spontaneously and improvisingly) use construal operations, and also owing to the context (physical, social, cultural, and immediate communicative; global and local, as per Kövecses, 2014). The term *emergent* here means that human speech “must be viewed as a real-time, social phenomenon, and therefore [speech] is temporal; its structure is always deferred, always in a process but never arriving, and therefore emergent” (Hopper, 1987, p. 141). Cf. Clifford's (1986, p. 19) statement that “[c]ulture is temporal, emergent, and disputed”.

On that, the modal-to-amodal conversion is the panchronic mechanism of human cognition that regulates the process of linguistic semiosis, determining the genesis of the word as that of a sign-symbol. This cognitive mechanism operates at each of the stages in language development in time, diachrony and synchrony included, and is universal for the speakers of language by virtue of their embodiment.

#### B. The Embodied Cognition Framework of Linguistic Research

Make no mistake about it, *that* is the stuff of which human minds are made: brains, bodies, and environments. (Spivey, 2007, p. 33; emphasis in the original)

Cognition is said to be *embodied* to mean that it is caused and constituted by the cognizing agent's body that in a peculiar way senses and interacts with the environment it is placed into (Varela et al., 2017). The body positively contributes to cognition so much so that it is the body as a whole, not the brain alone, that is argued to make the seat of cognition in living organisms (Gallagher, 2005). *Perception*, on that, is “an extended process involving whole organisms in motion through their environments <...>. Visual perceptual processes, for instance, are not exclusive to the eye or even the brain, but involve the whole organism as it moves about its environment” (Shapiro & Spaulding, 2024).

*Human perception* is an array of lived, attentional subjective experiences that emerge into human consciousness owing to awareness; these experiences submit to verbal report but yet remain ineffable (Zahavi, 2005). Human perception has an intentionality and a phenomenology of its own (Merleau-Ponty, 1962); it physically occurs in one's active exploration of the environment, which forms a dependence between one's movements and sensory states and the world: on this view, cognition in humans is enactive, in the sense that it emerges from, and even is constituted by, sensorimotor activity (Ward et al., 2017), with a dynamic coupling of the brain, body, and world into a single cognitive system (Chemero, 2001). Cognition in humans is embedded, too, in the sense that the capacities of one's mind depend on one's environment that might be (un)suitably organized for these capacities to emerge (Martin & Schwartz, 2005). Physical embodiment goes together with cultural embodiment (Kimmel, 2008), as cultural environments shape cognition, too.

Embodied perspectives on cognition naturally apply to concepts. To say that human concepts are embodied is to understand that the morphological properties of the human body inform and constrain (the content and structure of) human concepts.

#### C. The Embodiment View of Human Concepts in Evolution

The peculiar nature of our bodies shapes our very possibilities for conceptualization. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 19)

A concept is a mental entity and an operational unit used in human cognition, as the human mind manipulates concepts in the processes of thinking; *concepts* are quanta of structured knowledge that humans learn experientially about the world. Concepts get manifested in language just as much as in the other systems of signs at human disposal. Concepts captured by linguistic signs make the meanings of these signs. Words stand out among the linguistic signs of other levels, e.g. morphemes or sentences, due to the fact that it is *words* that bridge human cognition, i.e. the conceptual worldview, and communication, i.e. the linguistic worldview. The two worldviews overlap but never coincide (Kubrjakova, 2004), as the conceptual worldview is broader than the linguistic one, with the result that concepts are only partially exposed in the meanings of words acting as these concepts' names.

Concepts suggest historical variation as they transform in the course of time, which makes their *evolution* (Ševčenko, 2016). Evolution is continuous and relates to the human mind, as this mind *per se* is a product of evolution (Bergson, 1911). In the field of linguistics, diachronic semantics intends to explore concepts in view of their evolution, analyzing concepts diachronically by virtue of their names. As a diachronic semanticist, we in our work have come to substantiate the distinction of a concept's diachronic depth (the term by Vasko, 2019) from this concept's diachronic variation (the term by Ševčenko, 2016), where we elaborate on the terms, rendering them panchronically, in particular with respect to the cognitive mechanism of modal-to-amodal conversion, and understand that the evolution of the concept is completed by both its diachronic depth and its diachronic variation.

The diachronic depth of a concept is an archaic image whose formation in the human mind was prerequisite for this concept to emerge. As images of things, the diachronic depths of concepts relate to human organs of vision in the first place. These images had formed perceptually in the mind of human beings who sensed and cognized the surrounding world while interacting with this world, which we offer as an account of the embodiment of human concepts, to mean that *all human concepts are embodied* as long as all such concepts have their diachronic depths; the account includes abstract concepts, too. As abstract concepts refer to "entities that are neither purely physical nor spatially constrained" (Barsalou & Wiemer-Hastings, 2005, p. 129), their embodiment has proven hardest to show, producing much reflection on the matter, for which see (Borghi & Binkofski, 2014) among others. Our suggestion is that the diachronic depths of abstract concepts must be looked at as a proof of their embodiment. "There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterwards you can remove all traces of reality" (Picasso; cited in Moholy-Nagy, 1945, p. 74). Mental images at the diachronic depths of human concepts are the direct visual experience that humans once started with in perceiving the world they were to conceptualize.

The distinction that we introduce for the diachronic depth and variation of a concept resonates with Gebser's (1986) judgment of the stages in the evolution of human consciousness, which we take as archaic images' relation to mythical consciousness, and as concepts' relation to mental consciousness. Consciousness itself is embodied (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 408), and human bodies together with their environments shape human thoughts (Heidegger, 1988; Husserl, 2012) that by nature can be either non-propositional or propositional (Kosslyn et al., 2006). Whereas *archaic images* at the diachronic depths of human concepts are structures of non-propositional thought, these *concepts per se* are structures of propositional thought, and it is as structures of propositional thought that concepts lend themselves to diachronic variation in the worldview they belong to (Vakhovska, 2023). The diachronic depth of a concept is the starting point and the program of this concept's diachronic variation, as this archaic image is archetypal and acts as a seed generating in the soil of a particular culture those multiple mental representations that this concept eventually comes to subsume (Vakhovska, 2023, pp. 195–197).

On that, the evolution of human cognition has apparently featured a conversion, in which the format of representations in the human mind could once *convert from modal to amodal*. Here, we refer to Kaup et al. (2024) who state that developmentally, and otherwise, there is an interaction between the two formats; yet, we allow ourselves to refine the statement to mean that this interaction is a conversion of modal mental representations into amodal ones, and back. This conversion we believe *once supported* the evolution of human cognition, when the archaic consciousness in humans transitioned to their modern one; this conversion we believe *now remains central* to human communication with words, where it employs the visual and auditory areas of the human brain, orchestrating the respective organs of sense, along with the deep and shallow layers of the human mind, transcending the individual (un)consciousness into the collective unconscious (For the stages in the evolution of human consciousness, see Gebser, 1986; for the (neuro)physiology of human communication with words, see Hasson, 2016; Zada et al., 2024; Kumar et al., 2024; for the layering of the human mind, the collective unconscious included, see Jung, 1970; Minsky, 1988).

The first words in human evolution were *symbols* whose forms were in a sacred way syncretic with meanings (Makovskij, 2012); we believe that these words inherently were perceptual symbols (the term by Barsalou, 1999) that owed their syncretism to those images of the world that appeared in the emerging consciousness of early humans. In the course of time, this syncretism fell apart, with the result that human words became *signs* whose forms and meanings were now connected only arbitrarily, i.e. the words had lost those mental images that they originally bore. These images are what we show at the diachronic depths of human concepts; they have guided the development of human intelligence that began with nothing other than an image, and are those senses (the term by Frege, 1892) that humans have come to make of the world; they are the inner forms (the term by Potebnja, 1892) of the words that act as concepts' names, and are reconstructed as the etymological meanings of these words. In view of embodiment, the genesis of a concept must therefore be taken together with the genesis of the word that acts as this concept's name. Whereas *the concept is embodied* by virtue of the mental image at its diachronic depth, *the word is embodied* due to its property to bear this image from within this depth.

In what follows, we document our research on the evolution of SIN in the English worldview, with the premise that SIN is an embodied abstract concept that has *sin* (n.) as its name in the English language. As human sins generally are not tangible and not visible, this appears rather non-trivial to show the human body's imprint that SIN and *sin* (n.) have inherited.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The evolution of SIN in the English worldview embraces SIN's diachronic depth and SIN's diachronic variation, which informed the two stages in our research.

Stage 1. *The diachronic depth of SIN* took a series of steps to explore. First, the etymon of the Modern English noun *sin* was identified in Old English as *synn*. This etymon by nature is a word, and also is a sign reconstructed via *etymological analysis* from the Proto-Germanic root *\*sunðjō-/sunjō-* that stands as the etymological archetype of *synn*.

Second, the archaic image that motivated the word *synn* at the moment of creation was shown via *etymological interpretation*, in the form of a mythical story narrated relative to the sacred makeup of the archaic world, as in the mind of early humans the world was represented with the help of images as symbols for certain phenomena of this world. Old English and the other genetically (un)related languages were considered semasiologically and onomasiologically in order to give a coherence to the archaic consciousness of humans whose mind's eyes were looking at sin.

A number of authoritative etymological dictionaries were used in order to reconstruct the original and the etymological meanings of *synn*, and of the root *\*sunðjō-/sunjō-* that this word and its cognates derive from. For the etymological dictionaries we used, and for the academic literature containing the linguistic terminology we adopted, see Vakhovska (2022).

Stage 2. Studying *the diachronic variation of SIN* required that the content of SIN be specified using *feature lists* for the notional-evaluative and the image-bearing components of this concept. The Biblical notion of sin that acts as a prototype for the diachronic variation of SIN in the English worldview was specified first, drawing the data from pieces of Christian religious discourse. As the diachronic variation of SIN has occurred in the secular segment of the English worldview, pieces of English secular discourse were analyzed using the cognitive linguistic methodologies of research.

*Semantic analysis* was used to identify and structure the meaning of *sin* (n.) and the meanings of its synonyms organized into the lexical-semantic field 'Sin' in the composition of subfields 'Ungodliness' and 'Wrong' whose centers are the semes 'a violation of the divine law' and 'a violation of a moral / legal / existential norm,' respectively.

*Cognitive modeling* was used to structure the semantic space of *sin* (n.) as that comprising the RELIGIOUS and SECULAR domains against which the SIN concept profiles; the domains were structured by frames, with the specification and causation relations of SIN to the other concepts whose names are the synonyms of *sin* (n.).

*Conceptual mapping* was used to expose metaphors in the conceptualization of sin; the metaphorical range of SIN was structured by the entailments of these metaphors.

*Contextual analysis* was used to compare and contrast the content of SIN at different stages in its historical development; the diachronically invariant and variant features of SIN were identified in the English secular discourse of the 14<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries, and particularized and interpreted using the data of religious studies, philosophy, ethic, cultural studies, sociology, psychology, and other related sciences; tendencies in the diachronic variation of SIN were identified using elements of *statistical analysis*.

The material of the study was directly sampled from authoritative lexicographical sources, with *sin* (n.) shown to have 137 synonyms in Modern English. The set of discourse data included 15,000 fragments of English secular discourse manifesting SIN; the fragments were collected from fiction and non-fiction works by British and American authors of the 14<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries, both printed and online, including some of the major corpora of English, both British and American. For the data sources we used, for the academic literature containing the linguistic terminology we adopted, and for the overview we provide for the major religious and philosophical renditions of sin, see Vaxovskaja (2011).

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### A. *The Diachronic Depth of SIN in the English Worldview*

To say it another way, thinking, however abstract, originates in an embodied subjectivity, at once overdetermined and permeable to contingent events. (de Lauretis, 2004, p. 365)

We find that the Old English word *synn* with the meaning 'a mistake, a bad act' ascends to the Proto-Germanic root *\*sunðjō-/sunjō-* with the meaning 'movement > a trespass on a territory that must not be trespassed > any violation > an incongruity, a mismatch,' which shows that the diachronic depth of SIN in the English worldview is *the archaic image of movement*:

One moves continuously along a way (the life) and trespasses on a territory that is forbidden (commits a sin). This trespass is a bad act because in it one violates the sacred order of the horizontally marked up world. This world is the nested circles of Cosmos vs. Chaos and of this vs. another tribe's territory that have their center as the good and their periphery as the evil. One goes beyond the boundaries of these circles in sin. <...> Whereas one's movement is a dynamic sequence of scenes (the life), a sin is a scene in this sequence only (a moment in life). A sin is an occasion in the journey (the life) and a blemish on the trajectory that curves one's way (a line of life) but the journey continues and is not terminated by the sin. This sin is this traveler's natural lot because all humans are corruptible and mortal. This sin is a true fact about the traveler. The traveler's guilt in committing this sin is verily proven. (Vakhovska, 2022, p. 183)

This narrative captures a peculiar cultural knowledge of sin, and is *the metaphor* (THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF) SIN is MOVING THE WRONG WAY; the entailments of this metaphor are given in brackets throughout the narrative. The sin that this narrative describes is one's trespass beyond the sacred circle of life, as in the mythical view the boundaries of this circle stood between the good and the evil. The metaphor is grounded in embodied cognition, as it explains the human

experience of sin in terms of peculiar primary experiences of the body, given the particular information coming to human sensory and motor systems in action, in a particular sort of environment (cf. Huo & Chen, 2021). Movement is a basic concept that for humans is presumably innate, which grounds SIN in that “direct physical experience,” as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 57) term it, that is afforded to the human species by nature.

Moreover, insofar as abstract and concrete concepts may prove to be grounded in different aspects of embodiment, e.g., “situations versus perceptual properties and direct experience versus metaphors” (Borghi & Binkofski, 2014), SIN does relate to a situation in which abstract knowledge of sin builds upon its experience-based knowledge, through a metaphorical transfer. The cultural embodiment of SIN is its unique metaphors across the diverse human cultures. Compare the embodied metaphor for SIN in the Ukrainian worldview (THE CONSEQUENCE OF) SIN *is* BURNING IN THE FIRE (Vakhovska, 2022), which corresponds to the sacred order of the vertically marked up world. Whereas sin in the English worldview is action-oriented, and in effect is a psychomotor act of movement, which has transcended the culture and got manifested in the principles of justice and law, sin in the Ukrainian worldview is a physical-chemical process of burning, in which the experience of suffering and pain inflicted onto the body is transferred to the sinner’s soul undergoing punishment and purification. The metaphor goes deep into the culture, too, with a particular resonance to the archaic worship of the Sun.

The image of movement at the diachronic depth of SIN in the English worldview is archetypal, with a relation to *the psychological archetypes* THE SHADOW, ANIMA, THE SELF, and TRANSFORMATIONS. Archetypes are “the chthonic portion of the psyche” (Jung, 1970, p. 53), to mean that it is through archetypes that the human psyche is attached to nature, which we take as another proof that human SIN is embodied by virtue of its diachronic depth. Archetypes hold in themselves the foreknowledge of all things known by humans; they possess the power of plurality that for humankind makes “a guarantee against the dead-ends of evolution” (Mamardašvili, 1996, p. 53).

Archetypal images, due to their inherent numinosity, make their appearance as symbols that animate many other things in the context of human cultures. Symbols of this kind emerge in both religious and secular imagery of SIN, giving rise in particular to those metaphors of SIN that surface in English discourse as diachronically invariant and variant ones, for which see the subsection of this paper that follows.

#### B. The Diachronic Variation of SIN in the English Worldview

‘Twas sin before, but now ‘tis charity. (Shakespeare, 2021, p. 243)

SIN is a universal human concept that yet invariably is shaped differently by the different human cultures. SIN varies cross-culturally, as distinct cultures in a unique way conceptualize sin, and intra-culturally, as the conceptualization, the categorization, and the evaluation of sin change in the course of time within one and the same culture, too.

In Christianity, the notion of sin for the most part derives from the Bible, with the Old and New Testaments suggesting their peculiar conceptualizations of sin: whereas SIN in the Old Testament regulates not so much the spiritual life of individuals, but the social life of a community, SIN in the New Testament takes on a spiritual nature, and the value of SIN is now markedly moral. The Christian sin implies an unbreakable bond of man to God, and relates to the notions of the religious autonomy of man, and of the free will: sin is a violation of the moral law that was given to man by God. Biblical theology has elaborated on the notion of the original sin, with the various sins that resulted from the fall of man.

The Biblical notion of sin has diachronically remained (almost) invariant in English religious discourse, with the *religious experiences of sin* added to the religious segment of the English worldview. The Biblical notion of sin acts as a prototype in the diachronic variation of SIN in English secular discourse, which dates back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, beginning in the works by G. Chaucer, with the *secular experiences of sin* added to the secular segment of the English worldview. The diachronic variation of SIN in the English secular discourse of the 14<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries is socioculturally determined, due to the growing secularization of the English-speaking community, with a continuous desacralization of sin. The concept preserves its orientation towards the future and certainly will continue to change.

SIN as a concept of culture presents itself in English secular discourse as a unity of its notional-evaluative and image-bearing components, with a set of features included into each (Vaxovskaja, 2011). The content of SIN varies diachronically, with major changes affecting the evaluation and the metaphorical conceptualization of sin, whereas *the notion of sin* proves rather invariant owing to the Biblical prototype that relates SIN to GOD and MAN, and also explains the gender markedness of sin, as Eve was the first to sin in the Garden of Eden. The other notional features of SIN that derive from the Biblical prototype but prove diachronically variant are that sin belongs to the spiritual sphere of human life; that sin in humans is universal due to the original sin; and that sin is negatively evaluated, in accord with the highest values that are positive.

Sin is now conceptualized outside of the spiritual sphere, as animals and nonliving things that inherently are spiritless are understood as sinners; in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, sin is a mistake, a bad taste, and a folly, which is taken trivially. Sin is now not an attribute of the universal nature in humans but of that in groups of people of a certain social class, and of a particular race; the 21<sup>st</sup> century features conceptualizations of sinlessness of some individuals altogether. The negative evaluation of sin can now change to be neutral and even positive; in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the evaluation of sin is negative (39%), neutral (34%), and positive (27%). The category of sins proves to fill, too, as the secular society acquires all new vices, e.g. drug trafficking.

*Metaphors of SIN* make the image-bearing component of the concept, subsuming the diachronically invariant conceptualizations that build upon the Biblical imagery and Christian symbolism of sin, and the diachronically variant

ones that either elaborate pictorially on the negative evaluation, which is most common, or give a neutral and positive evaluation of sin, which is less common in the data.

The range of the *diachronically invariant* conceptual metaphors of sin includes A PHYSICAL OBJECT, A HUMAN BEING, AN ANIMAL, and A PLANT as the metaphorical sources that map on SIN as a target, producing their networks of entailments that highlight certain aspects of SIN. As A PHYSICAL OBJECT forms a specification relation with A SUBSTANCE and AN EVENT that themselves have this and other semantic relations with a range of concepts, this network of entailments includes such metaphors as SIN is DOWN / INSIDE / OUTSIDE / ON THE LEFT, e.g. *the underworld of sin*; SIN is A BLACK-COLORED / RED-COLORED OBJECT, e.g. *her soul must be black as sin, red was an evil colour*; SIN is A BURDEN / THE EARTHLY FLESH, e.g. *on him rested the weight of all her sin*; SIN is A CONTAINER, e.g. *she was in mortal sin*; SIN is WATER / A STONE, e.g. *the stream of human sin*; SIN is FILTH / A BLEMISH, e.g. *stained his soul with a deadly sin*; SIN is A WAY / THE FINAL DESTINATION, e.g. *the broad boulevard of sin*; and SIN is A COMMODITY, e.g. *paid a high wage for each hour of sin*.

A HUMAN BEING entails such metaphors as SIN is AN ENEMY, e.g. *the victory over sin*; SIN is AN ILLNESS / A MENTAL DISORDER, e.g. *the illness as sin made manifest in bone*; SIN is A HUNTER / A PREY / A BAIT, e.g. *Satan baits his hooks with sin*; and SIN is A TRAP / SLAVERY, e.g. *the slavery of sin*. AN ANIMAL when mapped onto SIN produces such metaphors as SIN is A BEAST / A WORM, e.g. *dens of sin*. A PLANT does so in SIN is A TREE / A WEED, e.g. *the fruits of sin, to eradicate sin*.

As far as the *diachronic variation* goes, there are conceptual metaphors of sin with its negative evaluation that appear only in some historical periods, making a quantitative variation of SIN; these metaphors are SIN is AN INFECTION / A SPIDER'S WEB / A CAGE / A DUNGEON / A SLEEP / A SEA / A ROCK / A SPIDER / A SCORPION / A RIVAL / A CRIMINAL / A GRANDEE, e.g. *the livery of sin*. Qualitatively, the metaphors SIN is A COMMODITY (e.g. *sin taxes on beer, spirits and tobacco*) and SIN is AN OBJECT (e.g. *delicious as the less criminal forms of sin*) change their evaluation to neutral and positive. The 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought about the SIN is UP (e.g. *to dizzy heights of sin*) and SIN is A WHITE-COLORED OBJECT (e.g. *the fairest sin, white sin*) metaphors that depart from the Biblical evaluation furthest.

## V. CONCLUSION

We are thus introduced to a new principle of relativity, which holds that all observers are not led by the same physical evidence to the same picture of the universe, unless their linguistic backgrounds are similar, or can in some way be calibrated. (Whorf, 1956, p. 214)

This paper has shown from a panchronic perspective that the evolution of a linguistic concept in a worldview takes this concept's diachronic depth along with this concept's diachronic variation, with the understanding that the diachronic depth of a concept is an archaic image that was prerequisite for this concept to emerge and that had formed perceptually in the human mind, through the direct visual experience that humans had in perceiving the world, which accounts for the embodiment of this concept. On that, the answer to the question that this paper's title asks is twofold. First, one who brings the linguistic concept into a panchronic view can see the mental image that once converted into this concept and that now lies at this concept's diachronic depth. Second, owing to this image one can see, and understand, the fact of the embodiment of this concept, and of the word that acts as this concept's name, as it is this word that carries this image from the diachronic depth.

Whereas the property of having a diachronic depth is universal for all human concepts in all national worldviews, the image at each concept's diachronic depth in each national worldview will be culture-specific, this specificity making the images at the diachronic depth of one and the same concept different in different national worldviews, e.g. the SIN concept has the archaic image of movement at its diachronic depth in the English worldview, and the archaic image of fire in the Ukrainian worldview. Calibrating this difference makes this paper's prospect.

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# Exploring Learning Strategies of Students Studying in English-Medium Instruction Courses: A Case Study in the Thai Context

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**Abstract**—Despite the abundance of research focusing on the perspectives, challenges, and needs of students learning English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), there is a lack of studies examining the learning strategies employed by students in different academic disciplines. To fill this research gap, this study investigated the most common learning strategies adopted by students in EMI programs and explored the factors influencing their choice of strategies. The study was conducted at a university in Thailand, involving 40 students from medical and engineering schools. A qualitative research design, utilizing an inductive approach, was employed, with data collection conducted through focus group interviews. The thematic analysis revealed that participants primarily relied on cognitive, language-focused, social, and affective strategies. Nevertheless, only a small number employed metacognitive strategies. Furthermore, four main factors—language barriers, content-related issues, tests and assessments, and anxieties—were found to influence students' selection of learning strategies. Pedagogical implications suggest that instructors should enhance technological integration, provide language support, offer supplementary study materials, and encourage metacognitive activities to motivate students to reflect on their learning experiences. Collaborative learning and a supportive classroom atmosphere are also essential for EMI courses.

**Index Terms**—English-medium instruction (EMI), factors, learning strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

English-medium instruction (EMI) is the practice of using English as the primary language for teaching academic subjects, excluding English itself, in regions where the predominant language differs from English (Macaro et al., 2018). In other words, EMI entails delivering content subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies in English instead of the students' native languages. This instructional approach allows students to cultivate proficiency in their academic disciplines while concurrently improving their English language skills (Dafouz & Camacho-Miñano, 2016; Macaro et al., 2018; Rose et al., 2019).

Over the past few decades, EMI has emerged as a global phenomenon, driven by globalization and internationalization. This trend is notable in tertiary education across various regions worldwide (Dearden, 2014; Macaro et al., 2018), particularly in non-Anglophone countries. Research on EMI has been conducted across different contexts to better understand its implications and challenges. Dearden and Macaro (2016) investigated the perspectives of college instructors in Austria, Italy, and Poland regarding teaching academic subjects in English. Meanwhile, Rose et al. (2020) conducted a comprehensive study on EMI policy and implementation in Chinese higher education, involving surveys of teachers and students, analysis of policy documents, and interviews with stakeholders. Hengsadeekul et al. (2014) explored the attitudes and motivations of Thai undergraduates enrolled in EMI programs, while Tang (2020) examined lecturers' perspectives on EMI challenges and their impacts on Thailand International College. These studies collectively highlight the global reach and significance of EMI, as described by Macaro (2018) as "an unstoppable train that has already left the station" (p. 232).

Due to academic and economic driving forces, the university where this study took place also offers some EMI courses for undergraduate levels. These courses are taught by English-speaking instructors, who are responsible for delivering instruction, creating teaching materials, and assessing students' performances in English. The EMI courses demand students to be proficient in both the subject matter and the English language. However, many students, especially those whose first language isn't English, frequently struggle to balance their academic workload with

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language acquisition. This pressure to excel in both areas can lead to increased anxiety and potentially hinder their academic performance.

Although numerous studies have examined the perceptions, difficulties, and needs of students in an EMI environment (e.g., Corrales et al., 2016; Kym & Kym, 2014; Phuong & Nguyen, 2019; Su & Kong, 2023; Yıldız et al., 2017; Volchenkova, 2023), there remains a gap regarding the learning strategies employed by students in such settings. This gap is particularly notable in the context of the university under investigation, where a significant portion of students demonstrate varying levels of English proficiency, ranging from A2 to C2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Because of this diverse proficiency range, it prompts an inquiry into how these students engage with and thrive in EMI classrooms. Therefore, the primary objectives of this study are to explore the most commonly used learning strategies among students in EMI courses and to investigate the factors influencing students' choices of learning strategies. The findings are expected to inform institutions and instructors on how to provide effective pedagogical approaches and support for EMI students, especially those in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term 'strategies' or 'learning strategies' has been defined in different ways. Oxford (1990) defines learning strategies as intentional efforts undertaken by learners to facilitate their learning to be faster, easier, more pleasant, more self-directed, more efficient, and more transferable to new circumstances, whereas O' Malley and Chamot (1990) went further and defined learning strategies as cognitive processes and actions employed by learners to enhance their understanding, acquisition, and retention of knowledge. O' Malley and Chamot defined learning strategies as a diverse set of tactics encompassing organizing or elaborating on new information during the encoding process, focusing on specific aspects of the new information, analyzing and monitoring information during acquisition, assessing the learning after it is finished, or reassuring oneself that the learning will be successful to reduce anxiety. It can be summed up that learning strategies are conscious and deliberate actions taken by learners to enhance their learning process.

Rubin (1987) differentiated between strategies that directly or indirectly contributed to language learning: learning strategies, communication strategies, and social strategies. According to Rubin, learning strategies play a crucial role in language learning and can be categorized into two main types: cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies encompass a range of techniques aimed at acquiring, interpreting, and integrating linguistic information, comprising six primary strategies: clarification/verification, guessing/inductive inferencing, deductive reasoning, practice, memorization, and monitoring. Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, involve deliberate efforts to organize, oversee, and regulate one's own learning process, thereby enhancing overall efficacy and autonomy. In contrast, communication strategies and social strategies are not directly linked to language learning. Rather, communication strategies emphasize the methods or purposeful plans to convey meaning, exchange ideas, and interact effectively with others, while social strategies are opportunities for learners to practice their knowledge and skills.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) further developed this classification by dividing learning methods into three main categories: cognitive, metacognitive, and social-affective strategies. They explained that cognitive strategies pertain to how the brain processed language, including activities such as rehearsal, organization, inference, summarization, reduction, visualization, transfer, and elaboration. Metacognitive strategies involve reflective consideration of the learning process itself, including selective attention, planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning activities. Social-affective strategies encompass techniques used to manage emotional and social aspects of learning situations, such as cooperation, questioning for clarification, and self-dialogue. While O'Malley and Chamot (1990) provided a valuable framework for understanding learning methods, there might have been some overlaps among these strategies. For example, social-affective strategies, such as negotiating meaning with peers or assessing one's own contributions to group work, might have required cognitive and metacognitive involvement.

Expanding upon these foundational frameworks, Oxford (1990) made a distinction between direct and indirect language learning strategies, providing a nuanced understanding of the various approaches employed by language learners. Oxford (1990) pointed out that direct strategies encompass three principal categories: memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Memory strategies include methods for storing information, such as creating mental associations, utilizing visual and auditory aids, and engaging in systematic review processes, while cognitive strategies involve the mental processes by which learners construct meaning from their learning experiences, including practicing, analyzing, reasoning, encoding and decoding messages, and structuring both input and output. Compensation strategies are the techniques learners utilize to overcome gaps in their linguistic knowledge, such as predicting intelligently and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. On the other hand, indirect strategies comprise metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies involve specific approaches to regulate and optimize the learning process, such as planning, monitoring progress, and maintaining focus. Affective strategies prioritize the emotional and attitudinal aspects of learners during the learning process, aiming to reduce anxiety, foster self-encouragement, and monitor their emotional state. Social strategies equip learners with skills to effectively navigate interpersonal interactions, involving activities such as questioning, collaboration, and empathy.

These frameworks highlight the interconnectedness of cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective components in fostering proficiency in both direct and indirect language acquisition. Therefore, students should use a variety of

strategies in a balanced manner to enhance their efficacy and develop greater autonomy in their learning process. Shi (2017) provided an overview of each framework, as presented in Figure 1.

|                             |                      |                          |                          |                     |                             |        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| Rubin<br>(1987)             | Direct Strategies    |                          |                          | Indirect Strategies |                             |        |
|                             | Learning Strategies  |                          | Communication Strategies |                     | Social Strategies           |        |
|                             | Cognitive Strategies | Metacognitive Strategies |                          |                     |                             |        |
| O'Malley & Chamot<br>(1990) | Cognitive Strategies |                          | Metacognitive Strategies |                     | Social/Affective Strategies |        |
| Oxford<br>(1990)            | Direct Strategies    |                          |                          | Indirect Strategies |                             |        |
|                             | Memory               | Cognitive                | Compensation             | Metacognitive       | Affective                   | Social |

Figure 1. Excerpt From Shi's (2017) Classification of Language Learning Strategies

Several studies shed light on the strategies employed by students in EMI courses. Soruç and Griffiths (2018) explored strategies that students from different backgrounds used to cope with the difficulties of working in International Relations and Psychology classes at a Turkish university. Through qualitative interviews and observations, they found that students employed a variety of strategies to cope with the challenges of EMI, including linguistic strategies (such as code-switching, using dictionaries, and translation tools), cognitive strategies (such as organizing thoughts, asking questions, visualizing, using prior experience, clarifying, and thinking critically), social strategies (such as seeking help from peers and teachers), and affective strategies (such as staying motivated and managing anxiety).

In a similar vein, Ali (2020) examined the coping strategies of Omani students enrolled in an EMI engineering program, particularly addressing issues related to lecture comprehension. The study found that these students employed various techniques to cope with their difficulties, such as seeking help from classmates, using online resources, taking notes, and actively participating in discussions. Additionally, the students often relied on their native language (Arabic) and bilingual dictionaries as a support system when they encountered comprehension challenges in English lectures.

Furthermore, in Wilang's (2022) study on specific anxiety situations and coping strategies of 140 students in full EMI engineering programs, the findings illustrated that students encountered different factors contributing to specific anxiety situations, including communication apprehension, cognitive processing, course difficulties, and fear of failure. To cope with these anxieties, students employed a range of strategies, including reviewing lessons, seeking support from peers and teachers, utilizing online resources, translating, engaging in self-study, and employing relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, positive thinking, and self-motivation.

Meanwhile, Muttaqin and Chuang (2022) assessed the learning expectations, challenges, and strategies of 177 university students in various EMI programs in Indonesia. The results showed that students employed various strategies to cope with challenges, including language-related issues, unfamiliar academic environments, and cultural differences. Initially, students used language learning strategies such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing to enhance their English competence. Additionally, they utilized cognitive and metacognitive techniques, such as managing time, asking for clarification, and adjusting to various learning styles. Social strategies, such as collaborating with peers and seeking help from teachers, were also used. Significantly, students applied digital technology as a tool for academic support and language learning.

Recently, the study conducted by Mao and Peng (2024) examined the use of learning strategies among Chinese university students who took courses taught in English. Their analysis covered multiple aspects, such as the frequency and types of strategies used, factors influencing strategy use, and students' perspectives on strategy efficacy. The results indicated that students commonly employed cognitive techniques, including rehearsal, organization, and elaboration, as well as metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. In addition, the study discovered the utilization of social and affective strategies, such as seeking help from peers or instructors and managing anxiety. However, students mostly relied on cognitive strategies in contrast to other strategies. Moreover, the study highlighted that students' choice of strategies was influenced by their language proficiency, motivation, and cultural background.

Although previous research offers valuable insights into the challenges and support strategies within EMI contexts, there is a scarcity of studies that thoroughly investigate how academic discipline, personal experiences, or institutional factors influence students' selection of learning strategies in EMI courses. This study seeks to complement previous research by analyzing commonly utilized learning strategies and the factors affecting their choices. Examining the primary learning strategies employed by students could strengthen the systematic comprehension of their learning processes in EMI environments. Moreover, examining the factors that affect students' selection of strategies may uncover the contextual components that influence their learning processes in EMI environments. Understanding these features can guide the development of support mechanisms to improve student success in EMI education. Consequently, the study examines two principal research questions: 1) What are the most commonly used learning strategies in EMI courses? and 2) What factors influence students' choice of learning strategies?

### III. METHODS

#### A. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative, inductive approach to explore students' learning strategies and the factors influencing their choices of learning strategies of undergraduate students in EMI programs. Focus-group interviews served as the primary tool of data collection as they could allow in-depth discussions and generate comprehensive qualitative data on students' experiences and perspectives on learning strategies. Furthermore, inductive approach allows researchers to draw broad conclusions that lead to the discovery of new themes and insights which have not been previously considered (Thomas, 2003).

#### B. Participants

A total of 40 undergraduate students voluntarily participated in this study. They were from three different disciplines: medicine (n=14), civil engineering (n=13), and mechanical engineering (n=13). All participants enrolled in the EMI courses at a university in northeastern of Thailand and had mix abilities of English proficiency levels, ranging from A2 to C2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale. The principal rationale for selecting these three departments was their exclusive utilization of English as the medium of instruction, including all instructional materials and the language of instruction. Consequently, the participants were more capable of providing in-depth responses based on their experiences in EMI compared to students from other disciplines, especially in this context. The participants were those who indicated a willingness and interest in the research topic. Their demographic information was represented in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

| Groups   | Nationalities of participants (pseudonyms)                                             | Departments            | Year of study          | CEFR levels |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|
| Group 1  | • 3 Thai (Nan, Pek, Ging)                                                              | Medicine               | 2nd and 3rd year       | A2          |
| Group 2  | • 4 Thai (Fah, Ken, Namtarn, Tung)                                                     | Medicine               | 3rd year               | B1          |
| Group 3  | • 3 Thai (Phom, Boon, Olive)                                                           | Medicine               | 3rd year               | B2          |
| Group 4  | • 4 Thai (Alice, Aoy, Natty, Ying)                                                     | Medicine               | 3rd year               | C1-C2       |
| Group 5  | • 4 Thai (Gaew, Lora, Mana, Anne)                                                      | Civil engineering      | 4th year               | B2          |
| Group 6  | • 4 Filipino (Cherry, Wilson, Jay, Opal)                                               | Civil engineering      | 2nd year               | C1          |
| Group 7  | • 3 Thai (Oat, Amp, Tony)                                                              | Civil engineering      | 3rd year               | C2          |
| Group 8  | • 1 Burmese (Mona)<br>• 1 Cambodian (Dave)                                             | Civil engineering      | 2nd year               | C1-C2       |
| Group 9  | • 5 Thai (Boom, Ivy, Lek, Joy, Bee)                                                    | Mechanical engineering | 1st and 2nd year       | A1-A2       |
| Group 10 | • 1 Thai (Dara)<br>• 1 Lao (Ohm)<br>• 2 Filipino (Dennis, Sara)<br>• 1 Cambodian (Yue) | Mechanical engineering | 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year | B1-B2       |
| Group 11 | • 2 Thai (Sirisuk, Amnat)<br>• 1 Cambodian (Olie)                                      | Mechanical engineering | 3rd year and 4th year  | C1-C2       |

Notes: A1 (Beginner), A2 (Elementary English), B1 (Intermediate English), B2 (Upper-Intermediate English), C1 (Advanced English), C2 (Proficiency English)

#### C. Research Instruments

The primary instrument in this study was focus group interviews. After an extensive literature review, three primary themes emerged, guiding the creation of a semi-structured interview guide: 1) The learning strategies employed by participants (including language acquisition, cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies), (2) their experiences in EMI courses, and (3) the challenges they encountered. Three researchers thoroughly verified these themes for their relevance to the study and cross-referenced them with prior research to ensure comprehensiveness. This semi-structured interview guide allowed participants to elaborate on their responses and facilitated a thorough exploration of such issues. Thai students were interviewed in Thai, while international students were interviewed in English. Thai students' responses were subsequently translated into English by three researchers to ensure accuracy and consistency. Each focus group interview took approximately one and a half hours. It was audio-recorded and transcribed before undergoing thematic analysis.

#### D. Data Collection and Analysis

After obtaining permission from lecturers, the researchers visited EMI classrooms in three faculties, Medicine, Civil Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering, to explain the study's purpose, procedures, significance, and informed consent process. Students interested in participating were invited to join focus group interviews after their classes. As a result, 40 students agreed to participate, all providing informed consent before the interviews. Once the data were collected, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to identify the most commonly used learning strategies and the factors influencing students' choices of strategies. In this process, the interview data were coded into themes and analyzed using an inductive approach. Member checking was incorporated to allow participants to review

and validate the analysis for accuracy. Excerpts from student interviews were emphasized to highlight the shared experiences of EMI students within this specific context.

#### E. Ethical Considerations

This study received ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Students' participation was voluntary, and they provided informed consent only after being fully informed of the research aims and procedures. Participation had no influence on their course grades, and students were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

### IV. RESULTS

#### A. Learning Strategies Used by EMI Students

The data obtained from focus group interviews were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The data reveal a diverse range of approaches categorized as language-focused, cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective strategies. Key excerpts from the forty participants were then selected to highlight and support the emergent themes. The most common learning strategies reported by EMI students are summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
THE SUMMARY OF THE MOST COMMON LEARNING STRATEGIES USED BY EMI STUDENTS

| Learning strategies         | Sub-strategies                   | Study techniques                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Language-focused strategies | Vocabulary Building              | Used online and offline dictionaries to find the definitions of terminologies.                                                   |
|                             |                                  | Used Google Translate to translate words or sentences.                                                                           |
|                             | Language Proficiency Development | Enrolled in English for Medicine or general English courses.                                                                     |
|                             |                                  | Read English novels or watched English movies and series.                                                                        |
| Cognitive strategies        | Reviewing                        | Attended a writing training course to improve writing skills.                                                                    |
|                             |                                  | Reviewed the lessons after class.                                                                                                |
|                             |                                  | Reviewed the lessons before class.                                                                                               |
|                             | Using Technology                 | Reviewed notes taken in Thai language after class.                                                                               |
|                             |                                  | Learned from online resources (e.g., YouTube, e-books, websites, papers).                                                        |
|                             |                                  | Learned from applications (e.g., Osmosis, Atlas).                                                                                |
|                             | Finding main ideas or keywords   | Learned from relevant computer software/programs (e.g., AutoCAD, SketchUp).                                                      |
|                             | Searching for visual aids        | Found main ideas or keywords when studying or doing exams.                                                                       |
| Metacognitive strategies    | Listening actively               | Searched for pictures or flow charts to help understand the complex ideas.                                                       |
|                             | Monitoring                       | Stayed focused when listening to lectures in English.                                                                            |
|                             | Planning                         | Highlighted or noted down any points that were hard to grasp for further study and research.                                     |
| Social strategies           | Seeking Help                     | Checked the course syllabus or course description to get an overview of lessons.                                                 |
|                             |                                  | Asked friends about difficult content and vocabulary.                                                                            |
| Affective strategies        | Adapting                         | Asked lecturers about terminologies.                                                                                             |
|                             | Changing mindset                 | Took time to become familiar with the EMI courses.                                                                               |
|                             |                                  | Believed that even though the EMI courses were challenging, they could be beneficial for developing English and thinking skills. |

#### (a). Language-Focused Strategies

Language-focused strategies were critical for students to bridge the gap between their current English proficiency and the demands of EMI courses. Students predominantly used language-focused strategies to enhance their understanding of English, particularly vocabulary building and language proficiency development. They relied heavily on dictionaries to comprehend technical terms and unfamiliar words, frequently employing tools like Google Translate for quick translations. In fact, every participant reported that dictionaries, including Google Translate, were crucial in translating both individual words and complete phrases and sentences, significantly enhancing their comprehension of the English-taught content.

*When I encounter difficult words, I use the dictionary to translate them. If I can't find the words in the dictionary, I look them up on Google or a reliable website that isn't Wikipedia. Knowing vocabulary helps me understand the lessons better. (Oat, group 7)*

*If there were any words or phrases I didn't understand, I had to translate them first so I wouldn't waste time in the classroom. (Tung, group 2)*

To improve their overall language skills, most Thai students reported that they required much time to get used to the EMI environment. One of strategies that assisted them to get through this was enrolling in different English language courses, including English for Academic Purposes, English Writing Courses, English for Engineering, and English for Medicine. Students reported that these courses helped them to have a solid foundation of language knowledge before they fully engaged in full EMI. In addition, many participants from engineering reported that they supplemented their learning by consuming English-language media, including novels, movies, and series, and attending writing training courses to bolster their writing abilities. The usefulness of English language courses was mentioned below.

*The English for Medicine course was very helpful. It taught me a lot of new words, especially medical ones. (Pek, group 1)*

*I used to struggle with writing. It was hard for me to express my thoughts clearly. But, after taking a writing course, I've improved a lot. Now, I can write much better and share my ideas more easily. (Ivy, group 9)*

(b). Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies employed by the students reflected a structured approach to mastering course. A majority of the participants regularly reviewed their lessons both before and after classes, with some preferring to review notes taken in Thai to reinforce their understanding and retention. Excerpts are illustrated below.

*When I want to understand something better or if there's a point in the lesson that I didn't quite grasp, I go back and review it after class. Reviewing after class helps solidify my understanding. And, if I have time, I usually review before class as well. Sometimes I'll review the PowerPoint slides that the teacher sent us beforehand, which helps me follow along better during the lecture. (Mana, group 5)*

*When I encounter difficult content, I review it just like my friends do. Sometimes, reading the notes I've taken in Thai also helps. Even though we learn in English, I sometimes translate certain points into Thai. It makes it easier to understand, and when I review, I can remember it better. (Olive, group 3)*

Remarkably, the use of technology played a crucial role in their study habits. All participants reported that they used online resources such as YouTube, e-books, and websites to help facilitate their understanding of the subject matter. They mentioned that learning in EMI was challenging, and using these supplementary materials helped them significantly in grasping complex concepts. Particularly, many engineering students employed specialized software programs relevant to their studies, such as AutoCAD and SketchUp, to practice their engineering skills. Likewise, the majority of medical students, regardless of their English proficiency levels, utilized medical mobile applications, such as Osmosis and Atlas, to access comprehensive information and interactive materials. The incorporation of videos and images within these applications greatly facilitated their comprehension of medical concepts, as well as the etiology and pathology of various diseases. The following key excerpts showcase how students utilized technology in their learning process.

*If the content is complicated, I prefer to use Osmosis, a medical app, to know more because it shows information about the causes, treatments, and videos describing the nature of the disease. It summarizes the content in short. The letters are cute and easy to read. It's very convenient and helpful. (Fah, group 2)*

*After class, if I don't understand, I will go to YouTube for a more simplified explanation. Then, I summarize by writing the steps to solve the problems. Also, Coursera is a good and simple online learning resources. If I want to know about some specific engineering topics, I take a look at this website, too. (Dennis, group 10)*

Furthermore, when faced with lengthy and complex content during the examinations and study sessions, more than half of the participants from low and medium English levels preferred to find the main idea, central theme, or keywords when reading English texts or listening to English lectures. This helped them grasp the lesson more easily and pinpoint the important areas they needed to focus on. Active listening was another common method since it assisted students to keep attention and understand the teacher's explanations and instructions better. Furthermore, flow charts and images were also frequently employed as visual aids to simplify complex and abstract concepts. The excerpts are given as follows.

*Most of the time, when I'm studying, I try to grasp the main points or identify the keywords in the lessons. This facilitates me to understand the material more easily and stay focused on the key concepts. (Anne, group 5)*

*In pathology, we have to learn about the disease process, right? So, when I don't understand, I will go to applications like Calgary Guide, and type in the name of the disease I am interested in. It will appear as a flow chart explaining the disease in English. It helps me understand the process step by step. (Nan, group 1)*

(c). *Metacognitive Strategies*

Metacognitive strategies revealed students' self-awareness and their ability to regulate their own learning processes. Surprisingly, not many students mentioned their process to regulate their own learning. There were only two sub strategies reported by a small number of students. They reported that they commonly highlighted or noted down difficult parts for additional study and investigation. They also strategically planned by reviewing course syllabi or descriptions to have a general picture of forthcoming courses, enabling them to prepare more effectively.

*If I don't understand something I've learned, I'll mark it and read it again or search for more details. (Natty, group 4)*

(d). *Social Strategies*

Social strategies highlighted the collaborative nature of learning in EMI courses. When facing difficult content or unfamiliar vocabulary, both engineering and medical students reached out for assistance. However, there was a difference since most medical students, regardless of their level of language competency, asked their peers for help. Among engineering students, on the other hand, it was mostly those with low to medium English proficiency (CEFR levels: A1-B2) who asked friends for help more frequently than those with high language competency. Surprisingly, few students sought advice from their teachers. Only a minority of medical students reported that they sought clarification from teachers, when unsure about specialized terminology, whereas some engineering students asked for help from their teachers when they did not understand the lessons.

*When I don't understand the content, I always ask my friends for help. They are really nice. They help me all the time. (Lek, group 9)*

*Whenever I have a problem during learning, I always ask my friends for help. (Yue, group 10)*

(e). *Affective Strategies*

Students employed affective strategies to cope with the emotional and psychological challenges of EMI courses. They admitted feeling nervous initially when studying in EMI, but they knew they had to motivate themselves and work on self-improvement. Over time, they gradually adapted themselves to the new learning environment. Additionally, many of them made a conscious effort to change their mindset, recognizing that despite the difficulties, EMI courses could significantly contribute to the development of their English language skills. The relevant excerpts are provided below.

*Because my skills aren't good enough yet, I don't find studying enjoyable. But I always tell myself that I have to do it, I have to improve myself to understand it. (Bee, group 9)*

*Throughout my studies from the first to the third year, it's been quite exhausting. It's all new material that I never encountered in high school. Since I decided to pursue this path myself even though it's hard, I have to keep going. If I give up, it'll cause problems. (Boon, group 3)*

*It's like challenging myself. I mean, I studied English and used it a lot in high school, but after entering university, I might have forgotten some of it. Now, studying medical subjects in English feels like a way to refresh my knowledge. It's a challenge to see what I've forgotten and what new words I can learn to improve myself. (Alice, group 4)*

B. *The Choices of Learning Strategies*

The analysis revealed four key factors influencing students' selection of learning strategies in EMI classes: language barriers, content-related factors, the influence of tests and assessments, and anxieties. The results are demonstrated as follows.

(a). *Language Barriers*

The most relevant factor mentioned by students was language barriers. Many students identified vocabulary, English grammar, and English skills as elements impacting their EMI classroom learning experiences. Most students expressed that they had language difficulties, so they needed to find ways to manage these problems. Specifically, several students belonging to the CEFR B1-B2 levels had explicitly stated that technical terms in the text were the main obstacle impeding their understanding. The following excerpt sheds some light on how students evaluated the terminology as challenging.

*I could bring up the subject of xxx. I found it challenging to keep up with the content, especially when it was in English. There were many complex terms involved. If I had had the chance to do it again, I would have focused more on preparing for those terms. (Lora, group 5)*

Furthermore, many students with moderate to high English proficiency (CEFR levels B1-C2) reported that their limited grammar and vocabulary negatively impacted their comprehension of the materials, as the English content was often more advanced than their proficiency levels. This hindered their ability to fully engage within the EMI courses. This excerpt highlights a struggle across all language skills.

*When it comes to reading, I face the same issue as I do with listening and speaking, which is vocabulary. My vocabulary is quite weak, and it creates difficulties for me in reading, speaking, writing, and listening. (Ohm, group 10)*

As a result, students typically used the primary strategies to address the difficulties and develop their proficiency by translating, code-switching, using bilingual resources, enrolling in extra English courses, seeking help, and immersing themselves in English environment.

*(b). Content-Related Factors*

The second most mentioned was the difficulty and complexity of the content. Students expressed that the content was already challenging to learn in their first language (L1), and it was even more challenging when taught in English. They specified that some subjects were inherently difficult, and when explained them by using English, understand them caused more complication. Furthermore, some students pointed out that the English pronunciations and accents of different teachers also affected their comprehension. Each teacher had their own unique way of speaking, with varying levels of clarity, and this could impact the depth of their understanding. Accordingly, students supplemented their learning through independent study to bridge this gap. Notably, a number of medical students also revealed concerns that the teaching time allocated was not adequate with the excessive amount of content. They cited the example of the male pathology subject, which was expected to be completed within a three-hour. Given the vast amount of medical information involved, they felt that three hours were insufficient for proper learning and comprehension. As a result, they were compelled to seek additional information for further reading. The aforementioned reasons resonated with the opinions expressed by engineering students, as evidenced by the subsequent statement.

*The thing is, we only have twelve weeks to cover a ton of material for one course, and it's not enough. Plus, we only get a one-week break between trimesters, so we're often completely wiped out. And honestly, the time we have to study before exams just isn't enough either. (Olie, group 11)*

*(c). The Influence of Tests and Assessments*

Students across all focus groups, even with high proficiency ones, reported that the exams were difficult. Their negative attitudes were presented in this part. Students revealed that they lacked confidence in English usage, especially productive skills: speaking and writing. They tended to think in their mother tongue (Thai) before translating into English. Thus, it was difficult to express their ideas in written tests sometimes. During the examinations, many students were required to employ thinking skills to analyze and solve the problems, remember vocabulary, and practice with past papers to become familiar with the exam questions. Students stated as follows.

*The exam is very difficult. Sometimes we do the test that we have never done in the class before. How can we do the exam? So, I just click whatever choice on the test (guess). (Joy, group 9)*

*We have to do the exam in English for both university and national license examinations. It is quite challenging. We have to know both content and language to understand the exam questions. I have to read and remember a lot of terminology. (Alice, group 4)*

*The exam is very difficult. I need to prepare by reading the slides and searching for more information on the internet, Google, or e-book. I search for technical words and look at the illustrations to make them easier to remember. I think I need to find a lot of vocabulary to prepare for studying and taking exams. (Natty, group 4)*

*(d). Anxiety-Related Factors*

Students with limited backgrounds in EMI and low proficiency reported that they frequently felt anxious and lost confidence when they could not grasp the lectures or the materials. They were afraid that they were unable to answer the teacher's questions. Consequently, they had to take time to adapt themselves, check the course syllabus to get an overview of the lessons, review the materials, stay focused during lectures, and mark or highlight sections they did not understand to reduce their nervousness. The following excerpts illustrated their feelings.

*Reviewing the lessons helps me to reduce anxiety. I felt upset when I couldn't catch up with the lessons in class. It was like when the teacher was teaching something, and I didn't understand it; it was distracting. I couldn't move on. (Ken, group 2)*



*Sometimes, I feel nervous about answering questions in class. So, I have to listen carefully and pay attention to the teacher. (Dara, group 10)*

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings accentuate the necessity of students having adequate language skills in order to effectively study and understand contents with English instruction. It is evident that students with language difficulties frequently encounter multiple academic challenges in terms of comprehending lectures, capturing course materials, articulating ideas, and performing satisfactorily in examinations; all of these could exacerbate a student's anxiety in EMI courses. This study, in line with the findings of Ali (2020), highlighted the significant use of dictionaries by students as a primary strategy to enhance their vocabulary acquisition and comprehension of academic and technical content and language. In contrast, this present study further reveals that students not only widely employed dictionaries and translation tools, especially Google Translate, but also participated in language programs as a key method to improve their English proficiency. The widespread use of these coping strategies can be attributed to the significant linguistic gaps between English and the students' native languages (e.g., Burmese, Cambodian, Lao, Tagalog, Thai). Even though translating is the primary step for initial comprehension, frequent translations may prevent students from the acquisition of more advanced language skills. Therefore, pedagogical practices should aim to reduce their reliance on translation and foster direct comprehension. Lecturers may integrate active or collaborative learning as a means for students to solve problems or discuss in English. These meaningful approaches could enable students to utilize English more spontaneously.

Besides affecting comprehension of the content, language difficulties also influence students' performance on exams by hindering their ability to accurately interpret questions and effectively express their knowledge. Specifically, even when students grasp the content well, difficulties in understanding or expressing themselves in English can prevent exams from accurately reflecting their true potential. Studies have shown that students typically score higher on exams in their native language compared to those in English, and this could highlight the negative impact of language barriers on academic performance (Bälter et al., 2023; Li & Wu, 2018). In addition, the pressure to perform well on exams can create additional anxiety and stress for students. To ensure fair assessment, teachers should consider students' language proficiency when designing and evaluating exams. Teachers may provide language support and accommodations, such as allowing extra time or the use of offline dictionaries, to help students feel at ease during the testing process.

Cognitive strategies were shown to be the most employed learning approach, mostly due to the challenging nature of the course content and the associated language challenges. To overcome these obstacles, students adopted a variety of strategies, specifically lesson review and technological use, to gain a deeper understanding of the course. The integration of digital resources and specialized software is consistent with research findings that highlight how technology can improve the outcomes of EMI programs (Ali, 2020; Muttaqin & Chuang, 2022; Vo, 2021; Wilang, 2022). Interestingly, some students chose to take notes in their L1 (first language) as a comprehension aid. This bilingual approach is consistent with research findings by Ali (2020) and the work by Cummins (2008) on bilingual education. It demonstrates a resourceful strategy that students employ to bridge the language gap and develop a more profound comprehension of the subject matter. Thus, employing the L1 as a language support tool could effectively scaffold students' content and language learning within the EMI context.

Surprisingly, it is concerning that both medical and engineering students demonstrated low engagement in metacognitive strategies, such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating their learning processes. This finding contradicts previous research by Mao and Peng (2024), which founds that EMI Chinese students commonly used metacognitive techniques to enhance their academic performance. The limited use of these strategies in the current study may indicate a lack of awareness or understanding of how to effectively implement them. In addition, the technical demands of EMI programs may lead students to prioritize cognitive and language-focused strategies over metacognitive ones. In other words, the dual challenges of complex content and language barriers may result in cognitive overload that reduces students' opportunities to engage in metacognitive activities.

Both EMI medical and engineering students commonly employed social strategies, particularly seeking assistance from friends. Peer support aligns with socio-constructivist learning theories, which emphasize the significance of social interactions in knowledge construction (Vygotsky, 1978). Engaging in discussions with peers allows students to learn collaboratively, correct misunderstandings, and aid their understanding of the subject matter. This result aligns with various studies exploring peer support within the EMI context (e.g., Ali, 2020; Mao & Peng, 2024; Muttaqin & Chuang, 2022; Soruç & Griffiths, 2018; Wilang, 2022). Nevertheless, the results showed that few students asked teachers for assistance, most likely because they lacked confidence or fear of judgment when asking questions in class. Some students did approach teachers when faced with unfamiliar terminologies or complex contents. This behavior reflects the importance of teacher support that is essential for grasping core contents of challenging material.

In addition, research findings revealed that many students enrolled in EMI programs experienced anxieties, partly due to their unfamiliarity with the learning system and limited language proficiency. Most students had transitioned from L1-based high school curricula to English-taught programs at the university level. So, those with limited EMI background and proficiency frequently experience several types of anxiety, including speaking anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and general language anxiety (Le, 2023). High anxiety levels can discourage students from engaging in

classroom activities, limiting their active participation and opportunities to practice both subject matter and language skills. This can negatively impact their overall learning experience and performance on assessments.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were (1) to explore the most common learning strategies employed by students in EMI classrooms and (2) to analyze the factors that influence students' selection of strategies. A total of forty students were involved in the focus groups interviews as part of the qualitative methodology. It was found that the participants mainly utilized cognitive, language-focused, social, and affective strategies. However, few of them used metacognitive strategies. In addition, it was also discovered that language barriers, content-related factors, the influence of tests and assessments, and anxieties remarkably influenced students' choices of strategies. These findings deepen our understanding of the connections between factors and learning strategies and how they impact EMI students' educational experiences. Based on the results and discussions, several pedagogical implications can be drawn for the curriculum and classroom practices as follows.

- Instructors should enhance technological integration in their classes since students heavily rely on online resources and applications to supplement their learning. The instructors can provide or suggest educational applications, websites, and platforms that suit the specific needs of students in each discipline.
- Language barriers pose significant factors for students in EMI programs. Institutes or instructors, therefore, should offer language support programs based on students' needs, including vocabulary-building activities, language immersion opportunities, and additional language courses. Proficiency in English can enhance students' confidence to use language in the classroom.
- Since many students prefer reviewing their learning materials, instructors should provide materials beforehand to help students prepare for their class. Furthermore, extra reading lists can be offered to help students explore the topics discussed in class in-depth.
- The limited use of metacognitive strategies indicates a lack of recognition and comprehension among students of these strategies. Instructors should provide students with opportunities to practice and reflect on their learning processes, helping them to utilize metacognitive skills, such as planning, monitoring, and assessing.
- Peer support plays a crucial role in both medical and engineering education. Instructors, thus, should create more opportunities for collaborative learning, such as group discussions or peer tutoring programs. In particular, instructors should effectively build a supportive and positive classroom atmosphere to motivate students to seek help from teachers and ensure they feel at ease when asking questions in class.

In terms of limitations, since the study was conducted at a single university in Thailand, this may hinder the generalization of the findings, and the study involved forty participants. This small sample size may not fully reflect the diverse perspectives and experiences of the student population. It is recommended for further research to recruit more participants or adopt a mixed methods approach by integrating quantitative analysis from surveys or academic performance assessments, alongside qualitative methods. This combination could offer a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning strategies in EMI courses. In addition, future studies could explore the effectiveness of specific learning strategies, assess how these strategies influence academic achievement, and investigate the application of technology-enhanced learning in EMI settings. These examinations would offer practical insights for EMI lecturers as well as curriculum designers to enrich the learning experiences of their students.

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# ICT-Based Teaching Aids to Enhance English Language Proficiency of Indian Engineering Students

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**Abstract**—Technology has provided access to a wide variety of teaching tools, including digital tools like Google Classroom, Quizlet, Zoom, Kahoot, and Nearpod, as well as older technology like radio, television, video, and computers for those who are both teaching and learning the English language. Even before personal computers first became a common household item in the 1990s, many people believed they would revolutionize education, and using computer-based instruction and learning for the study of languages was no exception. Nevertheless, ICT-based English language learning has only recently become available in India. Technology is currently used in many educational institutions to teach subjects like languages. Consequently, technology in general and information and communication technology (ICT) in particular have made it possible for everyone around the globe to learn for themselves. Therefore, the focus of the researchers nowadays is on utilizing particular ICT-based instructional materials to improve the English language skills of engineering students from rural backgrounds. In the modern day, obtaining a job no longer solely depends on subject-matter expertise. Without a doubt, Rural Background Engineering (RBE) students must be skilled communicators in English these days in order to find employment. This paper focuses on the effective use of technology to enhance Indian RBE students English language instruction within a result-focused context. Therefore, integrating technology into language instruction offers clear benefits that pertain to both language education and preparing pupils for today's information culture.

**Index Terms**—digital technology, digital tools, ICT, English language learning, communication and information

## I. INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, the ability to communicate through language is necessary. It is a crucial and universal part of every society's cultural framework. These days, English has become the language of global society due to the sheer volume and geographic diversity of its speakers, as well as the significant number of non-native speakers who use it for at least some of their international communication. As such, it is the most widely used form of international communication.

The emphasis of the current research is on the crucial function that instructional materials play in the teaching of English. The effectiveness of some contemporary teaching tools is discussed, as well as how they might be used to teach and learn languages.

A teacher's use of teaching aids can make it easier for him or her to help students understand a concept. The utilization of hearing and sight are components of teaching aids. Through their research, scientists have estimated that 86% of a person's learning process depends on their senses, which begins right after birth when a baby initially seeks to learn things through his or her senses. He or she first recognizes his or her mother and other family members through the sense of sight. The newborn gradually gains the ability to hear sounds and learn how to respond to them, which eventually aids the baby in speaking simple words. Following that, the child's perception is influenced by their senses, and most scientists believe that sense-based learning lasts longer than mechanical learning.

The student's hearing and vision will be used in conjunction with audio-visual aids for the aim of learning English through modern technology. This will guarantee efficient and speedy learning. For instance, pupils believe that a social studies teacher's lessons will be more engaging and realistic if he or she adopts a globe model that allows them to more successfully study things like the Earth's many features, including its shape and its latitudes, longitudes, and poles. The teacher's time is saved while delivering the lesson, and the students' learning is strengthened and sustained. As another example, when explaining the human digestive system to students, a biology teacher may do so by sketching a diagram of it on the board.

By bringing vivid reality into the classroom, these technological aids will help to open new doors to learning. When teaching biology class, for instance, the students were shown specimens of diverse animals and plants kept in sealed bottles. This sparked their interest and passion and increased the depth and breadth of their learning. When learning is done practically, it is easier for slow learners or people with attention issues to retain information. Observing a scientist use equipment independently to conduct experiments, create charts and models, and so on gives participants firsthand experience. Teaching is made more engaging by using audio-visual tools. They help teachers conserve their time and energy.

## II. TEACHING AIDS

The use of ICT-based teaching aids in English language learning is the most suitable teaching tool to enhance language skills. Recently, technology has provided education with a vast range of teaching aids in the process of learning a language, such as tape recordings, film strips, film projectors, radios, televisions, videos, and computers. In the 1990s, personal computers became household items, and people thought that computers would eventually revolutionize education, and language learning was no exception. Though in India this came into fruition a little later than the rest of the world, it is not too late to adopt technology-based language learning, and specifically ICT-based English language learning and teaching. Several educational institutions have adopted technology for imparting knowledge, including languages. Hence, technology in general and information and communication technology (ICT) in particular have enabled self-learning in all areas of the world.

### A. Video-Based Instruction

Technology has created numerous opportunities for both teachers and students to benefit from access to the internet, computers, and proper guidance. The integration of video conferencing in classrooms has been particularly advantageous for students. This allows for synchronized collaboration, where multiple desktop computers in the same location are connected to a system, enabling group participation. All desktops have internet connectivity, allowing an instructor to communicate with a "classroom" of students, each working from their own workstation with an internet connection. A significant advantage of this setup is that students no longer need to be physically present in the same room; they can interact with teachers and peers from various locations. The instructor can control the students' computers, guiding them through exercises, information searches, or collaborative projects with remotely located students. The instructor can deliver both pre-prepared and new information to the students, whether by typing, using voice, or through real-time digital video. This networked environment introduces a new dimension to teaching and learning, where access to web-based information is crucial for both teachers and students to remain competitive in their academic and professional pursuits. According to the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Report, information and communication technology (ICT) plays a vital role in human activities, breaking barriers to knowledge, participation, and economic opportunities. Indeed, the rapid advancements in ICT have introduced new ways of managing, distributing, and utilizing information, and the UN report notes that "ICT is closely linked with globalization, creating a new paradigm known as the network age. In this context, school counselors are increasingly using computer technology to help eliminate institutional and environmental barriers that hinder students' academic success" (Ocampo, 2002, p. 23).

### B. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Literacy

ICT literacy emphasizes the importance of students developing skills that enable them to think critically, analyze information, communicate, collaborate, and solve problems, all of which are crucial in today's knowledge-based society. Technology plays a key role in fostering these learning skills, and the "six critical areas of proficiency are necessary for students to fully integrate ICT into counseling programs, which are essential for success in the workplace" (Tinio, 2002, p. 47).

1. Students must be able to express themselves not only through traditional means like paper and pencil but also using audio, video, animation, and design software.

2. Students need the ability to analyze and interpret large sets of data.
3. Students should grasp the capabilities, limitations, and underlying assumptions of various data representation systems, such as computational models and simulations, which are increasingly influential across many disciplines.
4. Students must efficiently manage multitasking, make informed choices, and prioritize tasks across different technological applications, allowing them to seamlessly navigate teams, assignments, and communities of practice.
5. Students need to apply their knowledge and skills to new situations effectively.
6. Students must be aware of and able to implement strategies to recognize, identify, and manage 21st-century risks.

For teachers implementing technology in the classroom, four key principles can guide the process: first, teachers must understand the distinct roles that they and the technology they use play in the learning process. Second, when adopting new technologies, it is important to move beyond the initial excitement and consider the pedagogical reasons for their use. Third, educators must choose technology that supplements and enhances what the teacher is already doing and not be used as a replacement for teachers. Finally, it is important to remember that, as noted before, “the effectiveness of tools like interactive whiteboards depends on how they are used, not just on the technology itself” (Jonxes, 1986, p. 171).

Incorporating technology in teaching language learners offers unique advantages that extend beyond language education to preparing students for modern information society. Computer technologies and the internet are powerful aids in language teaching, as web technology is deeply integrated into today's social fabric. This allows language learners to enhance their skills through activities like writing emails and conducting online research.

### C. E-Learning

E-learning suggests that “effectively utilizing the Internet to gather relevant information requires an understanding of how information is organized, along with critical thinking skills that help users make informed decisions” (Masagca & Londerio, 2009, p. 12). It also necessitates a practical knowledge of Internet notations. Essential skills for this process include searching for information, scanning and skimming content, and employing strategies like planning, monitoring, and evaluating during the search. As a result, the Internet has become a vast repository of valuable information in education. Therefore, it is crucial to teach students a broad range of internet literacy skills, from verifying the authenticity of online content to using various search strategies and techniques. This approach ensures that the Internet's full potential as a learning tool is harnessed to enhance teaching practices in schools.

### D. Learning in An Outcome Alert Environment

To create a successful teaching and learning program in an outcome-focused environment that integrates technology in English, it is essential to:

- Encourage innovative and student-centered learning approaches.
- Expand both individual and group learning programs by acknowledging the diverse needs and learning styles of students.
- Develop a balanced mix of open-ended tasks.
- Incorporate the use of technology into student learning outcomes.
- Provide opportunities for integrated learning or cross-curricular connections.
- Ensure that technology enhances the teaching and learning program, increasing its overall effectiveness.
- Adopt an inquiry-based and problem-solving approach to learning.
- Offer students the chance to evaluate and shape technological advancements.

Additionally, the traditional employer-centered workplace with predefined jobs and career paths has evolved into a worker-designed environment, where individuals create their own assignments and seamlessly integrate technical skills with a broad intellectual toolkit, enriched by experience, roles, team-building, and knowledge.

### E. Multi-Media-Based Approach

The emergence of multimedia computer technology has significantly increased the potential for career interventions, especially for at-risk youth. Interactive, computer-mediated environments enable students to explore better ways to address challenges related to learning, reading, and other skills. This approach is grounded in three main premises: (1) individuals act based on the meanings that things and people hold for them; (2) these meanings are derived from or emerge through social interactions; and (3) these meanings are employed in an interpretive process when individuals engage with things and others. In the context of school counseling, ICT is applied in several ways: through storing, encoding, and preparing materials and documents related to counseling; through retrieving, distributing, and utilizing data and information specifically related to counseling; and through supporting entertainment, leisure, and recreational activities.

Currently, it notes that the traditional language lab, which historically focused on audio, has evolved to incorporate new technologies, thereby addressing the needs of modern teachers and learners. Additionally, language departments are now exploring even more computer-based alternatives to traditional multimedia delivery methods. For example, starting in the mid-1990s, audio and video have been digitized and stored on video-capable file servers, allowing for more versatile access (Scinicariello, 1997, p. 185).

The language lab was originally designed to provide both in-class and independent access to analog audio, typically in the form of audiocassettes. A notable enhancement to this traditional setup is the ability to “bookmark” challenging segments of a tape, allowing students to revisit them later. Additionally, response analyzers can automatically generate student test scores upon the completion of an exercise or test. Some systems even enable simultaneous access to tracks of an audio tape for practicing interpretation, where multiple users can access different segments of a video or audio clip from their computers simultaneously. Another advantage is that a single computer station no longer needs a dedicated videodisc player or other peripherals; students at any networked station in the lab can directly access multimedia resources from the server. This server-based arrangement allows teachers and learners in remote locations with network access to use instructional materials. Smart classrooms, equipped to display videos, videodiscs, and computer outputs to a room full of students, enable faculty to integrate networked lab resources into their regular instruction.

While these technological advancements offer numerous pedagogical benefits, educators must also be aware of potential limitations when using technology as a teaching tool. Understanding the challenges of conducting internet-based lessons allows teachers to plan effectively, ensuring a meaningful and engaging learning experience for students. One issue is that students often head straight to the web without waiting for guidance from a teacher or librarian, leading to difficulties in navigating the web and finding relevant information for their homework tasks. This can be time-consuming, and students may struggle to distinguish between credible websites and those that appear credible but offer biased or inaccurate information. As a result, institutions face the challenge of teaching students not only the value of having vast amounts of information readily available on the internet but also the critical evaluation skills needed to assess that information.

In addition to understanding the strengths and weaknesses of internet-based lessons, teachers must also contend with practical constraints that may hinder the effective implementation of these lessons. One significant barrier is time, as students may not have sufficient access to computers with internet connectivity to dedicate a specific block of time to online activities. In today's knowledge-based economies, the ability to search for and retrieve information from the web is crucial. Successfully locating appropriate information on the internet requires a variety of skills, including the ability to use internet tools like search engines, knowledge of search techniques such as browsing through information trees, and the capability to execute effective searches.

In technological institutions affiliated with Jawaharlal Technological University, in addition to theoretical instruction, three periods are allotted weekly for the practical course English Language Communication Skills Lab for each branch of the university, where students are exposed to various topics related to learning the English language through computer systems. All technological colleges provide practical knowledge using specialized English software. The English Language and Communication Skills Lab monitors and guides students in enhancing their skills through this software. Students listen to recorded lessons and can even record their own voices in return. The lab is equipped with facilities that allow teachers to listen to individual students and communicate with them as needed. Teachers offer guidance from a console, and students have the opportunity to assess their own performance. If a student is not satisfied with their progress, they can repeat the exercise or listen to the examples again.

### III. DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES OF TEACHING AIDS

The benefits of using audio-visual aids in instruction are as follows:

- They make the classroom atmosphere dynamic and allow students to interact directly with objects.
- They lessen reliance on a second language excessively.
- They assist in avoiding overly verbose, pointless, and ineffective language use when teaching English.
- By stimulating all of the learner's senses, they aid in improving memory.
- They make the topic matter clear.
- They inspire a desire to study new things.

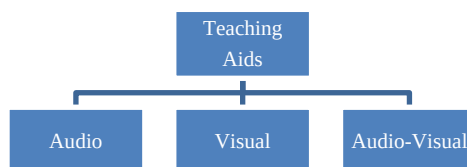


Figure 1. Teaching Aids

#### A. Visual Aids

Visual aids include teaching tools such as charts, models, mind maps, photographs, textbooks, software, and mobile phones and apps, among others, like those listed below in more detail:

##### (a). Blackboard



Research shows that the blackboard is the most popular teaching tool used by teachers to write significant points, illustrate concepts, solve issues, etc. In fact, the blackboard is the oldest and most popular teaching tool. It serves several purposes and is also the finest teaching companion. Its applications are countless and grow as the teacher's creativity grows. The more creative one is, the more they use the blackboard. Words, word groups, phrases, substitution tables, grammar rules, comprehension problems, and almost everything else can be done with a stick of chalk and the imagination. Everything should be carefully written on the chalkboard. However, to use the blackboard effectively, the English teacher should keep a couple of things in mind: first, the main points on the blackboard must be written in readable, clean handwriting; moreover, overcrowding of material on the blackboard must be avoided.

*(b). Bulletin Board*

A bulletin board is a display board with educational materials on it about a certain subject. Generally speaking, it is the size of a blackboard; yet, depending on the amount of wall space available, it may even be larger. Usually, it takes the shape of a corkboard, soft board, straw board, or rubber sheets that are framed. Such notice boards may be designated for particular departments or even for particular subjects, and they may also be used to showcase students' greatest work.

*(c). Flannel Board*

Sometimes referred to as a felt board or a flannelgraph, a flannel board is made of cardboard, wood, or strawboard that has been coated with wool or colored flannel. Used for displaying materials like cutouts, images, drawings, and light items that momentarily attach to, flannel board is one of the most cutting-edge tools for teaching science and language.

*(d). Flash Cards*

As their name implies, flash cards are used to quickly display numerous bits of information to children. Thick cards used for flash cards typically have images printed or drawn on them, though there might be a name for the image underneath it. Depending on how the flash card will be used, it may be necessary to write the picture's name or not. Words, phrases, sentences, and vocabulary items may also be included on flash cards. Students must read the text on the cards very quickly while the teacher briefly flashes them in front of the class. The motivation and interest of the student in learning the language are increased by these cards.

*B. Audio Aids*

*(a). Old-Model Audio Aids*

Radios, gramophones, and tape recorders are considered hackneyed audio aids used by teachers. However, many of the broadcasts on All India Radio are geared towards school-aged children or are discussions on educational issues or English-related themes and are very beneficial for both students and English teachers. Short speeches on fascinating subjects given by renowned poets, authors, and so on are great teaching resources that are available to English teachers. These lectures inspire the students and can be recorded and utilized repeatedly. Of course, there are also hundreds of pre-recorded audiocassettes available for this use. What is more, students can listen to the recordings and use the tape recorder to replicate proper English pronunciation. Rhymes, poetry, and other significant items can be recorded at home and played in class by the English teacher. Teachers can also read a text at the desired speed and record it on a cassette tape in order to increase the speed at which students read. Bring it to class and instruct the students to listen to the cassette while they read the passage. Additionally, they discover when to stop reading.

*(b). Modern Audio Tools*

These days, old-school audio tools have been replaced by modern audio tools like Vocaroo, UJAM, Incredibox, Chirbit, Online-ConVert, Jing, Voki, iTalk, and others. Teachers can give homework, and through these audio tools they can listen and assess their students' answers. These state-of-the-art technical tools are certainly helpful to the teachers, and students get interested while using these aids in their lessons and homework.

*C. Audio-Visual Aids*

Once upon a time, televisions, projectors, overhead projectors, and so on were used as audio-visual aids by educators. Today, however, millennial students consider them old and obsolete. In their place, ultra-modern audio-visual aids like Padlet, Edpuzzle, Nearpod, Seesaw, and Jamboard have come along and garnered the attention of learners. Some of these, as shown in Figure 2, are explained in more detail below:

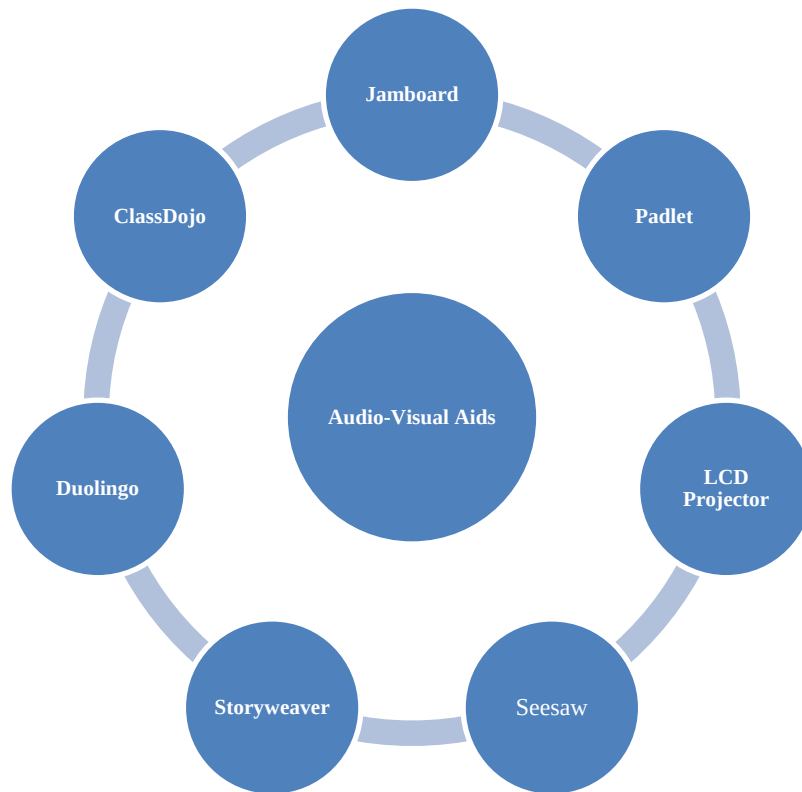


Figure 2. Audio-Visual Aids

*(a). Padlet*

Padlet is a great tool for students to use when working on group assignments, as the timing of discussions and assignment creation is up to them. Padlet's Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition (SAMR) model is very well-liked in Padlet, and instructors like using the program Edpuzzle to produce engaging video lessons.

*(b). Nearpod*

Using this program, teachers can share interactive movies, games, and other activities while conducting interactive classes on a single platform.

*(c). Seesaw*

Seesaw helps teachers communicate with parents, and as a result, parents can become their partners in education. Teachers can add photographs, web pages, drawings, and movies to a jamboard and can even resize the images or videos as needed.

*(d). Storyweaver*

The title speaks for itself since both teachers and students can create stories with different endings or conclusions with this teaching and learning tool.

*(e). ClassDojo*

ClassDojo allows teachers to create a collection of class photos, videos, messages, conversations, and so on that can be presented for learning and for making memories that will last a lifetime.

*(f). Microsoft Teams*

Used by many in academia throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Microsoft Teams is a team collaboration application offering workspace chat and video conferencing, file storage, and integration of third-party applications and services.

*(g). Duolingo*

Duolingo and other language apps are great for supplemental learning of languages.

*(h). Short Films and Film Clips*

Students can watch short films and film clips and share their opinions and reviews about what they have learned.

*(i). Cartoons*

Another much-loved instructional tool among students is cartoons. These animated series pique the curiosity of many children who use them to quickly pick up new languages.

(j). *Telegram*

The Telegram app is ideal for distance learning and instruction. Teachers who were working under difficult circumstances during the pandemic benefited greatly from this tool since it was free, mobile-friendly, quick, and safe. Moreover, it offered them cloud-based texting, voice recording, and video calling.

#### IV. EXPERIMENTATION AND RESULTS

Rural Background Engineering (RBE) students who are proficient in English are able to use English to ask questions, comprehend lectures, appraise materials and test ideas, and confront what is being asked in the classroom. This methodology includes seven audio-visual teaching aids. In this study, two groups were selected to assess the effectiveness of using audio-visual aids. Since it may be impractical to train a larger group, a total of 120 engineering students with rural backgrounds from V.R. Siddhartha Engineering College, Andhra Pradesh, India, were chosen. These students were mechanical engineering students, who were divided into two groups: Test Group 1 and Test Group 2, with 60 students in each. To ensure that both groups were comparable in their English proficiency, a pre-test was conducted. Following this, Test Group 2 received exposure to audio-visual aids, while Test Group 1 did not. The list of audio-visual aids by Test Group 2 is shown in the following figure:

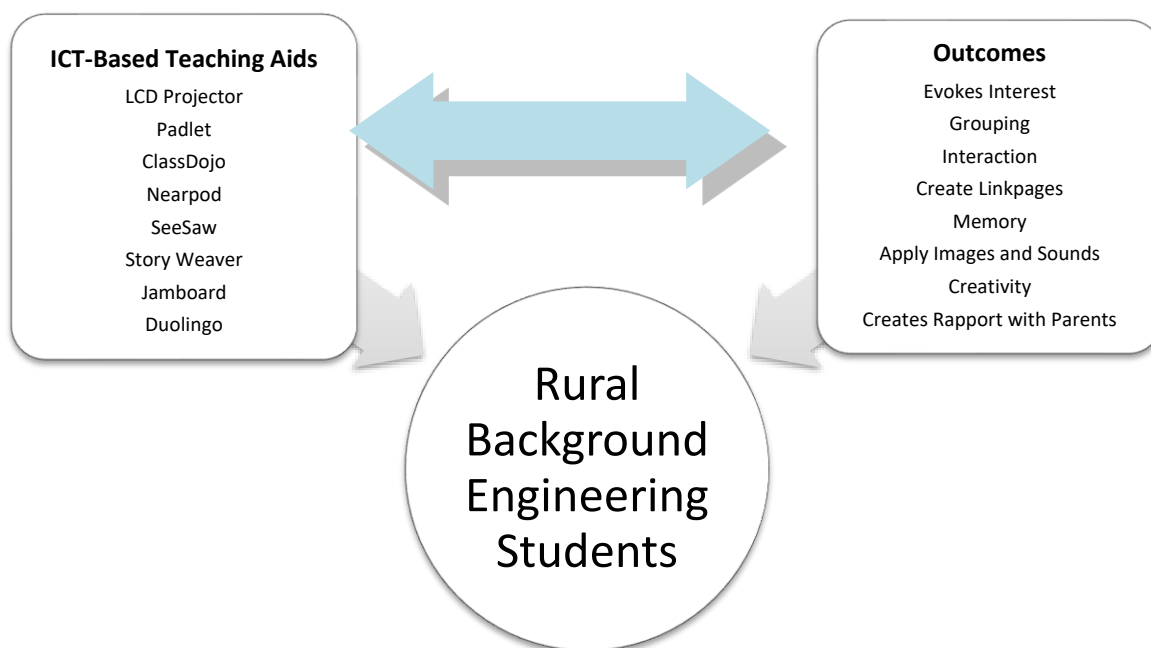


Figure 3. List of Used Audio-Visual Aids and Their Outcomes for Rural Background Engineering Students

Primarily, a pre-test was administered among the two groups, and the scores were recorded and compared. This presented the English language competency among the RBE students. Later, Test Group 2 was taught by using ICT-based audio-visual aids, while Test Group 1 was taught the same material without any aids, audio-visual or otherwise. Afterwards, a post-test was administered among the groups, and the results were analyzed.

##### A. *Pattern of Pre-Test*

Language ability is a key component in the requirements for all entrance examinations that assess English language proficiency in reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Therefore, the researcher designed a pre-test to evaluate the four language skills of ESL students. The pre-test covers various aspects of language skills that are typically included in placement and entrance exams. These include pronunciation, sentence correction, sentence improvement, sentence formation, completing statements, ordering words and sentences, analogies, reading comprehension, antonyms, synonyms, idioms and phrases, one-word substitutes, voice and speech changes, listening comprehension, error identification, critical reasoning, argument analysis, and paragraph formation. Hence, the pre-test is based on language skills and vocabulary components of the English language—synonyms, reading comprehension, word order, sentence formation, phonetics, and presentation.

Marks for different sections along with the time allotted for each section are given below:

TABLE 1  
MARKS AND TIME ALLOTTED FOR EACH SECTION

| Topics                          | Marks | Duration |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------|
| Reading Comprehension           | 5     | 10m      |
| Synonyms & Antonyms             | 10    | 10m      |
| Word Order & Sentence Formation | 10    | 10m      |
| Phonetics                       | 10    | 10m      |
| Presentations                   | 10    | 20m      |
| Total                           | 45    | 60m      |

### B. Pre-Test

The pre-test encompassed all four essential English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This trial was conducted by the researcher to gauge the language proficiency levels of Test Group 1 and Test Group 2. The table below presents the marks scored by the two groups in the pre-test, followed by a concise summary of the findings.

TABLE 2  
PRE-TEST SCORES OF TEST GROUP 1 AND TEST GROUP 2

| Sources      | Competency Level   | Test Group 1 |      | Test Group 2 |      |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------|------|--------------|------|
|              |                    | No           | %    | No           | %    |
| 55 and Above | 10 Points          | Nil          | -    | Nil          | -    |
| 41-55        | 8-9 Points         | 5            | 11%  | 10           | 23%  |
| 26-40        | 5-7 Points         | 36           | 80%  | 35           | 77%  |
| 25 and Under | Less than 5 Points | 4            | 9%   | 0            | -    |
| Total        |                    | 30           | 100% | 45           | 100% |

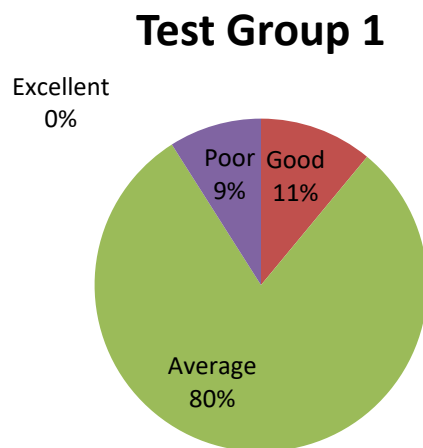


Figure 4. Pre-Test Performance of Test Group 1

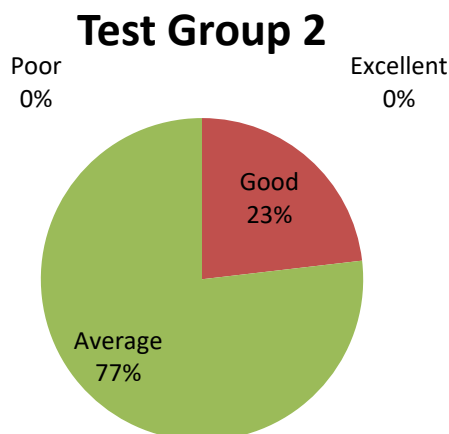


Figure 5. Pre-Test Performance of Test Group 2

The pre-test results for the control and experimental groups showed that only a few of the rural background engineering (RBE) students had a strong command of the language. These results were discussed among the students in the groups. Following this discussion, the researcher decided to implement ICT-based audio-visual aids for the experimental group. Five activities were designed to train the experimental group in five key language elements, with a total of four training sessions, each lasting 60 minutes.

### C. Post-Test

After the researcher utilized audio-visual aids during four training sessions with the RBE students, a post-test was administered to Test Group 1 and Test Group 2. The purpose of this post-test was to assess the effectiveness of the training. The following topics were selected as the basis for the post-test:

TABLE 3  
MARKS AND TIME ALLOTTED FOR EACH SECTION

| Topics                     | Marks | Duration |
|----------------------------|-------|----------|
| Pronunciation & Intonation | 10    | 10m      |
| Prefixes & Suffixes        | 5     | 10m      |
| Reading Comprehension      | 10    | 10m      |
| Vocabulary                 | 10    | 10m      |
| Group Discussion           | 10    | 20m      |
| Total                      | 45    | 60m      |

### D. Analysis of Marks Scored by Two Groups in Post-Test

The below table reveals the marks scored by the Test Group 1 and Test Group 2 in the post-test.

TABLE 4  
POST-TEST SCORES OF TEST GROUP 1 AND TEST GROUP 2

| Sources      | Competency Level   | Test Group 1 |      | Test Group 2 |      |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------|------|--------------|------|
|              |                    | No           | %    | No           | %    |
| 55 and Above | 10 Points          | Nil          | -    | 27           | 61%  |
| 41-55        | 8-9 points         | 5            | 11%  | 13           | 28%  |
| 26-40        | 5-7 points         | 32           | 72%  | 5            | 11%  |
| 25 and Under | Less than 5 points | 8            | 17%  | --           | --   |
| Total        |                    | 45           | 100% | 45           | 100% |

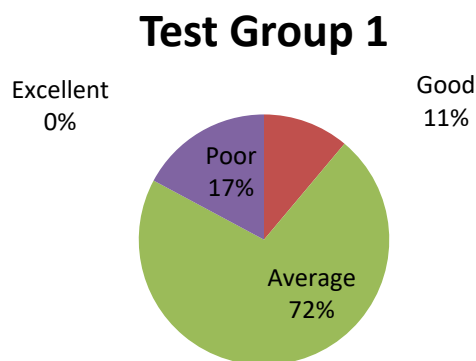


Figure 6. Post-Test Performance of Test Group 1

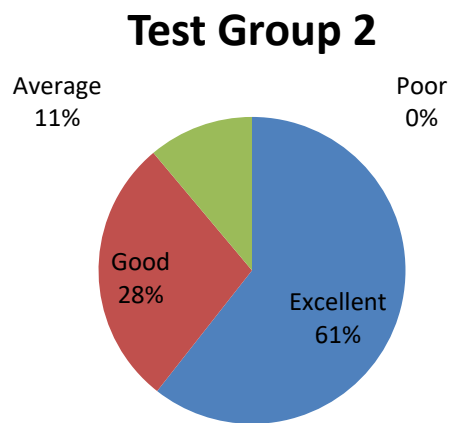


Figure 7. Post-Test Performance of Test Group 1

#### E. Observations

The researchers first observed that this new classroom instruction created by the researcher will lessen the hurdles faced by the RBE students in learning English. Moreover, this approach creates a dynamic classroom atmosphere and allows students to interact directly with objects. It also lessens their excessive reliance on their first language (L1) and greatly improves their second language (L2) abilities. Furthermore, using information and communications technology (ICT) helps English language students avoid using overly verbose, pointless, and ineffective language, while also stimulating all of the learner's senses and aiding in improving memory. Additionally, by adopting teaching aids in the classroom, RBE students can make their topic matter clear and present it effectively. It also creates a desire in RBE students to study new things. Finally, this study demonstrated that using ICT-based teaching aids in English language learning are the most suitable teaching tools for enhancing the English language skills of RBE students.

#### V. LIMITATIONS IN USING TEACHING AIDS

While ICT-based teaching aids offer numerous advantages in enhancing English language proficiency, they also come with certain limitations. For instance, many schools are unable to purchase certain technological teaching and learning aids because they are expensive. Implementing ICT tools and maintaining them can be expensive, requiring significant investment in infrastructure, software, and training. High costs can be a barrier for educational institutions, particularly those in resource-constrained environments.

Furthermore, many teachers lack the technical expertise needed to use them and must educate themselves on how to better use them. Without proper training, teachers may not use these tools to their full potential, reducing the effectiveness of ICT-based teaching aids. Conversely, some teachers utilize them excessively, giving them a less powerful, impersonal influence. Students can also occasionally know more than teachers do. ICT-based learning can also sometimes lead to reduced student-teacher interaction and peer engagement, especially in asynchronous learning environments. This can negatively affect motivation, collaborative learning, and the development of social skills.

Because so many pupils rely on technology, their creativity is declining. Additionally, excessive dependence on ICT tools can diminish the role of traditional teaching methods, which are also crucial for language learning. Over-reliance on technology might also result in students missing out on critical thinking, interpersonal communication, and other soft skills that are better developed through face-to-face interaction. Even worse, prolonged use of ICT tools can lead to health issues, such as eye strain, poor posture, and reduced physical activity. These health concerns can affect students' overall well-being and academic performance.

Not all students have equal access to the necessary technology, such as computers, smartphones, and stable internet connections. This disparity can lead to unequal learning opportunities and outcomes. Moreover, students from rural or economically disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle to participate fully in ICT-based learning, exacerbating educational inequalities. What is more, technical problems, such as software glitches, hardware failures, or connectivity issues, can disrupt the learning process. Frequent interruptions can frustrate students and teachers, leading to a loss of engagement and continuity in learning.

The quality and relevance of content available on ICT platforms can vary widely. Some resources may not align with the curriculum or the specific needs of the students. Poor-quality content can lead to misinformation or inadequate learning, while irrelevant material can waste valuable study time. Furthermore, the use of ICT in education involves the collection and storage of large amounts of student data, which can raise concerns about privacy and security. Inadequate data protection measures can lead to breaches, compromising the safety and privacy of students.

ICT tools, especially those involving internet access, can be distracting for students. They may be tempted to browse unrelated content or engage in non-educational activities. This can reduce the effectiveness of learning and lead to time being wasted on non-educational tasks. Moreover, some ICT tools may not provide personalized feedback or adapt to individual student needs, especially in larger classrooms or with less sophisticated software. Students might not receive the tailored guidance they need to improve, potentially slowing their progress. ICT tools are also often designed with a global audience in mind and may not always consider the cultural and linguistic contexts of Indian students. This can lead to misunderstandings or a lack of relevance, making it harder for students to engage with the material.

While ICT-based teaching aids offer substantial benefits, these limitations need to be carefully managed to ensure that they enhance rather than hinder the learning process. A balanced approach that combines ICT tools with traditional teaching methods, adequate teacher training, and strategies to address the digital divide can help mitigate these challenges.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, ICT-based teaching aids hold significant potential to enhance the English language proficiency of Indian engineering students. These tools offer interactive, personalized, and engaging learning experiences that can address the diverse linguistic needs of students. By leveraging technologies such as language learning software, online language labs, video-based learning, and gaming platforms, students can improve their vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and overall communication skills in a more efficient and enjoyable manner. However, to fully realize the benefits of ICT in language education, it is crucial to address the accompanying challenges, such as the digital divide, technical issues, and the need for teacher training. A balanced approach that integrates ICT with traditional teaching methods while being mindful of these limitations can create a more inclusive and effective learning environment. By doing so, Indian engineering students can develop the language skills necessary for academic success and global competitiveness.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# Verbalization Affixes in the Limola Language: A Descriptive Analysis

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**Abstract**—This article highlights the verbalization of affixes in the Limola language. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with the following data collection techniques: elicitation, recording, and note-taking. The affixation process proves three kinds of verbalization affixes in the Limola language, i.e., 1) prefixes: {ma-}, {mo-}, {pa-}, {mopa-}, {mapa-}, {ipa-}, {i-}, and {ti-}; 2) suffixes: {-i}, {-nga}; and 3) confixes: {i—i}, {i—a}, {ipa—i}, {mapa—i}, and {mopa—i}. Verbalization of an inflectional affix does not change the word class when attached to a verb root morpheme. Meanwhile, the affix attached to an adjective base morpheme called derivation changes the word class. The change due to the morphophonemic process is found in the prefix {ma-}, which has allomorphs /mang-/, /man-/, /mam-/, and /mab-/. These allomorphs occur when the initial phonemes of the word are /k/, /s/, /t/, /p/, and /b/. In addition, the process of affixing the suffix {-i} to the base morpheme endings in vowels /i/, /u/, and /e/ causes epenthesis of the vowel /a/, which lies between the end of the base morpheme and the beginning of the bound morpheme. This study's results provide a comprehensive viewpoint of the affixation process in Limola, illustrate how affixes interact with base morphemes to affect word formation and class transformation and emphasize the complex role of morphophonemic processes in the Limola language. The findings are beneficial for deepening understanding of the Limola language structure and, simultaneously, can be used in designing teaching materials for the Limola society to preserve and maintain the Limola language.

**Index Terms**—descriptive analysis, morphophonemics, Limola language, verbalization affixes

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to the language website ethnologue.com, Indonesia has the second-highest linguistic diversity of any nation in the world except first-place New Guinea (Ibrahim, 2011; Kemdikbud, 2022; Mu'jizah, 2018; Umar et al., 1998; Wiyanti et al., 2018). Accordingly, the most recent data from the Badan Bahasa survey conducted throughout the 1990s successfully mapped 718 regional languages in Indonesia. Sixty-two languages, or 90% of the total, are spoken in

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Sulawesi, eastern Indonesia. The Limola language – a regional language of the Indonesian archipelago – is one of the regional tongues that make up Sulawesi's 62 official languages and is spoken by people living in Sassa Village and Makumpa Hamlet, Baebunta District, North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Moreover, Limola belongs to the Austronesian class of Malay-Polynesian languages (Navez, 2006).

There have been two major studies of the Limola language related to this paper, namely the report on the vitality of the Limola language written by Agus et al. (2019) and the Limola language phonological system written by Garing et al. (2021). The first study revealed that this language's vital power had shifted and was even endangered. This is evidenced by the results of the accumulated index of ten indicators based on the study of the vitality of the Limola language, which scored 0.4915, indicating that the Limola language is an unstable and endangered language (Agus et al., 2019). Further, the research of Garing et al. (2021) shows that the Limola language has five basic vowel phonemes and thirteen variations of vowels; in total, 18 vowels function as meaning differentiators. Moreover, the Limola language consonant phoneme consists of 17 consonants (Garing et al., 2021).

Based on this information, further and in-depth research on the Limola language needs to be carried out rather expeditiously, considering that the language is already unstable and on the verge of extinction. Therefore, the author attempts to conserve the Limola language by compiling its morphological structure and filling in the gaps between the existing research results. The focus of this study is a morphological system for the verbalization of affixes in the Limola language. Verbalization affixes can be derivational or inflectional. Therefore, this study discusses the derivation that changes the word classes: a newly derived word with a different word class from the base word and an inflectional affix that does not modify the word class. Thus, the problem of the study is to determine how verbalization affixes are formed in the Limola language. The findings of this research aid the Limola-speaking community by offering essential educational resources for the younger generation. Moreover, it will help strengthen the viability of the Limola language and assist in mitigating its extinction.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper discusses verbalization affixes in the Limola language. Verbalization affixes are verb-forming affixes, making this study a part of a morphological study. Chaer (2008) stated that etymologically, the word morphology comes from the word *morph*, meaning “form,” and the word *logi*, meaning “science”. Therefore, the term “morphology” implies the study of form. In linguistics, morphology is the study of forms and word formation. Meanwhile, Aronoff and Fudeman (2005) state that the study of “linguistic morphology refers to the mental system involved in word formation or the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure, and how they are formed” (pp. 2-3). Kridalaksana (2008) proposes that morphology is a part of language structure that includes words and features. This is also in line with Morley (2015), who stated that morphology discusses the internal structure of word forms (Firdaus, 2018; Gaeta & Angster, 2019; Häikiö & Vainio, 2018; Kasim et al., 2022; Matthews, 1997).

In this manner, this study relies on the viewpoints developed by structuralists. For example, Nida (1970) states that a word resulting from combining one morpheme with another morpheme can be in the form of affixation, reduplication, or compound. The combination of morphemes becomes words; thus, the word is the most significant morphological form, whereas the minor form is a morpheme. Until now, morphemes and words have been the main topics of morphological studies (Rahmawati, 2019; Resticka, 2017; Sukri, 2015). Furthermore, the approach used in analyzing this research data is based on the principles of descriptive analysis, as stated by Nida (1970), as follows:

1. Descriptive analysis is based on what people say. This principle implies that the analyzed data are in the form of written data, whereas written data are used as complementary data.
2. The form is primary, and usage is secondary. This principle determines the analysis stage, especially when deciding the affixes.
3. A speech act cannot be entirely performed without reference to other speech acts. Its fundamental idea can be used to defend morphological creations (Jerniati, 2017).

Affixation is the process of forming words from a basic form or base (Herianah et al., 2022; Jerniati, 2019; Kawasha, 1970; Mappiasse, 2018). In the Limola language, words such as *moboso* (“cut”), *wowai* (“bring”), and *ibokkea* (“tied up”) consist of the base words *boso* (“cut”), *wowa* (“bring”), and *bokke* (“tie”), each of which is attached with bound forms in the form of {*mo-*}, {*-i*}, and {*i-a*}. An affix is a bound form or morpheme used to derive the three words. According to KBBI (Pusat Bahasa Kemdikbud, 2016), an affix is a bound form that changes the grammatical meaning when added to the base. An affix added at the beginning of a base word is called a prefix, whereas an affix added at the end of words is called a suffix (Ndlovu & Dube, 2019; Nugroho, 2018). If an affix is inserted in the middle of a word, it is called an infix or insertion (no data on this was found in the Limola language). In contrast, if an affix is added at the beginning and end, it is called a confix or simulfix. There is occasionally a class shift after this affixation procedure (Mappiasse, 2018). Class shift describes the derivation. The derivation is the formation of new words by adding an affix to a base (Kasim et al., 2022), which can be in the form of a root, stem, or bottom (Acedo-Matelln & Real-Puigdollers, 2019; Ba'dulu & Herman, 2012; Simonović & Mišmaš, 2020). Likewise, Yule in Ataman et al. (2019), Butts (2017), and Ermanto (2008) distinguish derivational affixes from inflectional affixes. The derivational affix is used in the derivational word process, whereas the inflectional affix is used in the inflectional affixation process (Davies & Embick, 2020; Pakendorf, 2019). Derivational affixes change word classes (Goodness, 2020; Simaremare et al., 2021), while inflectional affixes do not alter word classes

(Ghembaza et al., 2018). Lyon in Putrayasa (2010) argues that derivation registers various formations of a new word from an existing word (Ningsih et al., 2020). Further, inflection is a morphemic change process that maintains the lexical identity of the word. Verhaar (1996) notes that the inflectional group comprises a paradigmatic set of forms of a single word. Likewise, Ismail (2016) and Luthfan and Hadi (2019) explain that inflection is a construction that shares the same distribution as its base form.

Regional archipelago languages have affixation patterns that also characterize the language's specificity. Chaer (2008) argues that affixation is one of several morphemic processes in word formation. In line with Muslich (2008), who posits that affixation generally causes a morphophonemic process, namely a change in specific phonemes due to the affixation process, either in the form of a prefix, suffix, or infix (Idiatov, 2019; Karlin, 2022; Kasim et al., 2022; Morley, 2015). According to Tustiantina (2016), the consequences of these changes cause the derivation form's presence (Astafieva, 2016; Ningsih et al., 2020).

Based on these data, morphophonemic or morphophonological processes also occur in the Limola language. Schane (1973) states that morphophonology occurs when morphemes combine to form words, segments of adjacent morphemes line up, or sometimes change. This perspective implies sound change rules in word formation (Hendrokumoro & Temaja, 2019; Jerniati, 2017; Mappiasse, 2018). The theories presented are the primary references that support this study. In addition, because this study discusses verbalization affixes, the underlying references are related to derivation, inflection, and morphophonemic concepts. The three ideas synergize in this analysis by considering how they fit into the discussed data corpus.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

The method used in this research is a descriptive method using a qualitative approach. Field research uses natural objects experienced by specific communities (Berutu, 2019; Hadari, 2019; Mahsun, 2005; Sugiono, 2013). The data source in this research is the Limola language spoken by the people who own the language in Makumpa Hamlet and Sassa Village, Baebunta District, North Luwu Regency, South Sulawesi.

#### B. Procedure for Collecting and Analyzing Data

The techniques used to collect data were: 1) the elicitation technique, which obtains data related to the problem studied by using direct and directed questions to informants; 2) the recording technique, which completes the data obtained through the elicitation technique. The recording is done by preparing the question in advance; 3) the noting technique, which notes data related to the Limola language verbalization affixes; and 4) the retrospective technique, which selects the data obtained to gain more accurate data (Miles & Huberman, 2012; Sangidu, 2007; Sudaryanto, 2015).

The collected data were processed, analyzed, and selected as objectively as possible to obtain a description of verbalization affixes in the Limola language. The data analysis procedures were classification, identification, interpretation, and conclusion. Classification is a technique for selecting and sorting data as required. Identification is intended to determine or convey data that goes through morphological processes, particularly affixation processes. Interpretation is a data analysis method that examines the classified and identified data based on the demands of the data. The final data analysis process is the conclusion after executing the classification, identification, and interpretation procedures. The conclusion presents the outcomes and discoveries, discusses them briefly and in detail, and identifies the novelties discovered during the investigation.

#### C. Participants

The informants in this study were fluent Limola language speakers who lived in Sassa Village and understood and mastered the morpheme-forming elements in the Limola language. The researcher used 15 male and female interviewees between the ages of 25 and 50 to acquire these data. Furthermore, it required two experts, i.e., native speakers considered to be good data sources, who know more information, linguistic history, linguistic contexts, and the phenomena of changes that occur in the Limola language's word development process.

#### D. Materials

The data came from the findings of the answers given on the instrument, which included a series of questions about the form and process of verb morphology in the Limola language. The informants and resource individuals created a list of Indonesian questions as a reference and then described them in Limola. The questions dealt with the Limola language's morpheme elements, specifically essential and derived morphemes. In the Limola language, the instrument consisted of a vocabulary of verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and various morphological components. The number of questions or instruments used to gather data was not limited because the researcher constructed questions based on the answers and explanations of the informants to find types of verb-forming morphemes.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Verbalization Affixes in the Limola Language

Affixing is an essential factor in word formation or in determining the category of certain word classes. Some of the Limola language's affixes are verbalization or verb-forming affixes, and some can cause morphophonemic events. It can be identified by phoneme modifications brought about by the affixation process, such as prefixes, infixes, suffixes, or confixes. Several forms of verbalization affixes were established in this study, i.e., prefixes, suffixes, and confixes. The three affixes are explained below:

TABLE 1  
VERBALIZATION AFFIXES IN LIMOLA

| Prefixes     | Suffixes    | Confixes       |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| <i>ma-</i>   | <i>-i</i>   | <i>i—i</i>     |
| <i>mo-</i>   | <i>-nga</i> | <i>i—a</i>     |
| <i>pa-</i>   |             | <i>ipa-i</i> , |
| <i>mopa-</i> |             | <i>mapa-i</i>  |
| <i>mapa-</i> |             | <i>mopa-i</i>  |
| <i>ipa-</i>  |             |                |
| <i>i-</i>    |             |                |
| <i>ti-</i>   |             |                |

#### (a). Prefix

The prefix is an affix attached to the base form's left. In the Limola language, there are eight kinds of verb-forming prefixes, namely {*ma-*}, {*mo-*}, {*pa-*}, {*mopa-*}, {*mapa-*}, {*ipa-*}, {*i-*}, and {*ti-*}. The prefix {*ma-*} in particular, has the allomorph {*mang-*}, {*man-*}, {*mam-*}, and {*mab-*}. These prefixes are explained as follows:

##### 1. Prefix {*ma-*}

The prefix {*ma-*} is one of the verbalization affixes or verbs in the Limola language. The prefix {*ma-*} can only be combined with verbs, with some changes due to morphophonemics. In the first example (Table 3), the prefix {*ma-*} changes to {*mang-*} when it meets a base whose initial phoneme is /k/, and it changes to {*man-*} when it meets a base whose initial phonemes are /s/ and /t/. Furthermore, prefix {*ma-*} has the allomorph {*mam-*} if the initial phoneme of the base attached is /p/ and becomes {*mab-*} if the initial phoneme attached is /b/. These prefix forms are called allomorphs. The morphophonemic prefix {*ma-*} can be defined as follows:

TABLE 2  
MORPHOPHONEMIC PREFIXES IN LIMOLA

|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| Prefixes <i>ma-</i>         |
| { <i>mang-</i> }/# /k/      |
| { <i>man-</i> }/ # /s/, /t/ |
| { <i>mam-</i> }/ # /p/      |
| { <i>mab-</i> }/ # /b/      |

Table 2 above shows some examples of morphophonemic processes in Limola verbs.

TABLE 3  
PREFIX {*MA-*} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix <i>ma-</i> |              | Verb Root             | Morphophonemic Process              |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                   | <i>mang-</i> | <i>kowa</i> "carry"   | <b><i>mangkowa</i></b> "carrying"   |
|                   | <i>man-</i>  | <i>solo</i> "buy"     | <b><i>mansolo</i></b> "buying"      |
|                   |              | <i>tampera</i> "slap" | <b><i>mantamprea</i></b> "slapping" |
|                   | <i>mam-</i>  | <i>pilio</i> "find"   | <b><i>mampilio</i></b> "finding"    |
|                   | <i>mab-</i>  | <i>balu</i> "sell"    | <b><i>mabbalu</i></b> "selling"     |

The prefix {*ma-*} in the example above combines with stems in the verb class category and produces derivative words that belong to the same word category. This means that the prefix {*ma-*} is classified as a verbalization affix. The morphological process is inflection, which does not change the word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018).

##### 2. Prefix {*mo-*}

The prefix {*mo-*} is also a verbalizer affix in the Limola language. This prefix can be used as the base in verb and adjective clauses. If the base attached is a verb, then the derived morpheme is the same as the word class category, i.e., verb. However, if the base attached is an adjective, then the resulting derived morpheme is categorized as a different word class, namely verbs. Here is the case of the prefix {*mo-*}:

TABLE 4  
PREFIX {MO-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix<br><i>mo-</i> | Verb Roots           | Morphophonemic Process           | Adjectives Roots     | Morphophonemic Process            |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                      | <i>boso</i> “cut”    | <b><i>moboso</i></b> “cutting”   | <i>karrao</i> “away” | <b><i>mokarrao</i></b> “avoiding” |
|                      | <i>bare</i> “break”  | <b><i>mobare</i></b> “breaking”  | <i>roso</i> “strong” | <b><i>moroso</i></b> “strengthen” |
|                      | <i>bauru</i> “throw” | <b><i>mobauru</i></b> “throwing” |                      |                                   |
|                      | <i>sempa</i> “kick”  | <b><i>mosempa</i></b> “kicking”  |                      |                                   |
|                      | <i>tobo</i> “stab”   | <b><i>motobo</i></b> “stabbing”  |                      |                                   |
|                      | <i>tosu</i> “pierce” | <b><i>motosu</i></b> “piercing”  |                      |                                   |

Thus, two affixation processes occur in Table 4: the affixation of the prefix {*mo-*} on the verb roots and the prefix on the base adjectives. The first affixation process is an inflection that does not change the word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018). In contrast, the second affixation process is a derivation that changes the word class (Goodness, 2020).

### 3. Prefix {*pa-*}

The Limola language’s prefix {*pa-*} is categorized as a verb-forming affix. Results show that the prefix {*pa-*} can be paired with adjectives and verbs. A verb-derived word is created when the prefix {*pa-*} is joined to the base of an adjective. However, if the prefix {*pa-*} meets the verb base form, it has a derivative word, which is a noun (not a verbalization affix). Here is the case of the prefix {*pa-*}:

TABLE 5  
PREFIX {PA-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix <i>pa-</i> | Adjectives Roots           | Morphophonemic Process              | Verb Roots           | Morphophonemic Process          |
|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
|                   | <i>malessi</i> “beautiful” | <b><i>pamalessi</i></b> “beautify”  | <i>lappo</i> “crash” | <b><i>palappo</i></b> “crasher” |
|                   | <i>mapacci</i> “clean”     | <b><i>pamapacci</i></b> “cleaner”   | <i>patei</i> “kill”  | <b><i>papatei</i></b> “killer”  |
|                   | <i>macanni</i> “sweet”     | <b><i>pamacanni</i></b> “sweetener” | <i>solo</i> “buy”    | <b><i>pansolo</i></b> “buyer”   |
|                   | <i>makarra</i> “hard”      | <b><i>pamakarra</i></b> “harden”    | <i>jaga</i> “dance”  | <b><i>pajjaga</i></b> “dancer”  |
|                   | <i>makundu</i> “blunt”     | <b><i>pamakundu</i></b> “to dull”   |                      |                                 |

In verb roots case, the combination of the prefix {*pa-*} with the base word *solo* into *pansolo* 'buyer' and *jaga* into *pajjaga* 'dancer', a morphophonological event occurs, namely the change of {*pa-*} into {*pan-*} and {*paj-*}. The appearance of these two phonemes, /n/ and /j/, follows the initial phoneme of the base word they enter.

### 4. Prefix {*mopa-*}

TABLE 6  
PREFIX {MOPA-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix <i>mopa-</i> | Adjectives Roots         | Morphophonemic Process                |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                     | <i>mandate</i> “long”    | <b><i>mopamandate</i></b> “lengthen”  |
|                     | <i>mariboi</i> “low”     | <b><i>mopamariboi</i></b> “lower”     |
|                     | <i>manyangko</i> “light” | <b><i>mopamanyangko</i></b> “lighten” |
|                     | <i>malemma</i> “weak”    | <b><i>mopalemma</i></b> “weaken”      |

The prefix {*mopa-*} is a combination of the prefixes {*mo-*} and {*pa-*}. This prefix is categorized as a verbalization affix. If the prefix is attached to an adjective base, it will be a derivative word that is different from the base form (verb) (Simaremare et al., 2021). Therefore, this prefix belongs to the verbalization affix and is classified as a derivation that changes the word class from adjective to verb. This affixation process gives additional meaning to the base word, which affects the action or state described by the base word.

### 5. Prefix {*mapa-*}

The prefix {*mapa-*} is the same as {*mopa-*}, a duplicate affix that is created with the combination of the prefixes {*ma-*} and {*pa-*}. This prefix is a verbalization affix, or Limola language verb-forming. If the prefix is combined with an adjective base, it results in a verb (Simaremare et al., 2021). This means that the derivation process that occurs in the affixation process is a class-changing derivation.

TABLE 7  
PREFIX {MAPA-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix <i>mapa-</i> | Adjectives Roots           | Morphophonemic Process                |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                     | <i>macanni</i> “sweet”     | <b><i>mapamacanni</i></b> “sweeten”   |
|                     | <i>makessi</i> “good”      | <b><i>mapamakessi</i></b> “make good” |
|                     | <i>makarra</i> “hard”      | <b><i>mapamakarra</i></b> “harden”    |
|                     | <i>malessi</i> “beautiful” | <b><i>mapamalessi</i></b> “beautify”  |

### 6. Prefix {ipa-}

The prefix {ipa-} is one of the verbalization affixes of the Limola language and is a double prefix derived from the combination of the prefixes {i-} and {pa-}. However, this is different from the prefixes {i-} and {pa-}, which, when attached to a verb base word, will result in a derivative word with the same word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018). Meanwhile, as shown in the eighth example below, when the prefix {ipa-} is attached to a base-form adjective, it produces a different word class, namely a verb. Thus, this prefix affixation process is a derivation that changes the word class.

TABLE 8  
PREFIX {IPA-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix ipa- | Adjectives Roots        | Morphophonemic Process           |
|-------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
|             | <i>marangke</i> “dry”   | <b>ipamarangke</b> “dried up”    |
|             | <i>masanna</i> “fresh”  | <b>ipamasanna</b> “refresh”      |
|             | <i>marosoi</i> “strong” | <b>ipamarosoi</b> “strengthened” |
|             | <i>manyiu</i> “sharp”   | <b>ipamanyiu</b> “sharpened”     |
|             | <i>manyakko</i> “light” | <b>ipamanyakko</b> “lightened”   |

### 7. Prefix {i-}

The prefix {i-} is one of the verbalization affixes of the Limola language. When this prefix is combined with the verb root, it produces the same class derivative word (verb) (Ghembaza et al., 2018). The new morpheme is in the same category as the root form. Thus, this affixation is classified as an inflection that does not change the word class, and combining these prefixes does not undergo a morphophonemic process (Muslich, 1990).

TABLE 9  
PREFIX {I-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix i- | Verbs Roots         | Morphophonemic Process |
|-----------|---------------------|------------------------|
|           | <i>tosu</i> “stab”  | <b>itosu</b> “stabbed” |
|           | <i>wele</i> “see”   | <b>iwele</b> “seen”    |
|           | <i>sempa</i> “kick” | <b>isempa</b> “kicked” |
|           | <i>kowa</i> “carry” | <b>ikowa</b> “carried” |
|           | <i>boso</i> “cut”   | <b>iboso</b> “cut”     |

### 8. Prefix {ti-}

The prefix {ti-} is the same as the prefix {i-}, both of which are verbalization prefixes that, when combined with a verb root, produce the same word class. Thus, this affix is classified as an inflectional affix that does not change the word class, and the merging of these prefixes does not undergo a morphophonemic process (Muslich, 1990).

TABLE 10  
PREFIX {TI-} IN THE LIMOLA

| Prefix i- | verbs roots           | morphophonemic process    |
|-----------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
|           | <i>tunu</i> “burn”    | <b>titunu</b> “burned”    |
|           | <i>kawe</i> “dig”     | <b>tikawe</b> “dugged”    |
|           | <i>kombo</i> “gather” | <b>tikombo</b> “gathered” |
|           | <i>boso</i> “cut”     | <b>tiboso</b> “cut”       |

### (b). Suffix

The suffix is an affix placed to the right or at the end of the base form. There are two types of verbalization suffixes in the Limola language: {-i} and {-nga}.

#### 1. Suffix {-i}

When combined with a verb root, the suffix {-i} will produce the same class word. In the affixation process (see Table 11), the suffix {-i} attaches to the root, which has the final vowel phoneme /a/. When it connects to a basic morpheme other than the ending vowel /a/, it will add phonemes or epenthesis. Hence, in the Limola language, the suffix {-i} is a verbalization affix or an inflected verb that does not change the word class (Goodness, 2020).

TABLE 11  
SUFFIX {-I} WITH FINAL VOWEL PHONEME /A/ IN LIMOLA

| Suffix {-i} | Verbs Roots          | Morphophonemic Process   |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
|             | <i>bikka</i> “break” | <b>bikkai</b> “break it” |
|             | <i>kowa</i> “carry”  | <b>kowai</b> “carry it”  |
|             | <i>wowa</i> “bring”  | <b>wowai</b> “bring it”  |
|             | <i>bila</i> “count”  | <b>bilai</b> “count it”  |



The suffix {-i} in the Limola language matches the suffix /-kan/ in Indonesian. In addition, the affixation process of the suffix {-i} in Tables 12, 13, 14, and 15 shows that one additional vowel phoneme, /a/, appears at the end of the root before being affixed with the suffix {-i}. This occurs when the final phoneme of the root is the vowel phoneme /o/, /u/, /e/, and /i/. This differs from the affixation process in Table 11, where the base word attached has the final vowel phoneme /a/.

TABLE 12  
SUFFIX {-i} WITH FINAL VOWEL PHONEME /O/ IN LIMOLA

| Suffix {-i} | Verbs Roots  | Morphophonemic Process |
|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
|             | solo “buy”   | solo(a)i “buy it”      |
|             | karo “dig”   | karo(a)i “dig it”      |
|             | kondo “hit”  | kondo(a)i “hit it”     |
|             | pilio “find” | pilio(a)i “find it”    |

TABLE 13  
SUFFIX {-i} WITH FINAL VOWEL PHONEME /U/ IN LIMOLA

| Suffix {-i} | Verbs Roots   | Morphophonemic Process |
|-------------|---------------|------------------------|
|             | bauru “throw” | bauru(a)i “throw it”   |
|             | rabu “decide” | rabu(a)i “decide it”   |
|             | posu “sew”    | posu(a)i “sew it”      |
|             | tosu “stab”   | tosu(a)i “stab it”     |

TABLE 14  
SUFFIX {-i} WITH FINAL VOWEL PHONEME /E/ IN LIMOLA

| Suffix {-i} | Verbs Roots  | Morphophonemic Process |
|-------------|--------------|------------------------|
|             | bare “break” | bare(a)i “break it”    |
|             | wele “see”   | wele(a)i “see it”      |
|             | bokke “tie”  | bokke(a)i “tie it”     |

TABLE 15  
SUFFIX {-i} WITH FINAL VOWEL PHONEME /I/ IN LIMOLA

| Suffix {-i} | Verbs Roots | Morphophonemic Process |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------|
|             | rui “pull”  | rui(a)i “pull it”      |

Because of the presence of the phoneme /a/ between the final phoneme of the root and the suffix /i/ connected to it, the affixation of the suffix “-i” in the tables above displays a distinct affixation process (Herianah et al., 2021).

## 2. Suffix {-nga}

The suffix {-nga} is the same as the suffix {-i} and is a verbalization affix. If the suffix is combined with the verb root form, it will produce the same word class. This suffix is classified as an inflectional affix that does not change the word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018; Kasim et al., 2022).

TABLE 16  
SUFFIX {-NGA} IN THE LIMOLA

| Suffix {-nga} | Verbs Roots  | Morphophonemic Process    |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------------|
|               | solo “buy”   | solo(a)nga “to buy for”   |
|               | posu “sew”   | posu(a)nga “to sew for”   |
|               | bare “break” | bare(a)nga “to break for” |

TABLE 17  
SUFFIX {-NGA} IN THE LIMOLA

| Suffix {-nga} | Verbs Roots      | Morphophonemic Process     |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|
|               | kowa “carry”     | kowanga “to carry for”     |
|               | bila “calculate” | bilanga “to calculate for” |
|               | wowa “bring”     | wowanga “to bring for”     |

In Table 16, the suffix {-nga} is attached to the verb root /solo/, which has the final vowel phoneme /o/, as well as the root words {posu} and {bare}, which have the final phonemes /u/ and /e/. The affixation process of the three forms produces derivative words with the same word class category, namely verbs. The uniqueness of the affixation process is the appearance of the phoneme /a/ between the root and its suffix. This phenomenon is called “epenthesis” (Idiatov, 2019; Karlin, 2022; Morley, 2015). Compared to Table 17, the three forms have the final phoneme /a/; therefore, in the affixation process with the suffix {-nga}, there is no appearance of the phoneme /a/.

## (c). Confix



In addition to prefixes and suffixes, the confixes  $\{i-i\}$ ,  $\{i-a\}$ ,  $\{ipa-i\}$ ,  $\{mapa-i\}$ , and  $\{mopa-i\}$  are also found in the Limola language. These confixes also act as verbalization affixes or verb forms in the Limola language. The five confixes are described as follows:

1. Confix  $\{i-i\}$

TABLE 18  
CONFIX  $\{I-I\}$  IN THE LIMOLA

| Confix $\{i-i\}$ | Verbs Roots         | Morphophonemic Process        |
|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
|                  | <i>posu</i> “stab”  | <i>iposui</i> “to be stabbed” |
|                  | <i>lompa</i> “jump” | <i>ilompai</i> “to be jumped” |
|                  | <i>sempa</i> “kick” | <i>isempai</i> “to be kicked” |
|                  | <i>dange</i> “hear” | <i>idangei</i> “to be heard”  |

In Table 18, the confix  $\{i-i\}$  is the verbalization affix process. If the confix is attached to a verb root form, it results in the same derivative word class, namely verb. This happens to all root words that are affixed. The affixation process is inflection because the class formed is the same as the basic morpheme.

2. Confix  $\{i-a\}$

TABLE 19  
CONFIX  $\{I-A\}$  IN THE LIMOLA

| Confix $\{i-a\}$ | Verbs Roots        | Morphophonemic Process       |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
|                  | <i>bokke</i> “tie” | <i>ibokkea</i> “to be tied”  |
|                  | <i>kondo</i> “hit” | <i>ikondoa</i> “to be hit”   |
|                  | <i>sunu</i> “burn” | <i>isunua</i> “to be burned” |
|                  | <i>solo</i> “buy”  | <i>isoloa</i> “to be bought” |

As described in Table 19, the confix  $\{i-a\}$  is a verbalization affix attached to the verb root form. This combination produces derivative words from the same class of words. Therefore, this affixation does not change the word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018; Kasim et al., 2022).

3. Confix  $\{ipa-i\}$

TABLE 20  
CONFIX  $\{IPA-I\}$  IN THE LIMOLA

| Confix $\{ipa-i\}$ | Adjective Roots        | Morphophonemic Process              |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                    | <i>karo</i> “far”      | <i>ipakaroi</i> “put at a distance” |
|                    | <i>mariwo</i> “low”    | <i>ipamariwoi</i> “lowered”         |
|                    | <i>jujuku</i> “near”   | <i>ipajujuki</i> “brought closer”   |
|                    | <i>kapodde</i> “short” | <i>ipakapoddei</i> “shortened”      |

Confix  $\{ipa-i\}$  in Table 20 combines with an adjective base form to produce a different class derivative word, a verb. This confix is a verbalization affix, and the process of classified derivation changes word classes, illustrating how affixation can transform the word class function by converting descriptive qualities into actions or processes. This morphophonemic process demonstrates the dynamic nature of word formation in language, reflecting how morphological rules govern the transformation of word classes (Mappiasse, 2018).

4. Confix  $\{mapa-i\}$

TABLE 21  
CONFIX  $\{MAPA-I\}$  IN THE LIMOLA

| Confix $\{mapa-i\}$ | Adjective Roots          | Morphophonemic Process                |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                     | <i>mapute</i> “white”    | <i>mapamaputei</i> “to whiten”        |
|                     | <i>malaga</i> “handsome” | <i>mapamalagai</i> “to make handsome” |
|                     | <i>majaja</i> “worse”    | <i>mapamajajai</i> “to worsen”        |

5. Confix  $\{mopa-i\}$

TABLE 22  
CONFIX  $\{MOPA-I\}$  IN THE LIMOLA

| Confix $\{mopa-i\}$ | Adjective Roots           | Morphophonemic Process                |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                     | <i>macalla</i> “red”      | <i>mopamacallai</i> “to turn red”     |
|                     | <i>marajji</i> “diligent” | <i>mopamarajji</i> “to make diligent” |
|                     | <i>maloto</i> “black”     | <i>mopamalotoi</i> “to make black”    |

As described in Tables 21 and 22, confixes {*mapa-i*} and {*mopa-i*} combine with an adjective base form to produce different class derivative words, namely verbs. All root words affixed in examples 21 and 22 occurred. These affixations create a new word class called derivation, which changes the word class (Ghembaza et al., 2018; Kasim et al., 2022). Hence, these affixes are verbalization affixes in the Limola language.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the study, the researchers have drawn several conclusions. First, there are three kinds of verbalization affixes of verb-forming affixes process in the Limola language: 1) prefixes: {*ma-*}, {*mo-*}, {*pa-*}, {*mopa-*}, {*mapa-*}, {*ipa-*}, {*i-*}, and {*ti-*}; 2) suffixes: {*-i*}, {*-nga*}; and 3) confixes: {*i-i*}, {*i-a*}, {*ipa-i*}, {*mapa-i*}, and {*mopa-i*}. Second, inflectional affixes in the Limola languages are marked as not changing the word class. This happens if the prefixes {*ma-*}, {*mang-*}, {*man-*}, {*mam-*}, {*mab-*}, {*mo-*}, {*i-*}, and {*ti-*}, suffixes {*-i*} and {*-nga*}, as well as confixes {*i-a*} and {*i-i*} are attached to the verb root form. Third, affixes derived from the Limola language are identified as changing word classes. These occur only with the prefix {*pa-*} and the confixes {*mopa-i*}, {*mapa-*}, and {*ipa-*}, which combine with an adjective base form. Fourth, the changes in the affix form are due to morphophonemic events resulting from the morphological process. Changes due to the morphophonemic process are found in the prefix {*ma-*}, which has allomorphs /*mang-*/, /*man-*/, /*mam-*/, and /*mab-*/. These allomorphs occur when the initial phonemes of the word are /*k*/, /*s*/, /*t*/, /*p*/, and /*b*/. Furthermore, the process of affixing the suffix {*-i*} to the base morpheme endings in vowels /*i*/, /*u*/, /*e*/, and /*o*/ causes epenthesis of the vowel /*a*/, which lies between the end of the base morpheme and the beginning of the bound morpheme. Regarding the results, it was found that the verbalization process in the Limola language involved complex morphophonemic changes. Therefore, further studies on how phonemic changes affect word structure are needed to understand this process better. This greatly helps deepen our knowledge, develop better teaching materials, and, at the same time, support the preservation and maintenance of languages, particularly the Limola language.

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# Task-Based Needs Analysis: A Triangulated Methodology

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**Abstract**—This study presents a task-based needs analysis of female English major seniors at a Saudi university to identify the academic tasks needed for their academic progress. The study utilized triangulated sources and methods, including the department's written materials; semi-structured interviews with instructors and students; and questionnaires. Academic tasks were found to be essential for academic progress, providing insights that could be overlooked without such analysis. The interviews revealed that students' proficiency levels ranged from low to average and that course content was not adapted to support below-average students. According to the questionnaire, the most essential skills for students' academic progression were effectively using the university's Learning Management System, time management, and delivering presentations. Listening to teachers as well as writing coherent and cohesive paragraphs were also important, whereas critical thinking and writing research papers were the most difficult tasks. The findings of this study emphasize the importance of adapting course content and pedagogical strategies to accommodate diverse student proficiency levels, thereby enhancing academic success.

**Index Terms**—English as Foreign Language (EFL), task-based needs analysis (TBNA), Applied Linguistics, Saudi Higher Education

## I. INTRODUCTION

Task-based needs analysis (TBNA) is a systemic approach that identifies tasks students must perform in real-world contexts and designs courses accordingly (Long, 2005, 2015). This approach can be beneficial for both English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) learners (Brown, 2009; Long, 2005, 2015), as well as English majors specializing in linguistics, literature, and translation (Lambert, 2010). TBNA provides valid and accurate data on the tasks learners must perform, facilitating the development of a content-based or task-based syllabus. In such syllabi, task success hinges on effectively using a second language (L2) to communicate meaning. According to Lambert (2010), most English major graduates in EFL contexts struggle with the theoretical nature of what they have learned and the practical applications of their acquired abilities in the job market.

Therefore, this paper conducts a TBNA to identify and formalize the essential academic English tasks that English major students must master when advancing academically in EFL courses at a Saudi university. This aims to resolve ambiguities related to the practical application of the students' acquired skills. The study was conducted during the academic year 2017–2018 and included implementing two curricula plans for the bachelor's program: one new and one old. The study focused on the new curriculum plan of obligatory courses, as this will eventually be the adopted plan. Long (2005, 2016) emphasizes using multiple methods and sources to articulate learners' needs precisely. Thus, the current analysis adopts a triangulation of sources—written materials, instructors, and students—alongside multiple methods such as semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The following section (II) presents a literature review outlining theoretical concepts of tasks and recent research on TBNA. Subsequently, an outline of the study's methodology is provided in section III. Next, the results of qualitative and quantitative analysis are presented in section IV. Finally, a discussion about the results and implications will be provided (sections V and VI, respectively).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Tasks in TBNA

Pedagogically, tasks provide a framework encompassing all units of analysis (e.g., structures and vocabulary) which can then be evaluated and measured according to how learners complete the task (Long, 2005). This focus may also encourage learners to expand their interlanguage according to their internal syllabuses, their learning styles, and their personalities by prioritizing task achievement over correctly using structures and vocabulary (White & Robinson, 2005). Consequently, other units of analysis involved in task performance become part of the task outcomes (Long, 2000). Conceptually, individuals can judge their performance on tasks more accurately than their vocabulary and grammar competency (Lambert, 2010). Finally, TBNA identifies realistic tasks for workplace environments by referring to real experts (Avermaet & Gysen, 2009; Lambert, 2010; Long, 2005, 2015) alongside non-experts, such as teachers or linguists, who provide more precise conceptualizations of the language needed for task performance (Long, 2005, 2015).

Such tasks can be categorized into three types: target tasks, task types, and pedagogic tasks (Long, 2000). Target tasks represent daily life activities and are the outcomes of the analysis. Task types are abstract notions that can be classified to include different acts involved in performing a target task. Pedagogic tasks relate to educational activities in the classroom. For example, a target task “might be making/changing a hotel, plane, restaurant, or theatre reservation,” while the task type of such target tasks would be “making/ changing reservations” (Lambert, 2010, p. 100). A pedagogical task of the target task might include classroom activities such as “filling out/changing a reservation form while listening to a sample telephone call or role-playing customers and clerks who are making/changing reservations” (Lambert, 2010, p. 100).

#### *B. Previous Research on TBNA in Ongoing English Courses*

A substantial body of research adopting the TBNA approach has been conducted to identify L2 learners’ needs. Some studies, such as those by Gilabert (2005) and Serafini and Torres (2015) in Spain, as well as Huh (2006) in Hawaii, implemented TBNA to ascertain the tasks that students needed for their future careers. The results revealed which tasks were marginalized in their current curricula. Moreover, other studies have conducted needs analyses for varied purposes. For example, Chaudron et al. (2005) conducted an analysis to discover relevant task types for teaching Korean through a task-based learning approach; Lambert (2010) conducted TBNA to determine the tasks needed by English major students in the educational or business sectors. Similarly, Oliver et al. (2013) conducted a TBNA to identify the tasks students who speak English as an additional language would likely need in vocational education and training programs in various Australian workplaces or future educational settings.

Further studies have focused on conducting TBNA to identify tasks essential for academic progression. For instance, Kim et al. (2003) conducted a study to pinpoint the academic tasks essential for EFL learners’ success at the University of Hawai’i, Manoa. The study involved 89 students selected through stratified sampling for interviews, which revealed that the most common and challenging tasks included public language production, listening to lectures, taking notes, reading for lecture preparation or review, and utilizing technology for research. Subsequently, a questionnaire based on the interview findings was administered to all participants. The questionnaire consisted of five sections: background information, task frequency, task importance, task difficulty, and desired changes in English as an L2 course. The results revealed that task frequency varied by academic discipline and competency level, while task importance varied by the type and status of the ESL learner (whether immigrant or international). Contrastingly, task difficulty remained unaffected by factors influencing the preceding variables. However, the study acknowledged that it lacked expert opinions from content course instructors.

Similarly, Ono (2007) conducted a TBNA focusing on academic reading tasks to provide insights into developing academic reading curricula. Due to time constraints, the researcher opted for a single investigative method, employing a questionnaire to assess the frequency and difficulty of academic reading tasks. The questionnaire was based on Kim et al.’s (2003) study. They specifically emphasized the necessity of integrating task types that accurately reflected the required academic reading tasks, aligning the tasks with learners’ proficiency levels and content areas. Additionally, the study highlighted the significance of incorporating authentic reading materials from learners’ content courses into those academic reading courses. Recommendations were made to enhance future academic reading TBNA efforts, including the involvement of domain experts, conducting follow-up interviews, and observing the target group.

In a longitude study, Lambert (2010) employed a triangulation of sources and methods to investigate the tasks required of English major graduates in Japan, examining job employment records, expert interviews, and surveys. The findings revealed that, while education and business were the most frequent domains, education held more significant importance. Five key tasks emerged as essential in both domains: locating information, translating documents, summarizing information, editing documents, and interpreting between speakers. Nonetheless, other tasks (e.g., being able to communicate) were deemed the most critical, followed by using appropriate vocabulary; cultural awareness; politeness; listening and pronunciation skills; and speaking fluently and accurately. The study concluded with a recommendation to integrate these tasks into a unified language program for both domains.

In summary, the reviewed studies illustrate the diversity of tasks identified through TBNA across various educational contexts. These findings highlight the importance of using needs analysis to address L2 learners’ needs. The present study builds upon these insights by adopting a TBNA triangulated methodology to articulate Saudi learners’ needs.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### *A. Sources*

In this study, data triangulation was employed to conduct a TBNA, ensuring more robust qualitative findings by drawing from three sources: teachers, students, and written materials. This approach is supported by Long (2005, 2015) and has been implemented in prior research studies (e.g., Gilabert, 2005; Huh, 2006; Lambert, 2010; Oliver et al., 2013; Serafini & Torres, 2015). The current study involved 25 senior students majoring in English at a Saudi university and 13 instructors (see Table 1), each teaching a mandatory course(s) in the program. The study was conducted in the academic year 2017–2018, during which two curricula plans were taught. Data was collected from the newer plan’s sources, including course descriptions, syllabi, and input from instructors/students.



TABLE 1  
INSTRUCTOR PROFILES

|    | Major       | Education                  | <sup>1</sup> Number of Courses    |
|----|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | Literature  | PhD in Literature          | 3 required courses                |
| 2  | Linguistics | MA in Applied Linguistics  | 2 required courses                |
| 3  | Literature  | PhD in Literature          | 1 elective course                 |
| 4  | Linguistics | MA in Applied Linguistics  | 2 required courses                |
| 5  | Literature  | PhD in Literature          | 3 required courses and 1 elective |
| 6  | Literature  | MA in Literature           | 1 required course and 1 elective  |
| 7  | Literature  | MA in Literature           | 2 required courses                |
| 8  | Linguistics | PhD in Applied linguistics | 1 required course                 |
| 9  | Literature  | MA in Literature           | 2 required courses                |
| 10 | Literature  | PhD in Literature          | 1 required course                 |
| 11 | Linguistics | PhD in Linguistics         | 1 required course                 |
| 12 | Linguistics | MA in Linguistics          | 2 required courses                |
| 13 | Literature  | MA in Literature           | 1 required course and 1 elective  |

Chaudron et al. (2005) and Serafini and Torres (2015) identified teachers as *domain experts*, referring to students as *domain outsiders*. Accordingly, in this study, the instructors were the domain experts, and the students were domain outsiders. Additionally, written materials and unpublished works were utilized as a third information source to provide the researcher with the necessary contextual background, following Long's (2005) recommendation. This included referencing the department's official website, akin to practices observed in Oliver et al.'s (2013) and Lambert's (2010) studies.

### B. Methods

Aligning with Long's (2005, 2015) recommendations, two methods of investigation—semi-structured interviews and questionnaires—were utilized to ensure data triangulation. Interview protocols were informed by the questionnaire used to investigate ESL/EFL academic tasks in the work of Ono (2007) and Kim et al. (2003), as an examination of written resources detailing the mission, vision, and goals of the university, the college, and the department in which the study was conducted. Semi-structured interviews offer distinct discussion points that can provide a coherent framework for subsequent data analysis (Long, 2005). Scholars such as Kim et al. (2003), Gilabert (2005), Huh (2006), Lambert (2010), and Chaudron et al. (2005) have underscored the informative nature of interviews conducted in the initial phase, enriching their respective investigations. The interviews were structured into three parts: (1) exploring students' English language proficiency and the program's impact; (2) assessing the content and academic tasks within linguistics and literature courses; and (3) examining the alignment of the department's missions, visions, and goals with instructors' practices. Fifteen instructors were interviewed, nine specializing in literature and six in linguistics. Before each interview, the instructors' syllabi were reviewed to familiarize the researcher with the assigned academic tasks and streamline the interview process (Long, 2005, 2015).

The second phase involved designing a closed-ended questionnaire to confirm or reject the results of the first phase. Questionnaires are a favored method in needs analysis due to their accessibility, simplicity, and objectivity (Long, 2005). Echoing the approach of Kim et al. (2003), Gilabert (2005), Huh (2006), Lambert (2010), Serafini and Torres (2015), and Chaudron et al. (2005), questionnaires were used as a follow-up procedure to inform the analysis. The questionnaire was developed through various questionnaire samples from the literature, written resources such as the instructors' syllabi, and the results of the semi-structured interviews. Firstly, the suggested academic tasks identified in the semi-structured interviews were categorized into task types and further classified into target tasks, akin to the approach followed by Kim et al. (2003) and Ono (2007). Secondly, the target tasks were categorized based on the language and cognitive skills they fostered, mirroring the methodology of Serafini and Torres (2015). Subsequently, each task was assessed in terms of its frequency, importance, and difficulty, aligning with the methodology of Kim et al. (2003). However, adjustments were made to the scales, eliminating the *not-applicable* option to accommodate the inclusion of all items due to their applicability. Thus, frequency was measured on a scale of 1–4, with 1 indicating *never* and 4 indicating *very frequent*; importance was rated on a scale of 1–3, with 1 indicating *not important* and 3 indicating *very important*; similarly, difficulty was assessed on a scale of 1–3, with 1 indicating *easy* and 3 indicating *very difficult*.

### C. Procedure and Sequencing

The study unfolded in three phases. In the first phase, the researchers analyzed written sources to provide basic information about the program. This informed the questions asked by experts in the semi-structured interviews, a strategy aimed at maximizing the time efficiency of the interviews (Long, 2005). The second phase comprised semi-structured interviews with instructors and language experts. The third phase aimed to capture the senior (levels seven and eight) students' perspectives regarding the proposed academic tasks' frequency, significance, and difficulty. To accomplish this, the researcher designed a questionnaire based on the interview results and the analyses from phases one and two. Accurate sequencing, where each phase informs the next, is as vital as the triangulation of sources and methods for ensuring the attainment of reflective results (Long, 2005, 2015).

## IV. RESULTS



### A. Written Sources

Following Oliver et al.'s (2013) investigations of online sources, the academic department's website (specifically its mission, vision, and goals) was explored to determine the desired skills required, the type of graduates they wanted to produce for society, and the target jobs envisioned for graduates. Additionally, the current curriculum plan for the program was examined, looking for obligatory courses, their descriptions, and objectives. Moreover, the instructors' syllabi for each obligatory course were analyzed to identify the assigned academic tasks and their objectives within each course. This analysis revealed four main themes: (1) teaching and training students in English; (2) exploring topics within English language, literature, linguistics, and translation; (3) preparing students for the job market; and (4) engaging students in multicultural and international communication.

### B. Semi-Structured Interviews With the Instructors

The interviews revealed information about the students' English proficiencies, linguistics, and literature courses, as well as the department's vision, mission, and goals.

First, most of the instructors cautiously reported that students typically join the department with low to average English proficiency, though there are exceptions with higher levels of English proficiency. Almost all of them emphasized the importance of a placement test to filter the applicants and accept only those with at least an average level of proficiency, or as one of the instructors commented, "those with room for development." When asked about the department's role in training and developing the students' language, less than half of the instructors reported that the department provides sufficient extracurricular training in English via department clubs, the writing center, and workshops. They reported that the department did not provide teaching and training in the four language skills (writing, reading, listening, and speaking), explaining that the department is not a language institute. Instead, the department focuses on linguistics and literature, with English skills developing as a "by-product" to varying degrees depending on the individual students.

Eight instructors noted the failure of the preparatory year to develop students' language and communication skills. However, one experienced instructor did comment positively on the year's ability to develop the students' communication skills. Notably, four instructors were not satisfied with the limited advanced training in English skills; they preferred the program's older curriculum plan that explicitly taught the four language skills from basic levels. Finally, almost all the instructors tentatively reported that the students' language development depended on their differences, willingness, and motivation to learn English, with one instructor remarking, "language can't be spoon-fed!"

The second section of the interview investigated the influence of students' language levels on the depth and breadth of exploring topics in the fields of English language, literature, linguistics, and translation. It also explored the different types of tasks assigned to the students in their literature and linguistics courses. Most instructors reported that they did not limit the investigated topics due to the students' language proficiencies. However, they admitted that weak language skills could hinder students' understanding. Therefore, instructors reported using different teaching techniques, such as mind mapping, paraphrasing, translation, visual aids, and others to aid comprehension. Nonetheless, they noted that sometimes they adjust the level of topic exploration due to the limited course duration or the students' levels in the program. For example, one instructor reported introducing part of a long poem to allow time to present other prominent ones within the same study period. Another instructor avoided two extensions of a theory she introduced to her students because this material required an understanding of other interrelated theories that students were unfamiliar with at their level. However, one experienced instructor admitted that she altered the content of her beginner writing course by teaching from the sentence and paragraph level rather than the essay level, diverging from the course description. She justified this alteration by referencing the skill-training courses from the old curriculum plan, which provided better training in English. It should be noted that this instructor only implemented this alteration in skill-level courses and did not do so in major-specific ones. Moreover, some instructors noted that the content would be comprehensible if the students attended their classes: "basically, they need to attend." Regarding the assigned academic tasks, the instructors unanimously mentioned tasks that required the practice of the four language skills alongside cognitive skills.

The final part of the interview addressed the main goals of the department and the university; the research environment; intercultural dialogue engagement; and instructors' suggestions for program development. Most instructors agreed that all or some of their courses provided a research environment or at least introduced the students to research techniques such as seeking knowledge from different sources, critical thinking, extensive reading, creating arguments, and providing evidence. Nonetheless, one instructor reported that students must be taught how to conduct experimental research by training them on different research methodologies, data collection, and presentation of results, as well as how to structure their papers. However, she reported failing to give an experimental research assignment for one of her courses. Additionally, it should be noted that two instructors mentioned challenges in creating research environments in their language or linguistics courses due to the nature of the syntax course, which required a pure focus on language structure.

Regarding the reliability of the program in preparing students for the job market, the question produced different responses. Four instructors thought the program provided students with sufficient training, especially through the practicum course. Two of them noted that the program also prepares students to pursue higher education. One highlighted that, if they acquire research skills, they should succeed anywhere. However, most instructors hesitantly commented on the program's direct job market preparation, noting that such preparation comes from literature theories and linguistic pragmatics, which may equip students with the necessary insights to feed their communication skills (e.g., understanding

different personalities and “reading between the lines”). Additionally, instructors noted that the content of different novels and author backgrounds would not be beneficial unless higher education was pursued. Finally, only two instructors believed that the program did not prepare students for the job market. Notably, one instructor believed that direct preparation for the job market “should not be our concern.” She argued that the major is scientific and should thus be pursued through investigation and research—noting that the college should be a philosophy provider that specializes in linguistics and literature, not job training. Conversely, the other instructor stated that such preparation should be a priority, highlighting that the college should revisit its program to prepare its students for specific jobs, as it used to when it taught translation courses.

Finally, most of the instructors believed that the English language and literature program prepared the students to engage in intercultural communication by providing sufficient understanding of different cultures worldwide and adequate language for communication. However, one instructor believed that the students’ weak language proficiency would hinder such communication. Similarly, instructors almost unanimously recommended that the program must be developed, particularly in content and program sequencing. Content development suggestions included introducing new courses, reviving courses from the old curriculum plan, and eliminating some from the current one. The instructors unanimously suggested improvements in content, with the majority wanting more content on literature. Two instructors specified certain courses they wanted to see, such as “film studies,” “pop culture,” and skill courses like “scholarly editing” and “creative writing.” Some suggested job preparation courses such as “teaching English as a foreign language” and “translation” as elective courses.

Additionally, concerning the revival of the old program plan, this interest was mainly related to English language and literature content. Three instructors wanted to reintroduce the English language skills courses since “the old plan was much better in preparing students” for later courses. Moreover, the instructors wanted the old curriculum plan back because it provided better coverage of time periods in literature, noting that the current courses were “just surveys.” Thus, suggestions for eliminating the current courses mostly involved dropping survey courses such as “American Survey” and “Survey of British Literature” from the program. Notably, this elimination was suggested by all literature instructors. In addition, most instructors suggested removing the minor and elective courses, such as those taken from the departments of mass communication and Arabic language and literature. This is because these courses “limit the students’ practice of the language” and “waste hours” that should be invested in major-related courses. The general courses boost students’ GPAs, which results in a GPA that “does not reflect their language proficiency” or competency in the major. However, it should be noted that one instructor favored the minor courses as a means “to prepare the students for the job market.” Regarding the sequencing of the program, three instructors suggested introducing the “Composing Research” course earlier in the program to support students’ academic writing during the program. Moreover, seven instructors suggested early specialization in literature or linguistics since this focus would give students a “deeper understanding” of the field. One instructor suggested dividing the program into three sub-majors, literature, linguistics, and translation, to provide more focused educational pathways.

### C. Close-Ended Questionnaire to Investigate Students’ Point of View

The 25 questionnaire responses were collected from the students, excluding one incomplete questionnaire from the frequency and difficulty analysis. Means and standard deviations were calculated for task frequency, importance, and difficulty. Figure 1 illustrates that some tasks were rated as more frequent than others. It reveals that “using the LMS [learning management system] and Microsoft Office software” was the most frequent task students were asked to do ( $M = 3.8$ ), followed by “time management” (e.g., regular attendance, meeting deadlines;  $M = 3.5$ ) and “giving oral presentations” ( $M = 3.41$ ). Conversely, the “role play” tasks were the least frequent ( $M = 1.6$ ), preceded by “conducting administrative work in English” (e.g., writing reports for companies or banks;  $M = 1.87$ ) and “writing a research paper with a group” ( $M = 2.08$ ). The most frequent writing task was the sixth task: “writing an outline for a paragraph, essay, or proposal for a research paper” ( $M = 3.16$ ). This task was closely preceded by the most frequent reading task, which was the fifth task in the table: “reading for specific information (content) or for a specific purpose” (e.g., understanding a concept or answering a reading quiz;  $M = 3.17$ ).

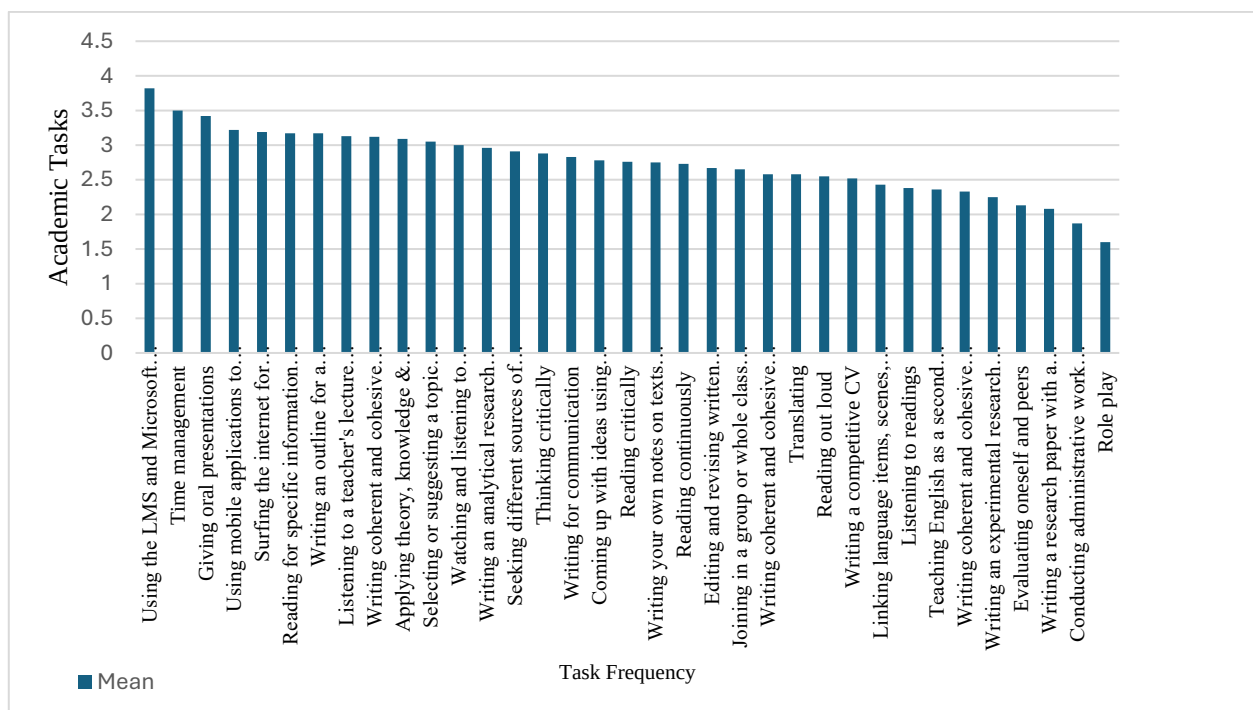


Figure 1. Mean Rates of Task Frequency

Additionally, as Figure 2 indicates, some tasks were rated as more important than others, and the most important task was “time management” (e.g., regular attendance and meeting deadlines;  $M = 2.55$ ). This task was followed by “listening to a teacher’s lecture or class announcements and taking accurate notes at the same time” ( $M = 2.54$ ) and “writing coherent and cohesive paragraphs” (with correct grammar and meaning;  $M = 2.52$ ). Notably, the students reported that the “role play” task was the least important one ( $M = 1.50$ ), which was preceded by “writing a research paper with a group” ( $M = 1.63$ ) and “linking language items, scenes, theories, concepts and so forth during analysis to real-life, textual evidence, or previous studies” ( $M = 1.83$ ). However, it should be noted that only 18 responses were found for this item. Moreover, the most important writing, listening, and speaking tasks were reported among the top three most important tasks, while the most important reading task was “reading critically” ( $M = 2.40$ ), which was rated as the eighth most important task in Figure 2.

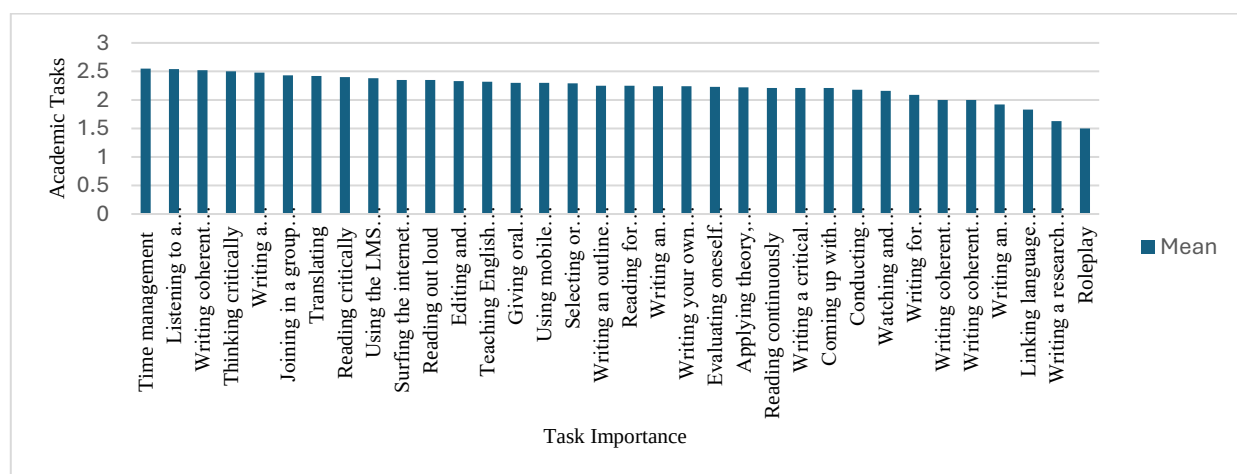


Figure 2. Mean Rates of Task Importance

Finally, as Figure 3 indicates, some tasks were rated easier than others. The students indicated that the most difficult task was “thinking critically” ( $M = 2.18$ ), which was followed by “writing an experimental research paper” (involving data collection, a methodology, and presenting then discussing results); “using APA style” ( $M = 2.00$ ); and then “role play” tasks ( $M = 2.00$ ). Notably, the task “writing an analytical research paper (analyzing a concept, theory, idea, theme or language item supported by other sources and/or real data) using MLA style” was rated as the fourth most difficult task ( $M = 1.92$ ). It should be noted that only 17 out of the 24 responses were provided for the “role play” task. Conversely, it was reported that the easiest assigned task was “using mobile applications to take quizzes, find lectures, or participate in social networks like Twitter (now known as X)” ( $M = 1.05$ ). This was preceded by “surfing the internet for information

via any device” ( $M = 1.05$ ) and then “watching and listening to English segments on YouTube (any media player/visuals) for analysis” ( $M = 1.18$ ). The fourth easiest task was “writing for communication” (e.g., email, text/WhatsApp messages, Tweets, or Instagram/Snapchat posts;  $M = 1.18$ ). However, it should be noted that only 19 out of the 24 responses rated “surfing the internet for information via any device”.

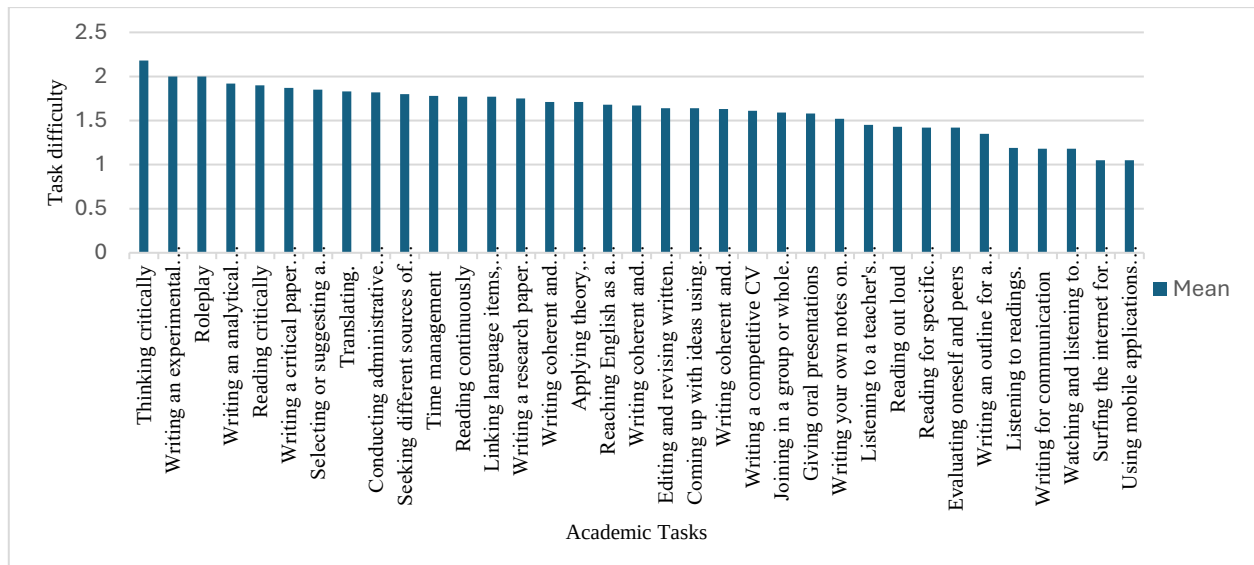


Figure 3. Mean Rates of Perceived Task Difficulty

## V. DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed that the most frequent tasks were using LMS, time management, and giving presentations. Time management (e.g., regular attendance and meeting deadlines) was rated amongst the top three most frequent and most important tasks, an item that was also stressed in the instructors' interviews. Notably, time management was not reported as a factor in previous academic TBNA research (e.g., Chaudron et al., 2005; Kim et al., 2003; Ono, 2007), which could be due to it being a feature or characteristic of accomplishing tasks rather than a target task itself. Moreover, this finding represents the necessity of a *tailored* needs analysis that Long (2005, 2015) stressed. This is because such task characteristics might otherwise go unnoticed if relying solely on pre-prepared academic tasks.

Another task among the top three most frequent was giving oral presentations, which was also noticed during the syllabus analysis. Nearly all courses required students to give presentations at least once per semester. The instructors highlighted the importance of teaching students how to give presentations, with one commenting that “they need to be trained” in this skill. However, most participants reported that presentations were not only relatively important but also relatively difficult. Giving presentations was also found to be among the most difficult academic tasks listed in Ono (2007), and the most important, although not as frequent as those from Kim et al. (2003).

From the students' perspectives, time management, listening to the instructor, and writing paragraphs were deemed important to learning new content. Listening to a teacher's lecture or class announcements and taking accurate notes at the same time was considered among the top three most important tasks for the students and the top ten most frequent tasks; however, this was also purportedly one of the easier tasks. Kim et al. (2003) also reported that tasks of a similar nature were among the most frequent and important, but not the most difficult. Similarly, writing coherent and cohesive paragraphs with correct grammar and meaning was among the most important and frequent tasks but not the most difficult. Although writing paragraphs and analytical papers was perceived as important, writing experimental/critical papers and essays was among the least important tasks. Finally, it was reported that the least important tasks were writing a research paper with a group and role-playing tasks, which were also among the least frequent. It should be reiterated that the results concerning the role play tasks should be considered with the caveat that a smaller number of participants answered questions on this item.

Moreover, the students reported that the most difficult tasks were thinking critically, writing an experimental paper, role-playing, and writing an analytical research paper. Thinking critically was noted as being both the most difficult and among the most frequent tasks, as well as being of relative importance. Teachers also reported that students must display critical thinking in their discussions and writings. Thus, although students did not believe that it was very important to develop this skill, they should be trained for it. According to Long (2005, 2015), students may not always be aware of their needs. Moreover, writing papers was among the most difficult tasks. However, writing an experimental research paper using APA style was reported to be among the least frequent and least important tasks. Conversely, writing an analytical research paper using MLA style was reported among the most frequent and relatively important tasks. However, most instructors did not differentiate between the two paper types. Nonetheless, upon further discussion of the paper

requirements, it was found that most instructors assigned the analytical type as experimental ones were usually given at higher levels. Moreover, Kim et al. (2003) reported that similar tasks were the most difficult and least frequent in their study.

Additionally, the students reported that translation, critical thinking, and critical reading were among the most important and difficult tasks (within the top 10). They also noted that engaging in group discussions was one of the most important tasks, but not the most difficult. Nonetheless, such tasks were among those that were somewhat frequent. Reading critically was considered among the top ten most important and difficult tasks. Notably, a discrepancy emerged with this task, as students indicated that they were not asked to do such reading frequently. This contradicts the instructors' claims of asking students to read critically as homework assignments. This discrepancy suggests a gap in compliance or perception between educators and students regarding this task.

## VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings from this current study suggest that a “general university skills” course should be given, as per one of the instructor’s recommendations. This course should provide critical thinking and time management training, which are skills that the students found important yet challenging to master. Moreover, academic English speaking and listening courses are needed to train students to give presentations, listen, take notes during lectures, and engage in discussions. Additionally, students should be provided with academic and general writing courses; while the latter was not considered an important task, it was frequently assigned and difficult to perform. However, the general writing course should include practice on how to write CVs, as this was found to be one of the students’ most important needs. Furthermore, students should be provided with academic reading courses that focus on critical reading and translation. These were described as important and difficult requirements by students, but also the least frequent, hence, they need guidance in these areas. Moreover, based on the interview results, placement tests should be administered to ensure suitable input and training for each group. Finally, all the recommended courses should be provided at the early program level, which some instructors also suggested.

In conclusion, conducting a TBNA may identify students’ needs more accurately when such assessment is based on the triangulation of methods and sources. For example, this study’s semi-structured interviews revealed that students’ proficiency levels range from low to average, course content was not altered for below-average students, and a research environment was almost always created. The questionnaire revealed that using LMS, time management, and giving presentations were the most frequent tasks. It also showed that time management, listening to teachers, and writing coherent/cohesive paragraphs were the most important. Furthermore, critical thinking and writing analytical or research papers were regarded as the most difficult tasks. Given these insights, this study recommends introducing university skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking, and translation courses; as well as conducting a placement test as a prior entry requirement to categorize students according to their level. It should be noted that this study was conducted during the pre-COVID period and thus the results may differ from teaching since the explosion of online communication.

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# Arabic Profession-Denoting Nouns and Gender: A Morphosyntactic Analysis of Agreement

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**Abstract**—The goal of this paper is to present a minimalist feature-based analysis that captures the verbal agreement triggered by female referent profession-denoting nouns in Modern Standard Arabic. In this language, nouns are classified as masculine or feminine based on the natural gender of their referents. Masculine nouns trigger masculine agreement on verbs, whereas feminine nouns trigger feminine agreement. However, some profession-denoting nouns are sometimes gender-neutralized; a masculine noun could be used when the natural gender of its referent is female. In this case, the masculine noun triggers feminine agreement on the verb. This unexpected type of agreement requires analysis under the latest assumptions of the Minimalist Program. The paper shows that the gender-neutralized nouns are initially selected from the numeration and introduced into the derivation with their gender feature specified as feminine. After their features are valued in narrow syntax, these nouns undergo a post-syntactic morphological operation that targets and deletes the feminine morphemes, leaving behind the masculine roots.

**Index Terms**—Agree, Arabic,  $\phi$ -features, gender, Minimalism

## I. INTRODUCTION

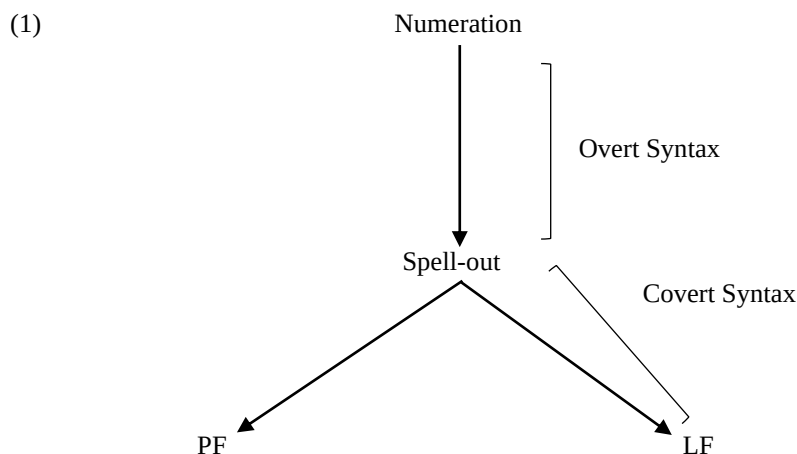
The correlation between gender and language is a hotly debated issue in the field of linguistics; it is a salient topic that is intensely researched in various areas such as typology (Corbett, 1991; Corbett & Fedden, 2016), sociolinguistics (Lakoff, 1975), morphosyntax (Kramer, 2015, 2016), language acquisition (Hopp, 2016) and translation (Flotow, 1997). Gender is defined as classifying nouns into two classes that determine the grammatical forms of associate words such as verbs, demonstratives and modifying adjectives in a grammatical context. In such a case, it is referred to as grammatical gender. Grammatical gender assigned to nouns is heavily dependent on natural gender (the biological sex of the referent). A male referent noun is assigned masculine grammatical gender, whereas a female referent noun is assigned feminine grammatical gender. This system of grammatical gender assignment is referred to by Corbett (1991) as the semantic system. However, grammatical gender is not only dependent on natural gender. Corbett (1991) identifies a different system that he calls the formal system; according to this system, grammatical gender is assigned to nouns based on their morphological or phonological properties.

Gender feature is prominent in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA); nouns fall into two gender classes based on the semantic value of gender or the morphological form: masculine and feminine. The class of gender on the noun controls agreement on the verb as we shall see in section 3 below. In this work, we focus on MSA profession-denoting nouns used to refer to men and women. Typically, these nouns are classified as masculine and feminine. However, it is observed that some profession-denoting nouns are undergoing a process of gender neutralization where the masculine form has become used to refer to both men and women. Although the form is masculine, it triggers feminine agreement when it has a female referent. This study concerns itself with unexpected agreement patterns where a masculine noun triggers feminine agreement on the verb. It adopts the latest assumption within the Minimalist framework as developed in Chomsky (1995 and later) and shows that these nouns are introduced in their structure as feminine. After their features, including gender, are valued under Agree in the narrow syntax, the feminine gender-marking morpheme is deleted at the PF interface level; we adopt Arregi and Nevins' (2007) notion of *obliteration*, which is developed within Distributed Morphology to refer to a post-syntax operation that deletes a morpheme from the structure of a word. The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the theoretical framework. Section 3 introduces MSA data and demonstrates that grammatical gender is dependent on natural gender and how grammatical gender is assigned to inanimate nouns. Section 4 discusses the literature on gender and syntactic agreement and represents our proposed analysis. Section 5 concludes the paper.

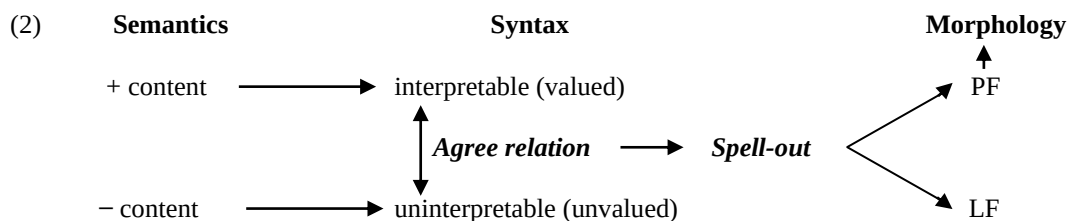
## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Gender feature on nouns is certainly relevant to syntax as it participates in agreement that is morphologically manifested on verbs and plays a major role in deriving structures. Within Chomsky's framework of the linguistic theory, the features of person, number and gender collectively referred to as phi-features ( $\phi$ -features) play a crucial role in the derivation. Under the most recent assumptions of the Minimalist Program (MP) adopted in this paper, these features are specified in the lexicon. Depending on whether they contribute to the semantic interpretation of the lexical item or not, they are introduced differently. When  $\phi$ -features appear on nominals, they contribute to the interpretation of these nominals. Therefore, they are described as interpretable  $\phi$ -features. Quite the opposite,  $\phi$ -features on functional heads such as *v*, *T* and *C* are uninterpretable  $\phi$ -features because they do not contribute to the interpretation. The classification of  $\phi$ -features as interpretable and uninterpretable results in representing them in the lexicon as valued and unvalued, respectively. Building structure is feature-based and it takes place within the computational system that has the valued and unvalued sets of  $\phi$ -features as the underlying force that triggers the computation to build structures during the stages of the derivation and representation. The derivation is initiated by the need to value and delete the unvalued uninterpretable features as they cannot be handled by the interfaces; the Full Interpretation Principle (Chomsky, 1995) requires that all the unvalued  $\phi$ -features that do not contribute to the semantic interpretation of the lexical items be deleted before they reach the representation PF and LF interface levels.

The computational system has four components involved in the process of  $\phi$ -features valuation, interpretation and association with morph-phonological forms. This structure-building system starts operating from the Numeration where the lexical items with their  $\phi$ -features, that have been selected from the lexicon, are placed before they enter the derivation. The diagram (1) below illustrates the components of the computational system.



Derivation takes place mainly within overt syntax. The selected lexical items in the Numeration undergo the operation Merge. Then, the operation Agree takes place to value the uninterpretable  $\phi$ -features. Subject-verb agreement, which is relevant to the topic of this paper, is the product Agree between *T* and the DP subject under a probe-goal configuration. The former has unvalued set of uninterpretable  $\phi$ -features. By contrast, the DP subject has a valued set of these features in addition to unvalued Case feature. Since both items are active, Agree operation applies and it values and deletes all the unvalued features. As a result, agreement is projected on the verb and the subject carries nominative Case value. Once this level of the derivation is achieved, the computation proceeds to spell-out, a point after which we reach PF and LF interfaces. The computational system relates sound (the morphophonological form) and meaning (semantic interpretation) to PF and LF interfaces respectively. Thus, at these two levels of representation, only interpretable features are allowed (Chomsky, 2000). Apparently, gender feature, as one of  $\phi$ -features, is present and active at semantic, syntactic and morphological levels. its presence and participation in the syntactic derivation and agreement is schematized as follows:



Agreement in MSA has been extensively investigated (see Fassi Fehri, 1993; Aoun et al., 1994; Mahfoudhi, 2002; Soltan, 2006; Alenazy & Saidat, 2015a; among many others). While there is consensus among authors that agreement on the verb results from the feature-based Agree operation, various analyses have been concerned with the subject positions



and word order and their implications for agreement. The agreement pattern where a masculine noun triggers feminine agreement (as we shall see in the next section) has not received attention; therefore, this anomalous agreement requires discussion within the Minimalist framework. Before we embark on our discussion in section 4 below, the next section introduces MSA data.

### III. GENDER IN ARABIC

MSA is the official language in the Arab World countries. It is the language of documentation, correspondence, instruction and media. It is also the language in which fiction, reports and studies are written. One property of this language is its rich morphological system that marks words in accordance with their grammatical functions and the contexts in which they exist. All nouns are inflected morphologically depending on their number, gender and Case. Verbs are also inflected to show agreement with their nominal subjects. MSA is one of the highly gendered languages, which has a binary gender system that classifies all nouns as masculine or feminine. Gender feature is an integral part of MSA morphosyntax as all animate and inanimate nouns are assigned grammatical gender that is congruent with their semantic gender; on the one hand, the grammatical gender assignment to animate nouns is based on their semantic (natural or biological) gender. Males and females are necessarily masculine and feminine, respectively. Inanimate nouns, on the other hand, are assigned grammatical gender depending on their morphophonological forms. Some nouns in MSA are represented lexically as pairs. As the Table 1 below shows, the semantic gender is lexicalized. Accordingly, the masculine and the feminine nouns have different lexical roots.

TABLE 1  
NOUNS WITH LEXICALIZED SEMANTIC GENDER

| <b>Masculine</b>   | <b>Feminine</b>      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| ab 'father'        | um 'mother'          |
| rajul 'man'        | imraʔah 'woman'      |
| walad 'boy'        | bint 'girl'          |
| shaikh 'old man'   | aʔjooz 'old woman'   |
| asad 'lion'        | labouʔah 'lioness'   |
| jamal 'male camel' | naqah 'female camel' |

In contrast to the nouns in the Table above, the majority of masculine and feminine animate nouns in MSA share the same lexical root. As the examples in Table 2 below illustrate, the feminine form is derived from the masculine form by adding the feminine suffix *-ah*. This suffix is used when it is final in the word; in connected speech or when this suffix is followed by the Case marker, it is produced as *-at* (see (4b) below, for example).

TABLE 2  
MASCULINE AND FEMININE NOUNS WITH A SHARED LEXICAL ROOT

| <b>Masculine</b>      | <b>Feminine</b>         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| ibn 'son'             | ibn-ah 'daughter'       |
| jad 'grandfather'     | jad-ah 'grandmother'    |
| aʔm 'paternal uncle'  | aʔm-ah 'paternal aunt'  |
| khal 'maternal uncle' | khal-ah 'maternal aunt' |
| zawj 'husband'        | zawj-ah 'wife'          |

Unlike animate nouns in Table 1 and Table 2 above, Inanimate nouns do not exhibit gender binarity. An inanimate noun that has a masculine grammatical gender does not have a feminine counterpart and vice versa. This means that these nouns are assigned either masculine or feminine grammatical gender based on their morphophonological forms. All inanimate nouns are conceived of as masculine by default unless they end with one of the sounds *-ah*, which is homophonous with the feminine marker in Table 2 above, the long vowel *-aa* or the long vowel *-aa* followed by the glottal stop (cf. Ryding, 2005), as can be seen from the Table 3 below.

TABLE 3  
NOUNS WITH MORPHOLOGY-BASED GRAMMATICAL GENDER

| <b>Masculine</b> | <b>Feminine</b>  |
|------------------|------------------|
| -                | saiyarah 'car'   |
| kitab 'book'     | -                |
| -                | sahraaʔ 'desert' |
| Sharea 'street'  | -                |
| -                | ðikraa 'memory'  |
| qalam 'pen'      | -                |

There are two classes of nouns that do not exhibit gender binarity, as those in Table 1 and 2 above; these nouns are referred to in Ryding (2005) as crypto-masculine and crypto-feminine. The former class refers to a masculine noun that ends with *-ah* sound. A crypto-feminine noun, by contrast, is a feminine referent noun, but it is not suffixed with the feminine marker. Examples of crypto-masculine nouns are ʔalamah 'scholar' and khalifah 'caliph', whereas nouns such as shamis 'sun' and areth 'earth' are examples of crypto-feminine (Ryding, 2005).



- c. qal-at      **al-ʔmeen-u**      **al-a'aam-u**      li-al-hizb-i      ad-demoqrati      al-iTali      inna-hu  
 said-3s-f   the-secretary.m-nom   the-general.m-nom   of-the-party   the-democratic   the-Italian   that-it  
 ḥana   al-waqt-u   li-al-ea'trafi   be-dawlati   fiṣṭeen  
 comes   the-time   of-the-recognition   of-state   Palestine

'The secretary general of the Italian Democratic Party said the time to recognize the state of Palestine has come.'

(Al-Rai newspaper 28/5/2024)

- d. wasaf-at      **al-ʔmeen-at-u**      **al-a'aam-at-u**      li-munadhamat-i      al-a'fwi      ad-dawliat-i  
 described.3s-f   the-secretary-f-nom   the-general-f-nom   of-organization   the-amnesty   the-international  
 at-tahjeera   al-qasria   li-sukaani   Gaza-ta   bi-anna-hu   min   jaraʔim   al-harb-i  
 the-displacement   the-forced   of-population   Gaza   that-it   from   crimes   the-war

'The general secretary of Amnesty International described the forced displacement of Gaza population as one of the war crimes.'

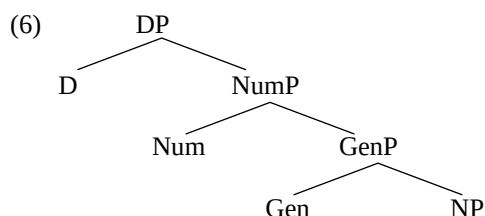
(Al-Rai newspaper 17/11/2023)

In all these examples, the profession-denoting nouns have female referents. Although the examples (5a) and (5b) come from the same source, the masculine form *wazeer-u* 'minister' and the feminine form *wazeer-at-u* are used in the same way. The examples (5c) and (5d) show the same contrast observed between (5a) and (5b). The titles in both sentences have female referents; however, it is masculine in (5a) and feminine in (5b). The inconsistent use of these female referent titles is not limited to media. Rather, similar cases to those in (5) are found in official documents such as letters of appointment, letters of communication between different governmental and private sector institutions. Whether the profession-denoting noun used to refer to a female is masculine as in (5a) and (5c) or feminine as in (5b) and (5d), agreement shown by the verb is insensitive to this discrepancy as long as the noun has a female referent. This suggests that the verb shows feminine agreement because gender feature is present when agreement is established; gender neutralization is a mere morphological process that targets the feminine marker and deletes it. In order to capture the behavior of gender-neutralized profession-denoting nouns, we will show that this morphological neutralization takes place at a post-syntactic stage following agreement that takes place in the overt syntax. Before we present our analysis, we will shed some light on previous literature in the following section.

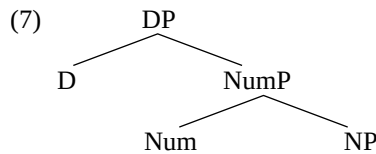
#### IV. ANALYSIS

##### A. Previous Studies

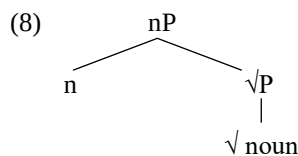
In this subsection, we review some of the prominent analyses of gender feature and show why these analyses are not applicable to MSA data and they do not account adequately for the discrepancy shown by the examples in (5) above. The literature on gender is vast and spans multiple linguistic disciplines. Syntactically, most of the studies have been concerned with the location of the gender feature and how it triggers agreement on the associate words such as verbs and adjectives. It has been assumed that gender feature occupies different locations within the structure of the DP. Picallo (1991) argues that gender appears as a separate gender projection (GenP) in Catalan DP; GenP dominates NP headed by the noun that carries this feature. Number also appears as another separate projection (NumP) according to Picallo who builds her proposal on the idea that a feature with a morphological form is represented as a separate projection. According to Picallo, the Catalan DP has the following structure:



Contra Picallo (1991), Ritter (1993) claims that gender does not exist as a separate projection while number feature does. Building on the contrast between noun phrases in Modern Hebrew and Romance languages, she assumes that number is a functional projection within DP. She further postulates that gender is a feature that exists either on Num or the head N. The DP structure, according to her view, is as follows:



Ritter argues that gender feature in Romance languages is generated on Num; its appearance on N is ascribed to the fact that it is attached to the noun that undergoes movement from N to Num. In Modern Hebrew, on the other hand, gender is located on N in the lexicon. This means that this feature accompanies the noun in all syntactic levels of representation. Kramer (2015, 2016) argues against the view gender has its own projection. Also, Kramer rejects Ritter's view that the Num head hosts gender. Instead, she assumes that gender feature is located on the head noun, alternatively it is located on a nominalizing n head. The analysis that suggests the existence of a nominalizing n head is an approach referred to as lexical decomposition; it assumes that the noun as a lexical category has two parts: the category-neutral root (represented as  $\sqrt{\text{ }}$ ) and the category-defining nominalizer n head that hosts gender feature. This view is schematized as follows:

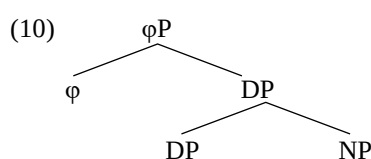


Whether we follow the assumption that gender feature is located on the head noun or another projection within DP, the behavior of the MSA profession-denoting nouns in (5) above remains unaccounted for. Following the latest minimalist assumptions discussed in Chomsky (2008), we posit that gender feature, as one of the  $\phi$ -features, is located on the head noun that constitutes the lexical core within the DP structure. Consequently, we assume that multiple projections are not necessary as they are not motivated conceptually, therefore, they should not exist (cf. Chomsky, 1995). Gender feature and its correlation with agreement have given rise to the so-called mixed agreement phenomenon (Corbett, 1991; Matushansky, 2013; Pesetsky, 2013; among others). Mixed agreement refers to the situation when a masculine noun dictates masculine or feminine agreement on a target (a verb for example) depending on whether this noun has a male or female referent. Nouns that behave in such a way are referred to as hybrid nouns (Corbett, 1991). In Russian, it has been observed that profession-denoting nouns such as *vrač* 'doctor' are masculine. However, they trigger mixed agreement on the verb; the noun *vrač*, for example, triggers feminine agreement on the verb as in (9a) when it has a female referent. By contrast, when it has a male referent, the verb shows masculine agreement as (9b) illustrates.

- (9) a. *vrač prišl-Ø*  
 doctor arrived-MASC  
 'The doctor [male] has arrived.' (Corbett, 1991, p. 231)

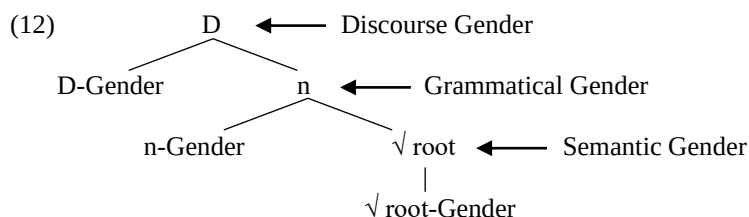
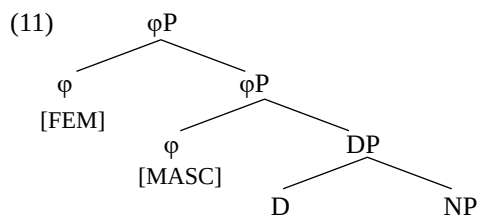
- b. *vrač prišl-a*  
 doctor arrived-FEM  
 'The doctor [female] has arrived.' (Corbett, 1991, p. 232)

In the literature, various analyses have been proposed to capture (9b) where the masculine form triggers feminine agreement. The proposed analyses agree on the idea that a feminine gender feature exists somewhere within the DP structure of the hybrid noun. However, there is no consensus among authors on the exact location of the feminine gender feature (see also the discussion above). Pesetsky (2013) argues that the feminine reading of the hybrid noun is ascribed to the merger of phonologically null morpheme that he terms a feminizing head  $\mathcal{K}$ .<sup>1</sup> This head is merged within NP structure, and once it is merged the nominal becomes feminine. Accordingly, it triggers feminine agreement. A different view is found in Sauerland (2004) who proposes that  $\phi$ -features (including gender feature) form a projection  $\phi$ P whose  $\phi$ -head selects the DP as a complement, as in (10) below:



<sup>1</sup> Pesetsky (2013, p. 39) clarifies that he represents the feminizing head "with the Cyrillic letter  $\mathcal{K}$  (pronounced "že"), the first letter of *ženščina* 'woman' and many related words".

Sauerland argues that  $\phi$ P is recursive. Therefore, in hybrid nouns, two layers of  $\phi$ -features exist with the feminine gender located in the second layer as (11) below illustrates.



The lower  $\phi$ -head in this structure is uninterpretable and exists to license the head noun. The higher feminine head, by contrast, is interpretable and triggers feminine agreement. In fact, this proposal is questionable according to Steriopo (2019), who asserts that it is problematic when it comes to the DP-internal agreement mismatches between the noun and the attributive adjectives because  $\phi$ -features are located above the DP. Steriopo and Wiltschko (2010) argue for Distributed Gender Hypothesis which proposes that gender feature is not located in one single projection; rather, gender feature is distributed across three different positions in the syntactic structure of the hybrid noun. According to this approach gender is divided into three levels: semantic gender which exists on the root (or the head noun), grammatical gender which exists on  $n$  (this corresponds to the nominalizing  $n$  in Kramer's analysis in (8) above), and finally discourse gender on the determiner  $D$ ; it is semantic gender that is dependent on the natural gender of the discourse referent. Steriopo and Wiltschko further assume that the higher gender in the structure of the hybrid nouns overrides the lower gender. This hypothesis is represented in (12) below.

However, Steriopo and Wiltschko (2010) are skeptical about the idea that discourse gender (the higher) overrides grammatical gender (the lower) in hybrid nouns. The only explanation they provide is that Russian hybrid nouns are unique in that they, unlike other nouns, have both discourse gender and grammatical gender at the same time. Steriopo (2018) revisits Steriopo and Wiltschko's (2010) analysis and dispenses with grammatical gender. Accordingly, she argues that gender is distributed across two positions: semantic gender located on  $n$ , and discourse gender located on  $D$ ; the root is categorial and does not have features.

The problem with these analyses, we would argue, is that they are objectionable on theoretical grounds and are not extendable to Arabic DP. Theoretically, multiple projections within the structure of DP pose a challenge to Agree Theory and complicate the derivation. If gender feature occupies different positions at the same time, then each projection which has its own gender feature needs to probe independently for an active goal to value this feature. Other features, such as number and person, also need to be valued and consequently initiate Agree with matching goals. This would mean that multiple agreement patterns are expected to arise on the verb. Furthermore, the assumption that masculine and feminine gender coexist within the structure of the hybrid noun, as in (11) above, to justify why the masculine noun triggers feminine agreement seems an ad hoc solution whose only purpose is to capture the behavior of the Russian hybrid noun; its application does not extend far beyond these nouns. Arabic gender-neutralized nouns such as those in (5) and above do not lend themselves easily to the analyses outlined in this subsection because they are significantly different from hybrid nouns. Although, the masculine profession-denoting noun triggers feminine agreement when its referent is female, it has a usable feminine counterpart. This strongly indicates that these nouns should not be treated on par with the Russian hybrid nouns. With this in mind, we turn now to our proposed analysis.

#### B. The Proposed Analysis

For the sake of clarity and ease of reference, we give the following short examples that parallel those in (5) above; in the examples below, the noun has a female referent. However, it has feminine grammatical gender in (13a), whereas it has masculine grammatical gender in (13b). In both cases it triggers feminine agreement on the verb.

- (13) a. ḥadar-at          al-wazeer-at-u    al-ejtimaā'-a  
          attended.3fs    the-minister-f-nom    the-meeting-acc  
          'The minister attended the meeting.'

- b. *ḥadar-at*      *al-wazeer-u*      *al-ejtimaa'-a*  
 attended.3fs    the-minister.m-nom    the-meeting-acc  
 'The minister attended the meeting.'

When the noun has a male referent, it has only one possible variant: a masculine form that triggers masculine agreement on the verbs as (14) below shows.

- (14) *ḥadara*      *al-wazeer-u*      *al-ejtimaa'-a*  
 attended.3ms    the-minister.m-nom    the-meeting-acc  
 'The minister attended the meeting.'

Of these examples, only (13a) (also those in (5b) and (5c) above) is of particular interest. The well-formedness of sentence like (13b) indicates clearly that feminine gender is present even if it is not morphologically marked. Evidence supporting this conclusion comes from the attributive adjectives internal to the DP structure. These adjectives show full agreement with the noun they modify in all the features carried by the noun including the gender feature. Adjectives that modify masculine nouns are masculine and adjectives that modify feminine nouns are invariably feminine; whether the profession-denoting noun that has a female referent is feminine or masculine, the adjective that modifies it must be feminine, as (15a) and (15b) illustrate. (15c) is ruled out because the modifying adjective is masculine.

- (15) a. *ḥadar-at*      *al-wazeer-at-u*      *al-muhtaram-at-u*      *al-ejtimaa'-a*  
 attended.3fs    the-minister-f-nom    the-respected-f-nom    the-meeting-acc  
 'The minister attended the meeting.'
- b. *ḥadar-at*      *al-wazeer-u*      *al-muhtaram-at-u*      *al-ejtimaa'-a*  
 attended.3fs    the-minister.m-nom    the-respected-f-nom    the-meeting-acc  
 'The minister attended the meeting.'
- c.\* *ḥadar-at*      *al-wazeer-u*      *al-muhtaram-u*      *al-ejtimaa'-a*  
 attended.3fs    the-minister.m-nom    the-respected.m-nom    the-meeting-acc  
 'The minister attended the meeting.'

It is a standard assumption in the syntactic literature that the features on the adjective in MSA match those on the modified nouns and the two items agree with each other at the DP level (see Fassi Fehri, 1999; Kremers, 2003; Alenazy, in press; among others). Irrespective of the analyses proposed to capture how agreement between the noun and the modifying adjective is established, the use of the attributive adjectives in (15b) above suggests that the noun is feminine. However, the question that remains unanswered at this juncture is: how does the masculine form trigger feminine agreement on the verb?

One possible way to explain how the masculine noun triggers feminine agreement is to assume, following Alenazy and Saidat (2015b), that the masculine profession-denoting noun with a female referent is a hybrid lexical item. In their analyses of animal nouns used metaphorically to refer to human beings, Alenazy and Saidat notice that certain feminine animal names in Jordanian Arabic are used to refer to males and vice versa. For example, the feminine noun in (16a) below has a male referent so it triggers masculine agreement. In (16b), on the other hand, a masculine noun is used to refer to a female, which is why it triggers feminine agreement. (In (16a), the intended meaning of the noun is *coward*, whereas in (16b), the intended meaning is *beautiful*).

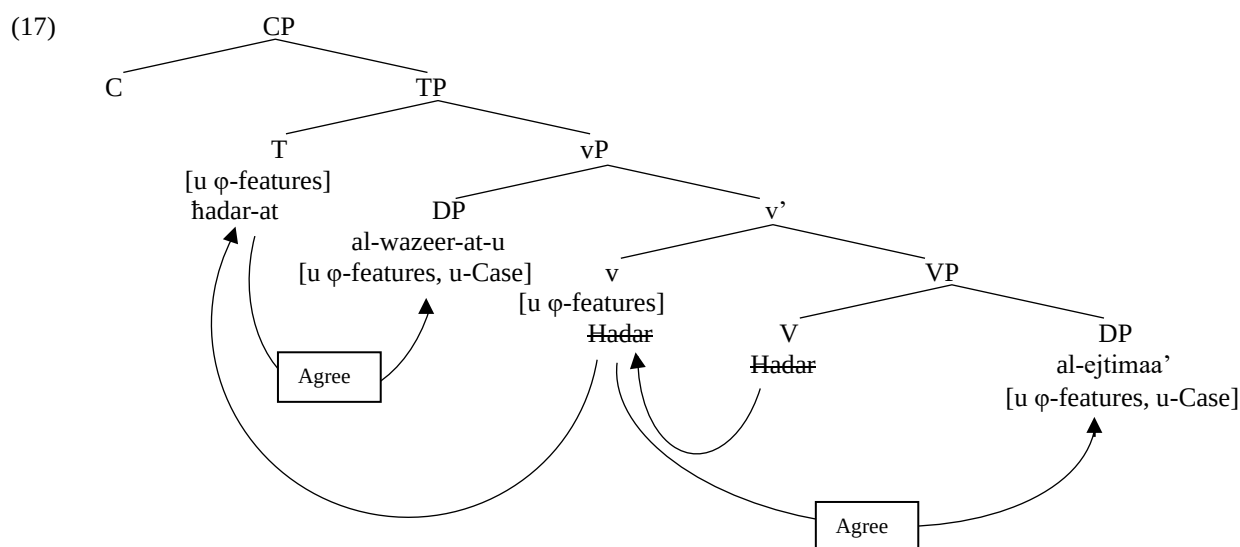
- (16) a. *ad-dajajeh*      *sharad*  
 the-hen.3fs      escaped.3ms  
 'The hen escaped.'
- b. *al-jamal*      *raaHat*  
 the-camel.3ms left.3fs  
 'The camel left.'

(Alenazy & Saidat, 2015b, p. 105)

The analyses they propose to capture these sentences builds on Chomsky's (2001) feature system and Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphor. Accordingly, they argue that animal metaphors such as those in (16) above are hybrid lexical items that result from a mapping process between the animal domains (the source) and the human domain (the target). Mapping of  $\phi$ -features is part of this process; the  $\phi$ -features of the human target are mapped onto the animal source. Therefore, when these nouns function as subjects the mapped  $\phi$ -features on them trigger the relevant agreement pattern on the verb. This line of analysis seems *prima facie* applicable to the gender-neutralized profession-denoting nouns; we could straightforwardly claim that the nouns in (5b), (5c), and (13b) above are treated on par with the

metaphors in (16) above. However, this line of analysis is not attainable because a close comparison reveals two significant differences between the two nouns. First, contrary to the animal metaphor which is a noun with the properties of two distinct nouns conceptually mapped to produce a hybrid lexical item as explained few lines above, the gender-neutralized noun is not a product of a mapping process. Second, in each case where a profession-denoting masculine noun is used with a female referent, there is a feminine version of the same noun. Taking these two differences into consideration, we are left with two scenarios to capture the behavior of the gender-neutralized nouns. The first scenario is to assume that these nouns are lexicalized in that neutralization of gender takes place in the lexicon before the nouns are merged in the structure; in other words, the noun enters the derivation and becomes part of Agree without having gender feature. During the course of the derivation, gender feature as feminine is specified depending on the context and the clues available in the sentence that help recover gender feature. However, this scenario does not account for the attributive adjectives (see 15 above) that retain gender feature. In fact, the behavior of the attributive adjectives provides support for the second scenario in which we initially assume that the feminine feature, as one of the  $\phi$ -features, is present in the narrow syntax and it contributes to agreement. To put things into perspective, let us consider how the derivation of (13a) above, where the profession-denoting noun is feminine, proceeds.

The noun is merged in the specifier of vP as an external argument of the verb. Its valued  $\phi$ -features and unvalued Case feature, which means that the noun is rendered an active goal that is available for Agree with a higher probe T that is active too by virtue of having unvalued  $\phi$ -features. The lexical verb undergoes head movement from V to v. Then, after it agrees with its object, it undergoes a further head movement from v to T. This level of derivation is schematized in the structure (17) below.



The head T initiates Agree relation with the DP subject in the specifier of vP to value its  $\phi$ -features by matching them with their valued counterparts on the DP. In return, T values the unvalued Case feature. The outcome of this Agree relation is the valuation and deletion of all the unvalued features; T projects agreement in  $\phi$ -features, and Case feature on the DP is valued as nominative. Once this unit of computation is completed it is transferred to spell-out, a point at which no further syntactic operations apply to value features. As regards the masculine noun in (13b) above, which triggers feminine agreement, we argue that this noun enters the derivation feminine. As such, the derivation of the sentence in which it exists is identical to the derivation of (13a) represented in (17). However, the point of departure between the two structures is that gender neutralization takes place at the PF interface level after spell-out; this neutralization is a post-syntactic morphological operation that deletes the feminine morpheme. We base our claim that a post-syntactic operation exists on Bonet (1991) who proposes *impoverishment* as a post-syntactic operation within the field of Distributed Morphology that results in the deletion of a feature on a terminal node. Arregi and Nevins (2007) propose *obliteration* as another post-syntactic process which is, unlike impoverishment, targets a terminal node and deletes a morpheme from the structure of the word. This is exactly what happens when it comes to the gender-neutralized nouns in MSA. As mentioned earlier, attributive adjectives support this conclusion as they are not influenced by the post-syntactic obliteration; the deletion of the feminine morpheme of the noun, but not of the adjective, indicates clearly that the deletion of the feminine morpheme is a morphological operation that operates at the level of the word.

## V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The minimalist feature-based analysis proposed in this paper directly accounts for subject-verb agreement and how it is established in narrow syntax. In the case where some masculine profession-denoting nouns trigger feminine agreement, the paper has shown that these nouns enter the derivation feminine, and they become part of the feature-valuation Agree

operation. At spell-out, the morphological operation *obliteration* applies and deletes the feminine morpheme. This deletion of the feminine gender marker, we would posit, is a gender-neutralization process that is motivated by sociopolitical factors to promote the status of women by using less-gendered language. Obviously, the discrepancy in the use of the gendered and gender-neutralized forms is an indication that slow syntactic change is taking place. Gender neutralization in profession- denoting nouns is limited to singular nouns; plural nouns are either masculine or feminine. In contrast to (13) above, only a feminine plural is allowed to be used with female referents, as can be seen from (18) below:

- (18) a. ḥadar-at            al-wazeer-aat-u    al-ejtimaa'-a  
          attended.3fs    the-minister-fp-nom    the-meeting-acc  
          'The female ministers attended the meeting.'
- b.\* ḥadar-at            al-wuzaraa'-u            al-ejtimaa'-a  
          attended.3fs    the-minister.mp-nom    the-meeting-acc  
          'The minister attended the meeting.'

We tentatively assume that there is a regulating condition that requires the obliteration of the feminine morpheme only. When this morpheme is obliterated, a singular form (the masculine root) that lacks feminine gender remains. Conversely, the morpheme *-aat* in (18a) above is a feminine plural morpheme that is added to a singular masculine root to derive a feminine plural noun. Its deletion means that both gender and number features are deleted. This deletion results in a singular form lacking the essential interpretable number plural feature. If the analysis proposed in this paper is on the right track, it paves the way for further discussions of the phenomenon. It also can be extended to account for related issues and structures in MSA and other languages.

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# A Critical Sociolinguistic Study of Conservatism in Selected British Novels

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**Abstract**—The main point of this study is to examine the ideology of conservatism in the selected British novels *The Blessing* by Nancy Mitford and *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith through the application of a critical sociolinguistic model. These two novels were chosen for having conservatism as the main theme. In this study, conservatism was analyzed according to four phases: the first phase (initiation) shows context and conservatism types. The second phase (description) highlights the text analysis, which involves analyzing vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. The third phase represents social analysis, which involves some social factors like age, gender, status, and style. The last phase is evaluation, in which ideology is evaluated according to some selected functions. In both novels, it seems that cultural conservatism is the most commonly used type. Further, it is shown that conservatives tend to use simple words that are easily understood by others. Additionally, declaratives, second and third person pronouns, and modality of necessity and probability are the most followed grammatical categories by conservatives. In relation to social analysis, it is proven that old people are more conservative than young ones, women are more conservative than men, uneducated people are more conservative than educated ones, and informal style is more used than formal style. With regard to evaluating conservatism, it seems that explaining, evaluating, orienting, and prescribing functions are all used in both novels.

**Index Terms**—conservatism, critical sociolinguistics, Fairclough's socio-cultural approach, ideology, social factors

## I. INTRODUCTION

As the title suggests, this paper discusses conservatism from a critical sociolinguistic perspective. To do this, a general review must first be introduced.

It is not surprising that, until now, there is no comprehensive theory for sociolinguistics that accounts for the relation between language and society. Most of the previous theories try to shed light on certain aspects of this relationship, neglecting others. As such, there is a need for an approach that accounts for problems in this relation that other approaches have overlooked.

Accordingly, critical sociolinguistics is suggested, as it is one of the approaches that deal with sociolinguistics. In terms of sociolinguistics, language is defined as “more than just a means of interaction or communication among members of society” (Heller et al., 2018, p. 119). Additionally, critical sociolinguistics has a function beyond that function of language in relation to scopes like social stratification, feelings, culture, and the human mind.

One of the most important concerns of critical sociolinguistics is exposing the way language produces, sustains, and replicates fundamental inequalities and conflicts in social groups. Inequalities and conflicts are everywhere: in education, economy, communication, and politics (Heller et al., 2018). Nonetheless, when it comes to conservatism, it is found that critical sociolinguistics deals with such issues. In other words, conflict is the area where critical sociolinguistics and conservatism meet. In conservatism, there is conflict and inequality between old and new norms, traditions, and conventions. Thus, it can be defined as an aesthetic, cultural, social, and political philosophy that seeks to promote and preserve traditional social institutions (McLean & McMillan, 2009).

Recently, a study by Frimer (2020) was presented to test the moral language of both liberals and conservatives. It showed that the moral average word differs according to the moral foundations and ideologies that each party carries. Since then, none of the previous studies had dealt with conservatism from a critical sociolinguistic perspective; hence, the current study is presented.

Having a gap that Critical Discourse Analysis fails to close, the current study tries to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the common types of conservatism that are used in the selected novels?
2. Textually, how can conservatism be analyzed?
3. What are the social factors that may affect conservatism?

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#### 4. How is the ideology of conservatism evaluated?

According to the above-mentioned questions, the following aims are put forth:

1. Investigating the common types of conservatism that are used in the selected novels.
2. Showing out how conservatism can be analyzed textually.
3. Shedding light on the social factors that may affect conservatism.
4. Examining how the ideology of conservatism can be evaluated.

Based on the previous aims, the current study hypothesizes the following:

1. There are some common types of conservatism that can be used in the selected novels, like social, cultural, political, and religious.
2. Textually, conservatism can be analyzed according to semantic, syntactic, cohesion, and textual structure categories.
3. Age, gender, status, and style are the selected social factors that may affect conservatism.
4. The ideology of conservatism can be evaluated according to its functions in the selected texts.

Lastly, the study is hoped to be valuable for those who have interests in linguistic, sociolinguistic, and critical domains. It is also supposed to be of value to those who have interests in literature or those who feel oppressed by social traditions.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Conservatism as a Concept

To begin, Cecil (1912) defined conservatism as “the instinctive human fear of sudden change and tendency to habitual action” (p. 8). In this sense, one can say that conservatism initially started as a social attitude rather than a political one.

According to Huntington (1957), there are four definitions for “conservatism”, and these definitions connect to and overlap with each other. First, conservatism has been regarded as “an aristocratic ideology.” In other words, it is historically related to aristocratic societies that see their values as worth keeping. Second, it has been treated as “a distinct ideology” protected by a political party or a conservative family. A pragmatic political approach that works as opposed to ideological politics is the third definition. Finally, conservatism has been defined as the “psychological habit” of rejecting change.

Thus, the definition of conservatism can be summed up as an ideology with positive or negative attitudes towards social change. It is positive when a conservative intends to adapt that which is positive, neglecting aspects that do not fit modernity. It is negative when a conservative is totally blinded by traditions.

In relation to the different types of conservatism, there are many; however, the current study focuses on the most common ones (see Figure 1). First, it refers politically to a set of beliefs that politicians follow in ruling a nation. Most of these beliefs are inherited from traditions of previous governments (Muller, 1997). Next, conservatism refers socially to a society that is built upon a delicate network of relationships that need to be supported through duty, traditional values, and conventions. Members of both society and government have a role in encouraging these traditional values. Examples of social conservatism are marriage, the family as a foundational unit, child adoption, same-gender relationships, prohibition of drug use, and so on (Heywood, 2017). Culturally, conservatism supports keeping the heritage of one nation or of a shared culture that is not defined by national boundaries. In other words, there are some values that could be shared among nations, for example, meritocracy in British and American societies. Cultural conservatives believe little in traditional values and traditional politics and often have an urgent sense of nationalism (Seaton, 1996). Finally, religiously, conservatism essentially focuses on teaching religious values to young generations. The process of teaching takes two forms: preaching to people or applying these values by law (Andersen et al., 2005).

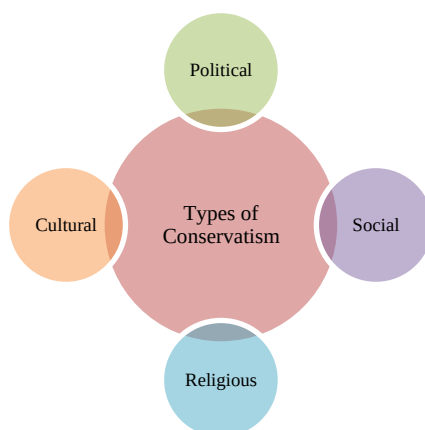


Figure 1. Types of Conservatism

### B. Critical Sociolinguistics

Originally, the roots of critical sociolinguistics (CSL) go back to the field of critical theory as it relates to society in general. This brings attention to what Marx referred to as the marginalized and the social inequalities and how he sought to free people from the circumstances that enslaved them (Horkheimer, 1982).

For Hymes (1996), criticality on language in society has been shown to be clear since initiating work in sociolinguistics in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1990s. Language is not only limited to a cognitive property held by Chomsky. Yet, it lends itself an eye on the social phenomenon and regulation. The speech community is proof of such a claim. Therefore, linguistic resources are socialized to achieve communicative aims. This shows how language works in society.

Additionally, notions like power, conventions, inequalities, and conflicts become subject to different debates and critiques. Critical implications arise about such notions of language when speakers and language are marginalized. Consequently, CSL sheds light on and gives a voice to the marginalized (Hymes, 1977). However, methods like critical discourse analysis (CDA) can be used as a tool for CSL. It takes on the role of both reflector and reproducer of certain beliefs, ideas, worldviews, and power relations. Moreover, it examines the text from linguistic, social, political, psychological, and historical perspectives, giving CDA a valuable methodological tool for managing societal inequalities (Weiss & Wodak, 2007).

In addition to inequalities, CSL deals with discrimination, which is analyzed via critical conversation analysis (CA). It examines two aspects: the first is social interactions, and the second regards the linguistic structure, including the linguistic choices, semiotics, pragmatics, and so on (Sidnell & Stivers, 2012). Therefore, one can say that critical theory in relation to language and society can create and sustain power relations within a community. This is exactly the core idea of CSL.

### C. *CSL and Ideology*

Broadly speaking, the term “ideology” refers to systems of ideas, beliefs, practices, and representations that operate in the interests of an identifiable social class or cultural group. Common usages generally fall into two categories: a critical definition allied with Marxist theory and a relativist definition used in liberal social theory and popular neoliberal discourse.

Furthermore, the concept of ideology has been developed to include the “ideological environment” in relation to the concrete social theory. Referring to it as an ideological environment is an excellent expression because ideology is not fixed to mind possession only but has a material social existence in language, text, and discourse (as cited in Voloshinov, 1973).

The relation of ideology to language is central in the social theory over the degrees of power that can be assigned to social structure and human agency. That is, ideology can construct and position the human subject through language. Thus, language is the means via which ideology is expressed. This indicates a marked shift from social structure to text structure (Bakhtin & Medvedev, 1985).

Critically, ideologies can operate on two social levels. First, there is the overall societal level, such as conflict, struggle, inequality, and so on, and at the local level of the situated social practices of everyday interactions. CSL meets ideology at the first level. It tries to investigate ideologies of those social groups who have power that cause conflict, struggle, and inequality (Van Dijk, 1998).

### D. *Fairclough's Socio-Cultural Approach (2001)*

Fairclough, one of the most significant scholars in the realm of CDA, created the “socio-cultural approach”, which focuses on social problems using linguistic devices as a means to examine ideology in relation to social and cultural aspects (Meyer, 2001). The overall approach focuses on the progression from description to interpretation to explanation.

Fairclough (2001) distinguishes between three stages of CDA: description, interpretation, and explanation. In his first stage, he focuses on analyzing the speaker's and writer's beliefs in a text. In other words, he tries to highlight the linguistic properties of the given text. Such properties include word choice, grammatical structures, cohesion, and textual structure. In the second stage, the meaning of discourse is reached by looking for participants, their ideologies, cognition, and social resources (Blommaert, 2005). Finally, the third stage of explanation investigates the ideological effects of social practices in discourse. The main purpose of this is to show how social structure could affect discourse (Pesic, 2022).

### E. *Social Factors*

Social factors are aspects that refer to the speaker's social identity and include social class, gender, status, age, ethnicity, and so on. They are influenced by the three components of language: setting, participants, and topic. Generally, they form fruitful ground for sociolinguistics (Swann et al., 2004). More specifically, age, gender, status, and style are the most related to conservatism.

Age is a core factor in sociolinguistics. It creates change in two senses: (a) change in the speech community over time and (b) change in an individual's speech over age. It cannot be separated from the social environment, yet it is interacted with by several factors like social class, ethnicity, culture, and so on (Ammon, 2005, p. 2334).

Additionally, studies on language and gender show that differences in speech resulting from gender are the main issue in sociolinguistics. Male and female language has been studied since the 1970s and has highlighted the fact that men and women see the world differently, which is reflected in the language they use (Putz & Verspoor, 2000).

In relation to style, a question can be asked, “Which style can be used by a conservative?” To answer this question, one has to know the social context of the conservative's speech. It has been shown that conservatism has a relationship to

the “defensive style”—the habitual way of defending an individual's thoughts and ideas when she/he feels that they are in danger. Usually, a defensive style is full of emotional words that help the speaker gain the agreement of others. This defensive style can be formal or casual. It depends on several factors like age, social distance, gender, and so on. (Horowitz, 2016).

While “status” can be a fuzzy concept, it is still an intuitive reality. To examine the function of status as a conditioning factor that influences linguistic variation, one needs to come up with ways of “diagnosing” or measuring it. Sometimes, an individual’s occupation, their education, their income, or their residence is used as a sign of their social class (Labov, 1966).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

In the current study, the qualitative method is followed and focuses on linguistically analyzing chosen extracts in relation to a variety of social factors. That is, it focuses on words, situations, or contexts rather than numbers. Also, it follows a quantitative method concerning descriptive results, or the statistical part in which the frequency of occurrences and percentages are provided. Accordingly, the followed method is a mixed method since both are used.

#### B. Data Collection

Two British novels from different eras were selected. The first novel is *The Blessing* by Nancy Mitford, published in 1951, and the second novel is *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith, published in 2000. Two extracts were chosen to be analyzed from each novel. Conservatism is investigated in these two novels, highlighting the procession of conservatism over time.

#### C. The Developed Model of the Analysis

The model of the study consisted of four phases: initiation, description, explanation, and evaluation. Basically, Phases 1 and 3 were developed by the researcher. For Phase 2, Fairclough's (2001) model was adapted for its social nature since the current study focuses on sociolinguistic aspects of conservatism and their critical study. Regarding phase 4, Ball and Dagger's (2002) functions of ideology were adopted (see Figure 2).

##### (a). Phase 1: Initiation

The first phase consisted of two steps: context and types of conservatism. Through context, a few general questions were answered: “Who is talking to whom?”, “What is the topic of speaking?”, and “What is the time and place of speaking?” Moreover, the types of conservatism were investigated to show whether political, social, cultural, or religious conservatism were dominant.

##### (b). Phase 2: Description

In this phase, selected extracts were analyzed linguistically. In other words, vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure are examined according to Fairclough's (2001) model. In vocabulary, word choice, word meaning, and word metaphor were tested. In its grammatical categories, modes of sentences, pronouns, and modality were investigated. In its cohesive categories, connectives and argumentation (critical or logical) were clarified. Concerning textual structure, interactional control and complexity are highlighted.

##### (c). Phase 3: Explanation

In this phase, four social factors are inspected: age, gender, status, and style. More clearly, it is important in studying conservatism to know the age of conservatives, their gender, their educational status, and whether their style was formal, causal, or defensive.

##### (d). Phase 4: Evaluation

In this phase, the ideology of conservatism is evaluated according to its functions. Ball and Dagger (2002) posit that ideology has four functions: explanation, evaluation, orientation, and prescription. It is an explanation if there are two existing ideologies within the same texts. It is an evaluation if the conservative tries to evaluate others' ideologies according to the surrounding events. It is an orientation if the conservative tries to orient others to follow his ideology. Finally, it is prescription if the conservative tries to oblige people to follow his ideology by using “should” or “must”.

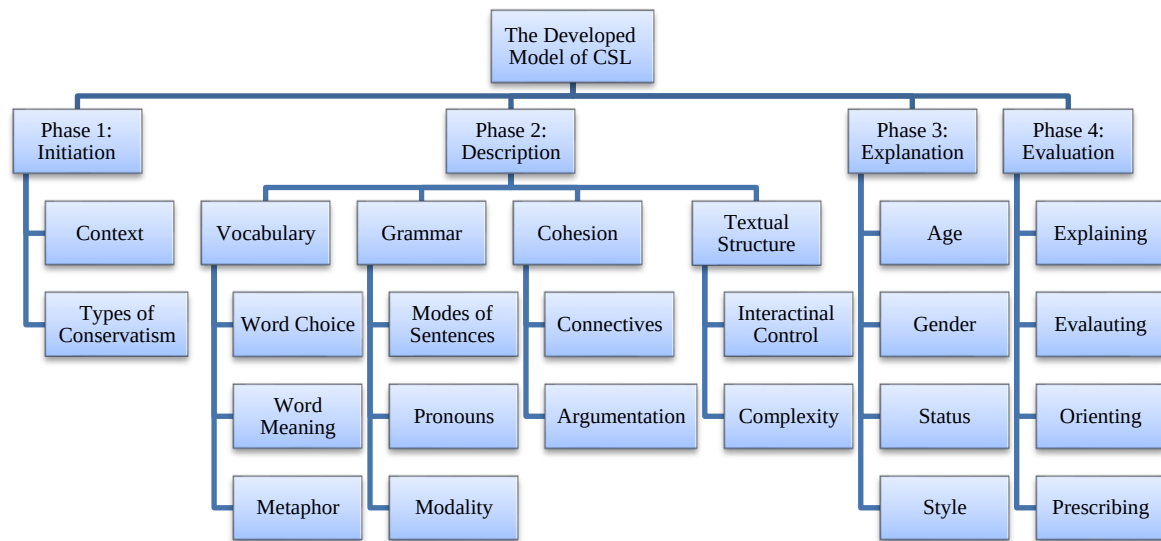


Figure 2. The Developed Model of CSL

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

##### A. Nancy Mitford's "The Blessing" (1951)

###### (a). Extract 1

Grace said:

"So tell me more, now I've seen them. Who is the old man?"

"M. de la Bourlie? He is my grandmother's lover."

"Her lover?" Grace was very much startled. "Isn't she rather old to have a lover?"

"Has age to do with love?" Charles-Edouard looked so much surprised that Grace said:

"Oh well – I only thought. Anyway, perhaps there's nothing in it."

He roared with laughter, saying, "How English you are. But M. de la Bourlie has visited my grandmother every single day for forty-six years, and in such a case you may be sure that there is always love". (Mitford, 1951, p. 32)

###### 1. Phase 1: Initiation

Contextually, Grace is talking to her husband, Charles-Edouard, about family issues regarding his grandmother. The time of speaking is in the early 1950s in France, after the two traveled to see his family. With regard to the type of conservatism, it is closest to being cultural. In other words, it is cultural in the sense that the differences exist between two different cultures (the British and the French).

###### 2. Phase 2: Description

Word choice was carefully examined. That is, words were intentionally chosen by the characters and examined by the researchers. For example, Grace's choice of the word "anyway" gives a hint that her marriage may not continue for long. That is, she chooses to end discussion with her husband because she knows whatever she says, she will get the same results. Second, Charles-Edouard chooses to use "English" when describing Grace as conservative, meaning that whoever is English is conservative.

Considering grammar, Grace and Charles-Edouard use declarative and interrogative modes of sentences. Grace, as a conservative, uses the interrogative mode more than her husband to inquire about things that she ignores in her husband's family, whereas Charles-Edouard uses the declarative mode to answer Grace's inquiries. In this extract, clearly, the conservative ideology is exhibited through inquiries rather than statements. Accordingly, it is important for Grace to inquire.

Investigating pronouns, it is found that first, second, and third personal pronouns are used. Each pronoun is used in its structure and context. Yet, what has gained attention is Charles-Edouard's use of the second pronoun "you" in "and in such a case you may be sure that there is always love." He uses the pronoun "you" more than any other pronoun to state that Grace lacks love when dealing with him.

As for modality, Grace often uses probability when talking to her husband. This is due to the cultural gap between them. She has not a full image about culture, traditions, or even the language of her husband. Thus, she consistently uses probability.

The third grammatical category is cohesion. Starting with connectives, it is obvious that both pronouns and demonstratives, or “references,” are used in the current extract. The pronouns and demonstratives used include “I”, “she”, “you”, “my”, “he”, “me”, “them”, “that”, and “there”. Furthermore, substitution is used when Charles-Edouard alternates “M. de la Bourlie” with the pronoun “he” and “grandmother” with “she”. Also, “anyway”, “but”, and “and” are used as conjunctions to connect sentences together. The last cohesive device is lexical cohesion. It is clear with the repetition of the words “lover” and “grandmother” to show how English is conservative regarding love relationships out of marriage in an advanced stage of age. Having the four categories of cohesion makes the selected extract more cohesive.

Additionally, argumentation is highlighted through Grace and Charles-Edouard's speech. The conservative Grace uses critical argumentation for asking about love relationships. It is critical because Grace focuses on age rather than marriage. Consequently, she feels that it is strange since it goes against what she used to see in England, her home country.

Within text structure and in specific interactional control, it was found that Charles-Edouard has more turns when speaking to Grace. This lacks Grace's chance to control the situation. Further, both Grace and Charles-Edouard keep to the central idea of love at an advanced age. In relation to complexity, Grace uses simple sentences, unlike her husband, who uses complex ones. This may be due to his controlling personality. As such, this may weaken Grace's conservative personality as a controller.

### 3. Phase 3: Explanation

Starting with age, both Grace and her husband Charles-Edouard are in their twenties; Grace is 23 and her husband is 28. Thus, in this extract, the conservative is younger than the anti-conservative. Concerning gender, the conservative is a woman, and the anti-conservative is a man and her husband. As for status, Grace is a country girl who does not work, unlike Charles-Edouard, who has a high position in the French Air Force. Finally, there is style. Being a husband and a wife, the couple use the informal style. No formalities are used by either.

### 4. Phase 4: Evaluation

According to what has been mentioned, one can say that the existing ideology is an ideology of explanation. More clearly, there are two ideologies: a conservative ideology regarding love and a modern ideology in relation to love. Somehow, Grace's conservative ideology is weaker than her husband's ideology. This may be due to the social factor of gender and male dominance.

#### (b). Extract 2

“But they're not in politics, Heck – hardly any, at least,” said Hughie.

“Not openly, no. That's their cunning. They work behind the scenes,” replied Hector.

“If you can call it work.”

“For the cause of Communism. The point I am trying to make is that they are dangerous because they are politically contaminated, a political contamination that can, in every traceable case, be traced to Moscow,” explained Hector.

“I say, hold on, Heck,” said Hughie. “All the old queens I know are terrific old Tories”. (Mitford, 1951, p. 104)

#### 1. Phase 1: Initiation

To start with context, Grace's friend, Hector, is talking to Grace's former fiancé, Hughie, about the political system in Britain and how politics works. The situation takes place in London in the early 1950s. Concerning the type of conservatism, both Hector and Hughie are talking about a political issue. Consequently, one can say that the given extract represents political conservatism.

#### 2. Phase 2: Description

Starting with vocabulary, it was found that there are some expressions like “behind the scenes”, “work”, “politically contaminated”, and “old queens” that were deliberately chosen. For instance, Hector chooses the expression “behind the scenes” to declare that most political systems have hidden scenarios that are different from how they publicly look. In turn, Hughie says, “If you can call it work,” to imply that what the government calls “work” is not actually work since work requires effort, which the government does not put forward for their people. By “politically contaminated”, Hector tries to emphasize that this type of pollution is the most dangerous one since it influences people directly. “Old queens” is another word that is chosen intentionally by Hughie to criticize the policy of the Monarchy for its dictatorial rules. As for word meaning, there are two expressions that need to be explained. They are “Communism” and “old Tories”. Communism is a political movement whose main ideology is centered on common ownership as the means of production. Old Tories is an expression that refers to those who are conservative.

In grammar, it looks that both Hector and Hughie use declarative modes when discussing an issue. As for pronouns, two types of pronouns are used: the first singular pronoun “I” and the third plural pronoun “they”. This shows that both Hector and Hughie talk about anti-conservatives who are absent at the moment of talking. Though both criticize

communism directly, they use the modality of probability when criticizing it through modals like “can”. In “If you can call it work”, Hughie uses the modal “can” to minimize the strength of communism, accusing it of having no real work to do.

As for cohesion, connectives are used through the given pronouns and demonstratives, like “they”, “I”, and “that”. Furthermore, Hector uses ellipsis when describing the policy of communism as playing behind the scenes. In other words, instead of saying, “It is not open about its politics,” he says, “Not openly. No.” to avoid redundancy. “But”, “if”, and “for” are used as conjunctions to connect sentences to each other. The last cohesive device that is used is lexical cohesion. In other words, they repeat the two words “work” and “political”. This emphasizes Hector and Hughie's point of view, which is that what communism presents is not work.

In relation to argumentation, it seems that Hector and Hughie follow a critical argumentation rather than a logical one. They criticize communism since it goes against their capitalist orientations.

Within text structure, it was found that the category of interactional control is presented through Hector's turns since he has most of the turn-takings in the given extract. Moreover, Hector, as a conservative, uses complex sentences when talking about communism. This belongs to the nature of the topic and to the hearer's status (Hughie), who is educated.

### 3. Phase 3: Explanation

Regarding age, it seems that Hector is older than Hughie. In relation to gender, the conservative Hector is a man. Additionally, he has worked in policy for several years, taking it as his status. Highlighting style, it is shown that Hughie calls Hector “Heck”. Accordingly, this can be an indication that the informal style is used.

### 4. Phase 4: Evaluation

Through the extract and the above-mentioned analysis, it is concluded that Hector's ideology functions as an ideology of evaluation since he tries to evaluate the situation according to the surrounding events.

## B. *Zadie Smith's White Teeth (2000)*

### (a). Extract 1

I say, isn't dat right, Darcus?’

‘Hmph.’

‘An’ it not,’ exclaimed Hortense, returning to Clara, having received Darcus’s grunt of approval, ‘dat young man’s soul you boddin’ yourself wid! How many times must I tell you – you got no time for bwoys! (Smith, 2000, p. 25)

### 1. Phase 1: Initiation

Contextually, this extract is different because of its Jamaican dialect. Here, the speaker is Hortense, who is speaking to her daughter Clara because of her relationship with Ryan. The place of the event is England in January 1975. Regarding the conservatism type, it is cultural since Jamaican people are culturally different from British people.

### 2. Phase 2: Description

Concerning vocabulary, it seems that the conservative Hortense is careful in choosing her words when talking to Clara. For example, she uses the expression “young man's soul” when she wants to express her rejection towards him. Using “man's soul” indicates that she does not refuse him for his identity or ethnicity; rather, she refuses his soul, which may not serve her daughter's ambition. As for word meaning, it is found that Hortense uses the slang word “boddin” for “bothering” to describe how her daughter is troubling herself over her boyfriend. Being direct, Clara's mother does not use any sort of metaphor.

Grammatically, Hortense uses both declarative and interrogative modes when talking to her daughter. She focuses on interrogative mode in order to blame Clara for such a behavior. With regard to pronouns, it is found that Hortense uses first singular and second person pronouns. She uses the first singular pronoun to indicate that her speech represents her own point of view. Clara's mother talks sternly in most of her speech. Thus, she uses the modality of obligation when she blames her daughter for her relationship with Ryan, as in “How many times must I tell you – you got no time for bwoys?”.

Moreover, cohesion is clearly employed in this extract. Reference, as a connective device, is clear through pronouns (“you”, “I”, “it”, and “yourself”) and the demonstrative “that” (“dat”). Substitution, ellipsis, and conjunctions are not used by Hortense. This is because of her simplicity, which makes her use short, simple sentences. In relation to lexical cohesion, it is obvious that Hortense keeps repeating the pronoun “you” and the word “time”, like “how many times” and “no time”. This may indicate that she is a practical woman who devotes most of her time to work.

As for argumentation, it seems that Hortense uses logical argumentation when she is talking to Clara about having relationships with boys. Logically, Clara has no time for such relations.

Within text structure, it is found that Hortense controls the text according to the category of interactional control. In other words, most of the turn-takings in this extract are attributed to Hortense. This gives her the chance to control the context.



Investigating complexity, Hortense uses complex sentences when talking to her daughter or her husband, Darcus. This may be due to her low educational level, which makes her hardly arrange her thoughts. This is clear through the above extract.

### 3. Phase 3: Explanation (Social Analysis)

Starting with age, Hortense is older than her husband, Darcus, and her daughter, Clara. This hints at most conservatives being older than liberals. Regarding gender, it is clear that the conservative Hortense is a woman. Furthermore, Hortense's status is that of a Black Jamaican servant who becomes a devout Jehovah's Witness. In the style category, Hortense uses an informal or causal style since she is talking to her daughter.

### 4. Phase 4: Evaluation

According to the above-mentioned analysis, Hortense's ideology of conservatism clearly functions as an ideology of prescription since she tries to force Clara to follow a certain behavior.

#### (b). Extract 2

"Only 144,000 of the Witnesses of Jehovah would sit in the court of the Lord on Judgement Day," said Hortense. "But what if we saved," replied Clara. "Some people," Hortense asserted with a snort, "have done such a hol' heap of sinning, it late for dem to be making eyes at Jehovah. It take effort to be close to Jehovah. It take devotion and dedication. Blessed are the pure in heart for they alone shall see God. Matthew 5:8. Isn't dat right, Darcus?" (Smith, 2000, p. 24)

#### 1. Phase 1: Initiation

The context of Extract 2 is similar to the context of Extract 1 in that Hortense is talking to her daughter Clara, who has abandoned her religion because of her boyfriend Ryan. The dialogue takes place in the 1970s in Queens Park, London, England. As for the conservatism type, it is apparent that Hortense uses religious conservatism when talking to Clara, who has rejected Christianity. This is clear through the borrowed quotation from the Old Testament: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they alone shall see God".

#### 2. Phase 2: Description

In vocabulary, Hortense chooses some words for an intention like "144,000", "court", and "effort". She uses "144,000" to hint that those people chosen by Jehovah to enter Heaven are very few compared to other religious groups. Furthermore, she uses the word "court" to intimidate Clara, stating that there will be a day when those who abandon Jehovah's religion will be judged. Also, the word "effort" is used to indicate that only the most faithful of believers can continue with such a religion. Accordingly, it is not an easy task to be one of Jehovah's followers. Furthermore, word meaning is exemplified with words like "Jehovah," "Witnesses of Jehovah," and "making eyes." More clearly, Jehovah is the name of God in the Old Testament. "Witnesses of Jehovah" refers to the religious branch of Christianity whose followers call themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses" because they try to be like Jesus, who they believe was the greatest of all God's witnesses. The last expression is "making eyes". It comes to mean "repent." Metaphorically, the word "court" is used to compare between a court in the real world and a court in Heaven, reflecting God's justice.

Grammatically, Hortense uses both declarative and interrogative modes of sentences. Moreover, she focuses on the declarative since she tries to explain an important religious issue to her daughter. She avoids using interrogative since using it means that she is not sure of what she is talking about. In fact, she uses it only once, seeking her husband's support. As for pronouns, Hortense focuses on third-person pronouns like "they," "them," and "it." This may indicate that Hortense tries to say that what she is talking about represents the whole nation rather than a personal goal. Shedding light on modality, Hortense uses the modality of necessity since she is talking about religious things related to Heaven and Judgment Day. This is clear through her use of modals like "would" and "shall," as in "Only 144,000 of the Witnesses of Jehovah would sit in the court of the Lord on Judgment Day" or "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they alone shall see God".

Regarding cohesion, it was found that reference is represented through the existing pronouns and demonstratives like "we", "it", "dem", "they", and "dat". This helps the text be more connected. Additionally, Hortense substitutes the expression "some people" with the objective pronoun "dem" and the expression "pure in the heart" with the third-person pronoun "they." Conjunctions are not used by Hortense. Rather, they are used by Clara once when she tries to interrupt her mother's opinion, as in "But what if we saved?" Further examining the extract, Hortense keeps repeating "Jehovah" and "Lord" or "God," that is, she uses lexical cohesion. Actually, this indicates that the speaker has a religious personality who tries to affect those people surrounding her, like Clara and her husband Darcus.

As for argumentation, Hortense uses critical argumentation when talking to her daughter. It is critical since what she supposes is not necessarily right. There might be another religion that most people follow.

Within text structure and interactional control in particular, it is obvious that Hortense has the greatest opportunity for turn-taking. She explains, clarifies, gives evidence, and asks others for agreement. All of these make her control the context. Furthermore, the topic is kept throughout the text by both Hortense and Clara.

Concerning complexity, Hortense uses complex sentences when talking to Clara. This may be due to psychological reasons, as her mind becomes confused when she knows that her daughter may turn to another religion. Accordingly, her sentences are not well arranged.

### 3. Phase 3: Explanation

Looking at age, obviously the conservative Hortense is older than her anti-conservative daughter Clara. Also, the gender of the conservative is a woman. Her job as a servant reveals her status, and regarding style, Hortense uses an informal style since she is talking to her daughter.

### 4. Phase 4: Evaluation

According to what has been analyzed above, one can conclude that Hortense's ideology functions as an ideology of orientation since she directly tries to orient Clara to continue with her own religion.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To test the validity of the hypotheses, this section presents the results as shown through the following descriptive statistical tables:

TABLE 1  
STATISTICS OF THE MOST FOLLOWED TYPES OF CONSERVATISM

| No. | Types of Conservatism | Fr. | %   |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Political             | 1   | 25  |
| 2   | Social                | 0   | 0   |
| 3   | Cultural              | 2   | 50  |
| 4   | Religious             | 1   | 25  |
| 5   | Total                 | 4   | 100 |

According to Table 1, cultural conservatism is the most followed type with about 50% of the total percentages. This may be due to the nature of the selected novels. Next, religious conservatism and political conservatism come in second at 25% each of the total percentages. As for social conservatism, it was not used by the conservatives because the events that occur take place with people from different cultures. As such, it is absent in the given novels.

TABLE 2  
STATISTICS OF CATEGORIES OF VOCABULARY FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATIVES

| No. | Vocabulary          |     |       |
|-----|---------------------|-----|-------|
| 1   | Semantic Categories | Fr. | %     |
| 2   | Word Choice         | 11  | 57.89 |
| 3   | Word Meaning        | 6   | 31.57 |
| 4   | Metaphor            | 2   | 10.52 |
| 5   | Total               | 19  | 100   |

Table 2 shows that conservatives usually choose certain words for a purpose. This is shown through the above percentages, with 57.89% of the words chosen deliberately. This may indicate that conservatives carefully choose their words simply because they have a message to deliver. As for word meaning, 31.57% of the words needed to be interpreted because of the differences in mentality among conservatives and anti-conservatives. Concerning metaphor, it has the lesser percentage of the total words used by conservatives at 10.52%. This reflects the fact that conservatives are often direct in dealing with issues related to conservatism. However, the percentages of word meaning and metaphor are less in range than word choice. This indicates that conservatives tend to use clear, simple words rather than difficult, playful words.

TABLE 3  
STATISTICS OF CATEGORIES OF GRAMMAR FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATIVES

| No. | Modes of Sentences | Fr. | %     | Pronouns | Fr. | %     | Modality    | Fr. | %   |
|-----|--------------------|-----|-------|----------|-----|-------|-------------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Declaratives       | 4   | 66.66 | 1st      | 3   | 33.33 | Probability | 2   | 50  |
| 2   | Imperatives        | 0   | 0     | 2nd      | 3   | 33.33 | Necessity   | 2   | 50  |
| 3   | Interrogatives     | 2   | 33.33 | 3rd      | 3   | 33.33 | Total       | 4   | 100 |
| 4   | Total              | 6   | 99.99 | Total    | 9   | 99.99 |             |     |     |

Table 3 shows 66.66% of the conservatives in this study used declarative modes when talking about their ideas and beliefs. Actually, conservatives' use of declaratives indicates that what matters is explaining their beliefs in a simple, direct way. Moreover, about 33.33% of conservatives' sentences are in the interrogative mode because of contextual factors like willingness to be polite, being hesitant, being the weakest, and so on. Imperative mode is not used by any conservative for its impolite indication. Further, being a conservative requires having a persuasive technique to make others believe in his/her beliefs. As such, using the imperative mode is not suitable here.

Nearly all types of personal pronouns are used with a focus on second and third pronouns. This is obvious, as each type was at 33.33%. The main reason behind using second and third person pronouns is that most conservatives address others in an attempt to prove how others are false in their beliefs, and they rarely talk about themselves.

Regarding modality, conservatives use the modality of necessity and the modality of probability equally. Using necessity or probability depends on several factors, like the nature of the topic, the addressee, and so on.

TABLE 4  
STATISTICS OF COHESION FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATIVES

| No. | Categories of Cohesion |          | Fr. | %   |
|-----|------------------------|----------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Connectives            |          | 4   | 100 |
|     | Total                  |          | 4   | 100 |
| 2   | Argumentation          | Critical | 3   | 75  |
|     |                        | Logical  | 1   | 25  |
|     |                        | Total    | 4   | 100 |

Table 4 shows that all conservatives use connectives like references, substitutions, conjunctions, or lexical cohesion. This helps their speech be more connected and more understandable. Thus, it gets about 100%. In relation to argumentation, both critical and logical argumentation are used. Yet the highest percentage goes with critical argumentation at 75%. This indicates that most conservatives defend their views without proving them.

TABLE 5  
STATISTICS OF CATEGORIES OF TEXT STRUCTURE FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATIVES

| No. | Interactional Control | Fr. | %   | Complexity | Fr. | %   |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|------------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Conservative          | 3   | 60  | Simple     | 1   | 25  |
| 2   | Anti-Conservative     | 2   | 40  | Complex    | 3   | 75  |
| 3   | Total                 | 5   | 100 | Total      | 4   | 100 |

Table 5 shows that most conservatives control the situation. It depends on the amount of turn-taking. The analyzed extracts show that about 60% of conservatives control the situation, though anti-conservatives control the text sometimes. It depends on the conservative's personality in relation to the social factors.

Concerning complexity, about 75% of conservatives use complex sentences when describing their points of view, and about 25% of conservatives use simple sentences. This indicates that missing the ability to arrange their ideas clearly makes them use complex sentences, although sometimes the topic that they are talking about obliges them to use complex sentences.

TABLE 6  
STATISTICS OF CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING CONSERVATISM

| No. | Social Factors |              | Fr. | %  |
|-----|----------------|--------------|-----|----|
| 1   | Age            | Young        | 1   | 25 |
|     |                | Old          | 3   | 75 |
| 2   | Gender         | Woman        | 3   | 75 |
|     |                | Man          | 1   | 25 |
| 3   | Status         | Educated     | 1   | 25 |
|     |                | Non-Educated | 3   | 75 |
| 4   | Style          | Formal       | 1   | 25 |
|     |                | Informal     | 3   | 75 |

In Table 6, it is found that most conservatives are those who are older with 75% of the total percentages. Regarding gender, it is concluded that most conservatives are women. This is due to women's natural fear of new events. As such, they prefer old attitudes to unknown new ones. Concerning status, most conservatives are uneducated. This indicates that conservatism consists of people who have low levels of education. Concerning style, most conservatives use an informal style. This is because of the close relationships of the characters in this study.

TABLE 7  
STATISTICS OF CONSERVATISM FUNCTIONS FOLLOWED BY CONSERVATIVES

| No. | Conservatism Function | Fr. | %   |
|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----|
| 1   | Explaining            | 1   | 25  |
| 2   | Evaluating            | 1   | 25  |
| 3   | Orienting             | 1   | 25  |
| 4   | Prescribing           | 1   | 25  |
| 5   | Total                 | 4   | 100 |

According to Table 7, it is obvious that all functions of conservatism exist in the current study. Each function has about a percentage of 25%. Function is affected by the context of conservatism. Thus, one cannot say which function is the most important one.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The following conclusions have been reached and are basically associated with the hypotheses of the study:

First, the most noticeable types of conservatism that exist in the selected data are political, cultural, and religious. Because of the differences in norms among cultures, cultural conservatism is the most followed one. This somehow verifies the first hypothesis that there are common types of conservatism that can be used in the selected novels, like social, cultural, political, and religious.

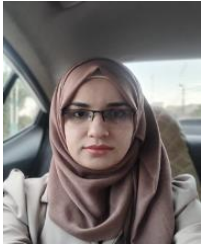
Second, conservatives choose certain vocabulary, grammatical structures, cohesive categories, and textual categories when presenting their ideas. In relation to vocabulary, conservatives are careful in choosing their words, which refer directly to what they want to convey. Further, they avoid words that may convey several meanings since what is important for them is how to deliver a message directly. Regarding grammar, most conservatives use declarative sentences, second and third person pronouns, and the modality of probability and necessity. Also, conservatives effectively use connectives when talking about their ideas and beliefs, with emphasis on critical argumentation. As for text structure, it was found that most conservatives have the controlling role in speaking with using complex language. Thus, this verifies the second hypothesis that, textually, conservatism can be analyzed according to semantic, syntactic, cohesion, and textual structure categories.

Third, age, gender, style, and status are the social factors that play a great role in describing conservatism. This is in line with the third hypothesis that age, gender, status, and style are the selected social factors that may affect conservatism. Furthermore, this conclusion has sub-conclusions: (a). Women are described as the most conservative due to their psychological and emotional nature; (b). Old people are more conservative than young ones; and (c). People with low education levels are more conservative than educated ones. Moreover, the informal style is the most preferable style used by conservatives when describing their ideas and thoughts.

Finally, several functions can evaluate the ideology of conservatism, like explaining, evaluating, orienting, and prescribing. This is realized by the fourth hypothesis that the ideology of conservatism can be evaluated according to its functions in the selected texts.

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# The Impact of Online Task Planning Conditions on L2 Utterance Fluency and Self-Perceived Fluency: A Study of Chinese EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—This study examines the effects of online task planning conditions on L2 learners' utterance fluency and self-perceived fluency among Chinese EFL learners. Ninety participants were randomly assigned to Pressured Online Planning (POP), Unpressured Online Planning (UOP), and Hybrid Online Planning (HOP) groups. Participants completed a narrative task based on a Mr. Bean video clip under their respective planning conditions. Utterance fluency was measured using temporal and linguistic indicators, while self-perceived fluency was assessed through CEFR self-assessment and an Analytic Fluency Perception Scale. Results indicate that the hybrid condition yielded significantly higher speech and articulation rates, with fewer disfluencies compared to other conditions ( $p < .001$ ). Notably, self-perceived fluency did not consistently align with objective measures or rater evaluations, particularly in the pressured condition. The study reveals complex relationships between task planning conditions, objective fluency measures, and learners' self-perceptions, contributing to our understanding of L2 speech production processes and informing task-based language teaching practices.

**Index Terms**—online task planning, utterance fluency, perceived fluency

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the field of second language acquisition (SLA), achieving fluency continues to be a major challenge for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, particularly in the Chinese context. Despite extensive classroom instruction, many students struggle to translate their theoretical knowledge into practical, real-time language use, revealing a crucial gap between understanding and applied linguistic skills (Ellis, 2017; Ur, 2013). Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has gained prominence as an approach to bridge this gap, with task planning conditions recognized as key factors influencing learners' utterance performance, particularly in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) (Robinson, 2015; Skehan, 2016).

Recent research has explored various task planning strategies, including pre-task planning (Khatib & Farahanynia, 2020; Lampropoulou, 2023; Qiu & Bui, 2022), within-task planning (Awwad & Alhamad, 2021; Gu & Van den Branden, 2024; Kim, 2020) and hybrid planning approaches (Hsu, 2017; Wang et al., 2019), offering valuable insights into how these conditions affect L2 learners' utterance performance. However, there remains a notable gap in understanding the impact of specific online task planning conditions—namely pressured, unpressured, and hybrid—on both utterance fluency and learners' self-perceived fluency, especially in dialogic tasks that mirror real-world communication more closely.

Theoretical frameworks such as Skehan's (1998) Limited Attentional Capacity Hypothesis (LACH) and Robinson's (2001) Cognition Hypothesis (CH) have been influential in task-based language research. LACH posits that learners have limited attentional resources, leading to trade-offs between different aspects of performance, while CH suggests that increasing task complexity can lead to improvements in multiple performance areas simultaneously. These models provide different perspectives on how task characteristics and conditions influence L2 performance, yet their implications for online task planning conditions remain underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the

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effects of different online task planning conditions on the utterance fluency and self-perceived fluency among Chinese EFL learners.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and Task Planning Conditions

#### (a). TBLT and Theoretical Models of Task Provision

In the field of second language acquisition (SLA) and instruction, Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) has garnered significant attention for over three decades and remains one of the most prevalent approaches (Ur, 2013). TBLT emphasizes communicative and collaborative activities as the foundation for planning and delivering instruction (Bygate, 2016; Long, 2016). It operates on the premise that language is a means of communication and can be effectively acquired through exposure and discussion during the performance of communicative tasks (Ur, 2013). Students engage in task-based activities by completing real-world tasks that focus on meaningful interaction and the practical use of language (Ellis, 2017). This principle suggests that students learn the target language more effectively when they are task-focused and given opportunities for authentic language usage in the classroom.

In psycholinguistic task-based language research, both the Limited Attention Capacity Hypothesis (LACH) and the Cognition Hypothesis (CH) have been influential, particularly in terms of task sequencing criteria in TBLT. Both hypotheses view tasks as the primary unit of analysis in language instruction, suggesting they should be sequenced according to specific criteria. While LACH and CH differ in defining task characteristics and conditions, both frameworks allow teachers to sequence tasks and determine their influence on second language (L2) students' task performance in terms of complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF).

Skehan (2009, 2014, 2015, 2016) explained LACH by distinguishing between task characteristics, which determine task difficulty based on the tasks' inherent features (e.g., cognitive complexity, code complexity), and task conditions, which determine task difficulty based on task performance (e.g., communicative stress). On the other hand, Robinson's (2001, 2005, 2007, 2015) CH offers a triadic componential framework for task sequencing, consisting of task complexity (cognitive factors related to task design), task condition (interactional factors regarding participation and participant variables), and task difficulty (learner factors regarding affective and ability variables). LACH posits that task characteristics and conditions should be included in evaluating task difficulty, with difficult tasks resulting in either an increase in complexity or accuracy at the expense of the other (Skehan, 2016). CH, however, argues that only task characteristics (i.e., task complexity) are used to evaluate task complexity, with complex tasks associated with simultaneous improvements in accuracy and complexity (Robinson, 2015).

Skehan (1998) and Robinson (2001) have proposed models representing the crucial elements of task complexity and describing how these elements contribute to task performance. Task complexity is critical to pedagogical task design and sequencing decisions. Skehan's model suggests that attentional capacity is limited, meaning that fluency, accuracy, and complexity compete for cognitive resources. Studies manipulating planning time or task requirements have found effects on both accuracy and complexity (Foster & Skehan, 1997; Skehan, 2009). Conversely, Robinson maintains that students can simultaneously draw on multiple cognitive resources, with fluency, accuracy, and complexity not necessarily in competition. Robinson categorizes task complexity dimensions into resource-directing and resource-dispersing.

#### (b). Task Planning Conditions and Previous Studies

Planning in oral task performance can be categorized into pre-task planning and within-task (online) planning (Ellis, 2005, 2009). Pre-task planning includes rehearsal and strategic planning, where students prepare for tasks beforehand. Online planning occurs during task performance and can be pressured or unpressured. Pressured planning involves time constraints, whereas unpressured planning allows adequate time for careful monitoring of language (Ahmadian & García Mayo, 2017). Combining pre-task and online planning can reduce cognitive load and enhance language output, referred to as 'hybrid online planning' (Ellis, 2009). Task difficulty, according to Robinson's CH, includes factors related to individual differences in learning and task implementation, classified into ability dimensions (e.g., working memory, aptitude) and affective dimensions (e.g., task motivation, processing anxiety). While Robinson did not explicitly distinguish between task characteristics and conditions, this study uses these terms consistently with Skehan's explanation.

Several studies have explored the effects of planning time conditions on oral performance, focusing on accuracy and complexity but giving less attention to fluency (Yuan & Ellis, 2003). Pre-task planning has been shown to improve L2 students' fluency, lexical complexity, and syntactic complexity. For example, Khatib and Farahanynia (2020) found that pre-task planning and repetition improved fluency and syntactic complexity, supporting the Trade-off Hypothesis. D'Ely et al. (2019) demonstrated that pre-task planning and repetition positively affected accuracy, complexity, and lexical density. Nielson and DeKeyser (2019) found that guided pre-task planning improved accuracy, while unguided pre-task planning improved fluency. These studies collectively highlight that pre-task planning generally benefits multiple dimensions of oral performance, suggesting that providing students with time to prepare before tasks can lead to enhanced language output across various metrics.

Research on within-task planning conditions indicates that unpressured planning allows for better monitoring and careful language use, improving fluency and accuracy (Awwad & Alhamad, 2021; Kim, 2020). However, findings on the effects of pressured planning are mixed, with some studies showing improvements in fluency and others highlighting trade-offs with accuracy and complexity. For instance, Panahzadeh and Asadi (2019) found that pressured online planning led to higher fluency and coherence but at the expense of grammatical accuracy. Similarly, Kim (2018) noted that while pressured planning improved fluency, it did not significantly enhance accuracy or complexity. These mixed results suggest that the benefits of within-task planning may depend on the specific conditions and the learners' abilities to manage cognitive load under time constraints.

Meta-analyses and comparative studies indicate that pre-task planning generally enhances fluency, complexity, and accuracy more effectively than within-task planning. Johnson and Abdi Tabari's (2022) meta-analysis, which included 52 studies, demonstrated that pre-task planning significantly improves syntactic complexity and accuracy, as well as fluency in L2 production. Similarly, Bakhtiary et al. (2021) found that strategic planning was more beneficial for oral production than unpressured online planning. These findings align with the Cognition Hypothesis (Robinson, 2011), suggesting that allowing learners to plan before tasks enables them to allocate cognitive resources more effectively, thus improving overall performance.

Hybrid online planning, which combines pre-task and within-task planning, has been shown to enhance accuracy and complexity of speech. Studies by Wang et al. (2019) and Hsu (2017) suggest that integrating multiple planning methods can optimize task performance and address trade-offs between fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Wang et al. (2019) found that hybrid planning conditions led to better accuracy and complexity compared to either pre-task or within-task planning alone. Hsu (2017) also noted that combining rehearsal with online planning improved language output significantly. These studies highlight the potential of hybrid planning to balance the demands of fluency, accuracy, and complexity, providing a more comprehensive approach to task-based language instruction.

Theoretical models such as LACH and CH provide valuable insights into how task planning conditions influence L2 speech production. While pre-task conditions generally improve accuracy, complexity, and fluency, within-task conditions remain controversial regarding their effect on fluency. This study aims to examine different task conditions (hybrid, unpressured, and pressured) and their impact on learners' utterance fluency, addressing the identified research gap.

## *B. Exploring Fluency in L2 Speech Performance*

### *(a). Definitions and Theories of Fluency*

The nature of L2 speech performance is multi-componential. The CAF framework (i.e., complexity, accuracy, and fluency) was developed to assist researchers in analyzing this multi-dimensional and multi-faceted phenomenon of L2 speech performance (Housen et al., 2012), and these language constructs or aspects can be used to describe, quantify, and measure L2 students' language production and language proficiency (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). Norris and Ortega (2009) established empirically that the characteristics of CAF components are interdependent and distinctive, which indicates each component of CAF has its own specific role in L2 proficiency. L2 students are, however, said to have limited pools of attention and limited proficiency in L2 to be able to pay attention to only one aspect of CAF at a time (Skehan, 1998, 2015). Based on Skehan's Limited Attentional Capacity Hypothesis (LACH), a trade-off effect is expected to emerge between the three dimensions (i.e., CAF) of speech performance. Thus, the current study focuses on one dimension (i.e., fluency) of L2 speech performance.

During the earlier stages, Fillmore (1979) defined fluency as the ability to talk for long periods without pauses, to talk in coherent and structured sentences, to communicate effectively in a variety of social and professional settings, and to use the language in a creative and innovative manner. Although Fillmore's definition of fluency was originally proposed for first language (L1), it is considered one of the seminal perspectives on fluency and has provided the foundation for L2 discussions of the concept. Lennon (1990) expanded on Fillmore's work, distinguishing between broad and narrow fluency. Broad fluency pertains to oral proficiency, while narrow fluency refers to the speed at which speech is produced. Tavakoli and Hunter (2018) further illustrated fluency as a pyramid with four layers, distinguishing between broad and narrow perspectives. For this study, fluency is defined using Lennon's narrow definition and Tavakoli and Hunter's narrow and very narrow perspectives.

### *(b). L1 and L2 Speech Production Models*

A well-established theoretical framework for interpreting fluent and non-fluent speech performances is Levelt's (1989) first language (L1) production model, which includes three main stages: conceptualizing the intended message, formulating a preverbal message, and articulating speech. Fluent speech is defined as knowing the ideas in advance (conceptualizing), possessing the language to express these ideas (formulating), and being able to construct or translate these ideas into speech (articulating). This L1 speech production model is applied in Kormos's (2006) L2 speech production model, highlighting some significant distinctions between L1 and L2 processes. In the conceptualization stage, bilingual speakers choose which language to use when forming communication intentions. The formulation and articulation stages are intuitive for L1 speakers; however, L2 speakers require assistance with conceptualization and monitoring to perform fluently.



The three stages of L2 speech production are related to utterance fluency, which can be assessed through speed, breakdown, and repair indexes (Lambert et al., 2021; Skehan, 2016; Suzuki et al., 2021). Speed fluency can assess the overall efficiency of these stages. Filled or unfilled pauses (breakdown) are related to the conceptualization and formulation stages, indicating that the L2 speaker is planning or considering (De Jong et al., 2021; Kormos, 2006; Tavakoli et al., 2020; Van Os et al., 2020) what to say. Monitoring in speech production can be reflected in repair, reformation, or repetition. Therefore, fluency requires parallel and stable relationships between the phases of the speech model. In line with this model, pre-task planning assists the conceptualization stage, resulting in more fluency, whereas within-task planning improves the formulation of the message, leading to increased complexity and accuracy (Ellis, 2009; Skehan, 1998). The present study evaluates performance on a specific language dimension, fluency, in L2 by using hybrid online planning.

### *(c). Characteristics and Measurements of L2 Fluency*

From a psycholinguistic perspective, Segalowitz (2010) describes three distinct characteristics of fluency based on Levelt's (1989) model: cognitive, utterance, and perceived fluency. Cognitive fluency refers to the ability to control the underlying cognitive systems associated with speech production to ensure the smooth flow of speech. Utterance fluency is an extension of cognitive fluency and can be measured through temporal features such as speed, breakdown, and repair. Perceived fluency is what listeners judge about speakers' performances, often influenced by speed and breakdown aspects.

Temporal measures related to speed and pausing were extensively used in earlier L2 fluency research (Lennon, 1990; Raupach, 1980). Skehan (2003) and Tavakoli and Skehan (2005) added repair measures, developing a comprehensive fluency framework consisting of speed, breakdown, and repair fluency. Speed fluency measures how fast a speaker delivers the message, breakdown fluency is concerned with disruptions in the flow of speech, and repair fluency describes monitoring processes and repair strategies. These dimensions have been widely accepted and used in assessing L2 fluency (De Jong, 2018; Suzuki & Kormos, 2022; Tavakoli et al., 2020; Van Os et al., 2020). Common measures of utterance fluency include articulation rate (AR), speech rate (SR), mean length of run (MLR), and phonation time ratio (PTR). Breakdown fluency measures include the frequency, duration, and location of filled and silent pauses. Repair fluency measures include false starts, repetitions, reformulations, and replacements.

Perceived fluency is typically evaluated by native speaker listeners. However, in this study, in addition to evaluations by native speaker raters, students will also participate in assessing their own speaking performance using a self-assessment scale to provide their self-perception of fluency. Specifically, this research examines: (1) the impact of pressured, unpressured, and hybrid planning conditions on objective measures of utterance fluency and subjective measures of perceived fluency and (2) the relationship between objective fluency measures and subjective self-assessments under different planning conditions.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### *A. Participants and Study Setting*

Ninety native Chinese speakers, consisting of sixty females and thirty males aged 18 to 21, participated in this study as volunteers. They were first-year Medical Science students at a university in Hainan and had not lived in an English-speaking country for more than three months. All of them had passed the National College Entrance Examination (NEMT) with band scores between 90 and 110 (maximum possible = 150), which grades between A and B in the oral component of this examination. Based on their self-reported proficiency from a pre-task questionnaire, their overall English proficiency ranged from 6 to 7 on the IELTS, with speaking scores between 5.5 and 6. These scores roughly correspond to B2 to C1 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), indicating intermediate to advanced English proficiency. The current study chose to maintain individuals in their original classrooms in case it was too disruptive to their learning to move them from their normal learning environment and would threaten the ecological validity of the study. The three classes were randomly assigned to two experimental groups, namely the Unpressured Online Planning (UOP) group (N=28), the Hybrid Online Planning (HOP) group (N=32), as well as a control group, the Pressured Online Planning (POP) group (N=30). For the UOP and HOP conditions, the video clips were slowed to 60% of their normal speed, while for the POP condition, the video was played at normal speed. Participants in the UOP and POP conditions received no pre-task planning time. In contrast, the HOP condition allowed participants to view the video once at normal speed without narrating, fostering content preparedness, before narrating during a second, slowed playback.

### *B. Research Instruments and Procedure*

All participants were instructed to narrate the events of a five-minute-long Mr. Bean video clip as they unfolded. This choice was driven by the clip's minimal dialogue and straightforward comedic content, making it ideal for middle-level students. The setup minimized listening demands, allowing students to focus solely on content narration without the need to decipher key words, thereby enhancing their engagement and concentration on the task.

### *(a). Utterance Fluency Measures*

This study operationalizes fluency as the speaker's speed of delivery, flow of speech, and absence of unnecessary hesitations or interruptions, aligning with Lennon's (1990) conceptualization. Following Tavakoli and Hunter's (2018) narrow view of utterance fluency, we further delineate fluency into three primary dimensions: speed fluency, breakdown fluency, and repair fluency.

Speed fluency was assessed using two primary measures: speech rate and articulation rate. Speech rate, calculated as the number of syllables produced per minute of total speaking time including pauses, provides a comprehensive overview of fluency by accounting for both production speed and pausing behavior (Kormos & Dénes, 2004). Articulation rate, measured as the number of syllables produced per minute of phonation time excluding pauses, offers a more focused measure of speech production speed (Tavakoli, 2016). These measures were selected based on their demonstrated strong predictive power for perceived fluency in previous studies. Breakdown fluency analysis focused on the frequency and duration of pauses, incorporating both filled pauses (non-lexical fillers such as "um," "uh," "er") and unfilled pauses (silent pauses lasting 250 milliseconds or more) (De Jong, 2018). Following Riggensbach's (1991) classification, we differentiated pauses into micro-pauses ( $\leq 0.2$  seconds), hesitations (0.2-0.4 seconds), and unfilled pauses ( $\geq 0.5$  seconds). To ensure a comprehensive analysis, we examined the number of filled and unfilled pauses, as well as the mean length of mid-clause and end-clause unfilled pauses. This approach was informed by methodologies from Derwing et al. (2009), Kormos and Dénes (2004) and Rossiter (2009). Repair fluency was measured using Skehan and Foster's (1999) framework, analyzing four types of disfluency episodes: false starts (abandoned utterances before completion), repetitions (verbatim reiteration of words, phrases, or clauses without modification), reformulations (repeated phrases and clauses with some alteration), and replacements (immediate substitution of lexical items).

All fluency measures were analyzed using PRAAT speech analyzer software, examining both transcriptions and waveforms. To ensure comparability across participants and tasks, all measures of utterance fluency were standardized and calculated per 60 seconds of speech. The selection of these specific measures was based on their recognized reliability in evaluating L2 oral performance, particularly in fluency assessment (Segalowitz, 2010), and their effectiveness in examining online planning processes in L2 speech production (Skehan & Foster, 2005).

#### *(b). Perceived Fluency Measures*

To complement the narrative task, perceived fluency was assessed through a comprehensive approach combining student self-assessment and rater evaluation, both based on performance in a dialogic narrative task. Two primary tools were employed for this purpose: the CEFR Self-Assessment Grid (Council of Europe, 2001) and the Analytic Fluency Perception Semantic Differential Scale (Bosker et al., 2013) (see Appendix A and B).

The CEFR Self-Assessment Grid, aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference, serves as the foundation for evaluation. This grid encompasses six levels of fluency, ranging from A1 to C2, and provides detailed descriptors for both spoken interaction and spoken production. These descriptors address various aspects of fluency, including ease of expression, frequency of pauses, complexity of language use, and the ability to handle spontaneous speech in different contexts. Following the dialogic narrative task, students engage in self-assessment by selecting the level on the grid that best reflects their perceived performance. They are instructed to consider factors such as the natural flow of their speech, the occurrence of hesitations, and their ability to express thoughts clearly within the narrative context. Concurrently, trained raters independently evaluate the students' performances by reviewing recorded speech samples from the task. These raters assess the same criteria (i.e., fluency, spontaneity, and interaction) with the aim of providing an objective measure of spoken fluency. They assign fluency levels from A1 to C2 based on the grid's descriptors, and scores from multiple raters are averaged to ensure reliability and minimize potential bias.

Meanwhile, the Analytic Fluency Perception Semantic Differential Scale is administered to students immediately following their completion of the dialogic narrative task. This scale comprises eight statements, each focusing on a specific aspect of fluency, such as smoothness of expression, rhythm, speed, effortlessness, frequency of hesitations and self-corrections, and the ability to maintain continuous speech without pausing to search for words. Students indicate their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 'Strongly Agree' (1) to 'Strongly Disagree' (5). For instance, they assess whether they could express themselves smoothly, maintain a reasonable rhythm, speak quickly, or communicate effortlessly without frequent pauses or self-corrections. Each student's responses are converted into numerical scores, with the total score obtained by summing the individual ratings. A lower total score indicates a higher perceived fluency level, suggesting that the student believes they performed more fluently during the speaking task.

#### *C. Data Coding and Analysis*

The data analysis process in this study followed a systematic approach to ensure accuracy and reliability in assessing L2 fluency. The initial step involved transcribing the spoken data, followed by segmenting the unpruned transcriptions into AS-Units (Foster, 2000) and clauses. The AS-unit was employed as a basic unit to segment the transcriptions into clauses, providing a standardized approach to analyzing spoken language. This segmentation was crucial for investigating pauses in mid and end-clause positions, offering insight into the temporal aspects of speech production. For the analysis of fluency measures, we utilized PRAAT software (Boersma & Weenink, 2013), which allowed for precise identification and measurement of speed and pausing features in the speech samples. The data annotation process in PRAAT was conducted manually by an expert researcher with extensive experience in analyzing similar data.

This process involved listening to speech extracts, inspecting spectrograms produced by PRAAT, and identifying and tagging fluency features such as pauses and repairs on a corresponding grid.

To ensure high reliability of the analysis, several measures were implemented. Despite PRAAT's difference and accuracy, the entire data set underwent PRAAT analysis for a second time to ensure a high level of intra-rater reliability. Additionally, 20% of the transcribed files were rechecked and recoded by a second expert rater to verify the reliability of the researchers' data coding. The Pearson correlation coefficient showed a high agreement of 92% between the coding of the researchers and the second-rater regarding fluency measures. This adequate inter-rater reliability permitted us to proceed with further data analysis. Following the reliability checks, the data was analyzed using the SPSS Statistical Package Software (Aldrich, 2018).

#### IV. FINDINGS

##### A. Effects of Task Conditions on L2 Speech Performance Measures

This study investigated the impact of task pressure on second language (L2) oral fluency. Through one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and post-hoc tests, we found that task conditions significantly affected multiple indicators of oral fluency (see Table 1).

In terms of speech rate, there was a significant main effect of task condition ( $F(2, 87) = 13.831, p < .001, \eta^2 = .241$ ). Post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed that the Unpressured Group ( $M = 165.81, SD = 43.85$ ) had significantly higher speech rates than both the Pressured Group ( $M = 115.61, SD = 39.53, p < .001$ ) and the Hybrid Group ( $M = 125.80, SD = 33.12, p < .001$ ). This result suggests that reduced time pressure may allow learners to produce more language output. The analysis of articulation rate presented a similar pattern, with a significant main effect of task condition ( $F(2, 87) = 17.474, p < .001, \eta^2 = .287$ ). Post-hoc tests showed significant differences between all groups: the Unpressured Group ( $M = 276.83, SD = 37.28$ ) outperformed the Hybrid Group ( $M = 252.32, SD = 30.49, p = .008$ ), which in turn outperformed the Pressured Group ( $M = 229.97, SD = 22.58, p < .001$ ). This result further supports the impact of time pressure on oral fluency.

Regarding pauses, we observed interesting patterns. The number of filled pauses (such as "um", "uh") was significantly affected by task condition ( $F(2, 87) = 18.066, p < .001, \eta^2 = .293$ ). The Unpressured Group ( $M = 14.84, SD = 3.16$ ) had significantly more filled pauses than both the Pressured Group ( $M = 10.89, SD = 2.86, p < .001$ ) and the Hybrid Group ( $M = 12.39, SD = 1.26, p = .001$ ). Conversely, for unfilled pauses, the Pressured Group ( $M = 22.56, SD = 8.14$ ) had significantly more than both the Unpressured Group ( $M = 16.43, SD = 6.52, p = .001$ ) and the Hybrid Group ( $M = 18.50, SD = 1.65, p = .035$ ). This contrast may reflect different cognitive strategies adopted by learners under various task conditions. Moreover, the mean length of mid-clause pauses was also significantly affected by task condition ( $F(2, 87) = 7.856, p = .001, \eta^2 = .153$ ). The Pressured Group ( $M = 0.73, SD = 0.36$ ) had significantly shorter mid-clause pauses than both the Unpressured Group ( $M = 1.22, SD = 0.64, p = .002$ ) and the Hybrid Group ( $M = 1.18, SD = 0.57, p = .005$ ). This may indicate that under time pressure, learners' language production becomes more fragmented, with reduced time for intra-sentential planning.

TABLE 1  
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS FOR THE EFFECTS OF TASK CONDITION ON L2 SPEECH PERFORMANCE MEASURES

| Variables              | Task Condition Group |                |                | F (2, 87) | p     | partial $\eta^2$ |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------|------------------|
|                        | Pressured            | Unpressured    | Hybrid         |           |       |                  |
| Speech Rate            | 115.60 (39.52)       | 165.81 (43.85) | 125.80 (33.12) | 13.83     | <.001 | .241             |
| Articulation Rate      | 252.32 (30.49)       | 229.96 (22.57) | 276.83 (37.28) | 17.47     | <.001 | .287             |
| No. of Filled Pauses   | 10.89 (2.86)         | 14.84 (3.16)   | 12.39 (1.26)   | 18.07     | <.001 | .293             |
| No. of Unfilled Pauses | 22.56 (8.14)         | 16.43 (6.52)   | 18.50 (1.65)   | 7.85      | <.001 | .153             |
| ML of Mid-Clause UP    | 0.73 (0.36)          | 1.22 (0.64)    | 1.18 (0.57)    | 7.86      | <.001 | .153             |
| ML of End-Clause UP    | 5.58 (1.01)          | 5.73 (1.59)    | 5.45 (1.75)    | 0.28      | .759  | .006             |
| No. of Disfluencies    | 8.62 (1.91)          | 7.64 (0.89)    | 8.33 (2.14)    | 2.53      | .085  | .055             |
| CEFR Self-Assessment   | 3.37 (0.61)          | 3.47 (0.73)    | 3.07 (0.70)    | 2.80      | .066  | .061             |
| CEFR Rater Assessment  | 4.37 (0.61)          | 4.20 (0.48)    | 4.17 (0.46)    | 1.25      | .291  | .028             |
| Semantic Difference    | 17.87 (3.03)         | 18.77 (2.89)   | 18.87 (2.96)   | 1.04      | .357  | .023             |

Note: ML = Mean Length; UP = Unfilled Pauses. Values in parentheses represent standard deviations.

Notably, we found no significant effects of task condition on other indicators such as the mean length of end-clause pauses, the number of disfluencies, CEFR self-assessment scores, teacher CEFR assessment scores, and semantic difference (all  $p > .05$ ). This suggests that these aspects may be less sensitive to task pressure manipulation or may require different measurement approaches.

##### B. Relationship Between Utterance Fluency, Perceived Fluency, and Semantic Difference

To examine the relationships among utterance fluency, students' self-assessment, raters' assessment, and semantic difference, we conducted a series of Spearman's rank-order correlations. The resulting correlation matrix is presented as a heatmap (see Figure 1), visually illustrating the relationships between the variables. The color intensity in the heatmap represents the strength of the correlations, with positive correlations indicated by shades of red and negative correlations by shades of blue.

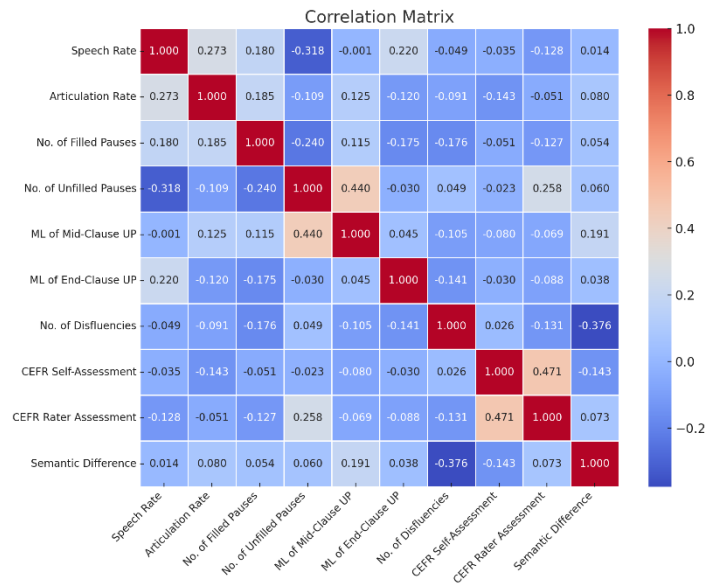


Figure 1. Correlation Matrix of Fluency Dimensions

The correlation analysis of speech fluency measures revealed several significant relationships. Speech Rate showed a moderate positive correlation with Articulation Rate ( $r = 0.273$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ), and a significant negative correlation with the Number of Unfilled Pauses ( $r = -0.318$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). A strong positive correlation was observed between the Number of Unfilled Pauses and the Mean Length of Mid-Clause UP ( $r = 0.440$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). However, the correlation between Mean Length of Mid-Clause and End-Clause UPs was weak and not statistically significant ( $r = 0.045$ ,  $p = 0.675$ ). The Number of Disfluencies demonstrated a notable negative correlation with Semantic Difference ( $r = -0.376$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). In terms of proficiency assessments, CEFR Self-Assessment and CEFR Rater Assessment showed a strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.471$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Interestingly, Speech Rate had weak and non-significant correlations with both CEFR Self-Assessment ( $r = -0.035$ ) and CEFR Rater Assessment ( $r = -0.128$ ). Lastly, the analysis revealed a weak, non-significant correlation between Semantic Difference and CEFR Rater Assessment ( $r = 0.073$ ,  $p = 0.492$ ).

## V. DISCUSSION

This study provides significant insights into the complexity of second language (L2) oral fluency, particularly regarding the interrelationships between task pressure and various fluency indicators. Our findings deepen the understanding of how task conditions affect L2 performance and elucidate the intricate dynamics of fluency components. The significant impact of task pressure on speech rate and articulation rate aligns with previous research by Ellis (2009) and Yuan and Ellis (2003) on the benefits of planning time. Our findings support Robinson's (2011) Cognition Hypothesis and Skehan's (2016) Limited Attention Capacity Hypothesis, suggesting that different planning conditions can be strategically combined to enhance L2 oral fluency. Notably, the hybrid planning condition yielded the highest speech and articulation rates, consistent with studies by Wang et al. (2019) and Hsu (2017). This aligns with recent work by Suzuki and Kormos (2020), which emphasizes the importance of task design in facilitating L2 fluency development.

Our study revealed a positive correlation between speech rate and articulation rate, challenging the common assumption that faster speech necessarily compromises clarity. This finding echoes Kormos and Dénes (2004) and is further supported by recent research from Tavakoli et al. (2020), who found that higher speech rates are often associated with improved overall fluency ratings. This relationship between speed and clarity underscores the complex nature of fluency and aligns with McDonough and Sato's (2019) call for a more nuanced understanding of fluency development in L2 learners. The analysis of pausing patterns revealed complex interactions between task pressure and different types of pauses. The pressured group exhibiting the highest number of disfluencies corroborates Skehan's (1998) Limited Attentional Capacity Hypothesis and is consistent with recent findings by Wang et al. (2019) on the effects of time pressure on L2 speech production. This result underscores the importance of considering potential trade-offs between fluency and other aspects of language production when designing task-based activities, a point emphasized in recent work by Hasnain and Halder (2023).

Contrary to earlier studies suggesting that time pressure might enhance fluency, our study found that the pressured group exhibited the highest number of disfluencies. This aligns with recent research by Khatib and Farahanynia (2020), who found that excessive time pressure can lead to cognitive overload in L2 speakers, particularly in complex narrative tasks. These findings highlight the need for careful consideration of task conditions in different learning contexts, as also noted by Ahmadian et al. (2023). The unpressured group's higher frequency of filled pauses aligns with Ellis's (2009) assertion that unpressured planning facilitates more careful language monitoring. This interpretation is supported

by recent work from Tavakoli and Wright (2020), who argue for a more comprehensive view of pausing behaviors in L2 speech.

Our findings on CEFR assessments revealed non-significant effects of task conditions on both self-assessment and rater evaluation of CEFR levels, suggesting a complex relationship between task planning conditions and perceived fluency. This aligns with recent research by Suzuki et al. (2021) on the multidimensionality of L2 fluency assessment. A notable discrepancy emerged in the participants' self-perceived fluency compared to rater evaluations, aligning with recent findings by Sadeghi et al. (2017) on the complexities of self-assessment in L2 fluency. The weak correlation between semantic difference and CEFR rater assessment is further corroborated by recent work from Saito et al. (2018) on the role of lexical sophistication in perceived fluency. These results collectively emphasize the complex and multifaceted nature of speech fluency and its assessment. They suggest that effective language teaching methodologies should address various aspects of fluency simultaneously, as proposed by Lambert and Kormos (2022) for a more integrated approach to fluency instruction.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study contributes significantly to the growing body of research on task planning conditions in L2 acquisition, offering valuable insights into the effects of pressured, unpressured, and hybrid planning on oral fluency among Chinese EFL learners. Our findings both support and challenge aspects of existing theoretical frameworks, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of L2 speech production processes.

Consistent with prior research, our study demonstrates that hybrid planning proves to be the most effective in improving fluency, as measured by speech rate, articulation rate, and the reduction of disfluencies. This finding supports the Cognition Hypothesis and underscores the practical value of incorporating diverse task planning strategies into L2 instruction. However, the discrepancies observed in self-assessed fluency, particularly under pressured conditions, highlight the complexity of fluency perception and suggest areas for future research, especially regarding the psychological factors influencing learner self-assessment. The superior performance of the hybrid planning condition in terms of speech rate and articulation rate suggests that combining different planning strategies may be particularly effective in enhancing L2 oral fluency. However, our study also reveals the need for a more comprehensive approach to fluency assessment that accounts for the multifaceted nature of L2 speech production, including aspects such as pausing patterns and semantic variability.

Our research advances the field of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and L2 acquisition by providing empirical evidence for the effectiveness of hybrid planning conditions and highlighting the complex relationship between objective fluency measures and learners' self-perceived fluency. It underscores the need for a more nuanced approach to fluency assessment and instruction in L2 education, considering both cognitive and affective factors that influence language production under various task conditions. In light of these findings, educators should strive to create balanced task conditions that promote fluency while also fostering accurate self-evaluations, contributing to more effective language learning strategies. By integrating these insights into curriculum design and pedagogical practices, language instructors can better support learners in developing both their oral fluency and their ability to accurately assess their own performance.

Future research should further explore the cognitive processes underlying the relationships between task pressure and fluency components, as well as investigate the long-term effects of different planning conditions on L2 fluency development. Additionally, studies focusing on the psychological aspects of self-assessment in relation to task pressure could provide valuable insights into learner perceptions and metacognitive processes in L2 acquisition.

In conclusion, this study not only contributes to our theoretical understanding of L2 fluency but also offers practical implications for language teaching and assessment. By adopting a more holistic approach to fluency development that considers task conditions, cognitive processes, and learner perceptions, we can enhance the overall effectiveness of L2 education and better prepare learners for real-world communication challenges.

## APPENDIX A. CEFR SELF-ASSESSMENT GRID

By placing an "✓" in the below table from 1 to 6, please indicate how well you understand your spoken fluency in general based on the descriptions in the following second table.

| Range | Fluency Scale              |                            |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
|       | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> |

| No. | Statements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | Spoken Interaction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Spoken Production                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 1   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interact in a simple way provided the other person in prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say.</li> <li>I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.</li> </ul>                                                                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 2   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities.</li> <li>I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.</li> </ul>                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.</li> </ul>                                                                                                            |
| 3   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken.</li> <li>I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions.</li> <li>I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</li> <li>I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.</li> </ul> |
| 4   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible.</li> <li>I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest.</li> <li>I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</li> </ul>                                                                      |
| 5   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.</li> <li>I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes.</li> <li>I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contributions skilfully to those of other speakers.</li> </ul>                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                           |
| 6   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.</li> <li>I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely.</li> <li>If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I can present a clear smoothly flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.</li> </ul>                                                                              |

## APPENDIX B. ANALYTIC FLUENCY PERCEPTION SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL SCALE

Please indicate the degree to which the statements apply to your perception of fluency in the speaking task that you have just narrated under the appropriate number from 1 to 5 by marking the continuum with an "✓". We are interested in your personal opinion. Thank you very much for your help.

| No. | Statements                                                                          | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
|     |                                                                                     | 1              | 2     | 3         | 4        | 5                 |
| 1.  | I can express myself smoothly in English.                                           |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 2.  | I can express myself with reasonable rhythm in English.                             |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 3.  | I can express myself quickly in English.                                            |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 4.  | I can express myself effortlessly in English.                                       |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 5.  | I can express myself with few hesitations in English.                               |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 6.  | I can express myself with few self-corrections in English.                          |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 7.  | I can express myself with reasonable speed in English.                              |                |       |           |          |                   |
| 8.  | I do not have to stop and search for words or expressions when speaking in English. |                |       |           |          |                   |

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# The Source Domain “Boxing” in Vietnamese Newspaper Discourse: The Case of Online Newspapers

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**Abstract**—The article explores the appearance of the metaphor ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ in online Vietnamese newspapers. Based on the linkages embedded in the experience and knowledge projected from the source domain to the target domain, the article clarifies the mapping mechanism between the spatial domains ‘boxing’ and ‘politics’ and explains the mechanism of moving and copying attributes between the two spatial domains ‘source’ and ‘target’ in the authors’ linguistic thinking. Based on the partial projection principles of metaphors, this paper presents the hierarchical characteristics of the authors’ conceptual thinking. From the basic metaphor ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’, through the mapping structure, the paper proves that four derived metaphors in online Vietnamese newspapers relate to four prominent characteristics of the source domain: ‘a blow’, ‘boxing tactics’, ‘the rules of boxing’, and ‘illegal blows’. The paper highlights the distinct way of thinking in conceptual structures on political issues based on the logical relationships in the mapping organization of conceptual metaphors. It also helps to clarify how Vietnamese media views politics, a topic that is intrinsic to the social superstructure and vital to the survival and advancement of a nation that is firmly devoted to socialism and is moving toward development.

**Index Terms**—boxing, conceptual, mapping, online newspaper, politics

## I. INTRODUCTION

The conceptualization of one cognitive domain to another, or the systematic mappings from the source domain to the target domain with the goal of developing a cognitive model relating the inner workings of the human mind, is known as conceptual or cognitive metaphors. According to Lakoff and Mark (1980), conceptual metaphors are a cognitive mechanism through which logic of abstract concepts is replaced with/by the logic of more concrete concepts. Additionally, as defined by Kövecses (2002), conceptual metaphors help to further understand a target concept A (often abstract) through the conceptual structures of a source concept B (more concrete). The source domain provides a relatively rich knowledge structure for the target domain and this knowledge is conveyed through schematic mappings between components of domains A and B (Kövecses, 2002). Kövecses (2002) also states that metaphorical mappings play an important role in metaphorical expressions, as they explain why specific characteristics are used to understand target domains.

Lakoff (1993) proved that constructing a mapping schema is a common way to conceptualize things. Mapping is not arbitrarily based on personal experience and accumulated through daily life to be used subconsciously. In conceptual structures, a fixed system of correspondences between constituent elements of source and target domains creates a mapping schema. When these correspondences are activated, attributes from the source domain are projected onto the target domain following partial or unidirectional projection mechanisms, resulting in the movement of very few attributes from the source domain to the target domain. Additionally, metaphors are also associated with the uniqueness of native speakers’ spiritual culture.

Research into conceptual metaphors has become a blossoming trend, undergoing significant development in a number of different industries and nations around the globe. However, in Vietnam, conceptual metaphor research on newspaper discourse, specifically within news relating to political matters via online newspapers, has not been a point of concern among researchers. Within that context, this research hopes to offer a new perspective on how native speakers conceptualize one of the metaphors about politics using the source domain 'boxing'. To achieve that aim, this research serves to answer three questions:

1. In media coverage on politics in online Vietnamese newspapers, which thinking mechanisms underline the use of metaphors with the source domain 'boxing' to discuss the behaviors and actions of politicians?
2. Why do Vietnamese reporters and journalists have a tendency to use metaphors with the source domain 'boxing' to think about problems relating to politics?
3. What are the pragmatic implications of these metaphors?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The source domain 'sports' and other sub-domains relating to sports such as 'football', 'baseball', 'American football', 'cricket', 'horse racing', 'boxing', 'auto racing', and so on seem to have become an integral part of media discourse when researching and analyzing some fields as target domains such as politics, commerce, business, education, and healthcare. In online Vietnamese newspapers, there are several terms reflecting the source domain 'boxing' that are used when expressing aspects of the target domain 'politics'. Moreover, conceptual metaphors in political discourse with the source domain of sports have indeed appeared in some recent studies.

In the first approach, sports have always been exploited as an important source domain in political discourse. Hardaway (1976) provided an interesting outlook on conceptual metaphors of sports used in commercials, business, and when talking about the government. Moreover, research has indicated that the overutilization of sports metaphors has caused readers to wrongly perceive the above-mentioned themes as rules of a game within which participants attempt to deceive and belittle one another. Semino and Michela (1996) placed emphasis on metaphors with the source domains 'football', 'war', and 'Bible' when investigating the political discourse of Italian politician, Silvio Berlusconi. The data revealed that football metaphors were most commonly used, resulting in a relatively new style of political discourse in Italy throughout the 1990s. Through inspecting the speeches of American presidents, Theodore Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and others, Segrave (2000) found three typical 'sports' source domains commonly appearing in metaphorical discourse, including 'boxing', 'horse racing', and 'football'. Cudd (2007) looked into some of Karl Marx's works and clearly identified the similarities between democracy and sports regarding the aspects of 'collaboration' and 'competition'. The latter element, including 'objective', 'means of scoring', 'attitude', 'player behavior', 'rules of the game', 'impartiality', 'individual role on the team', and so on, seems to fully project onto the target domain 'politics', expressing parallelism between the behaviors and actions of politicians and athletes. Over a span of five years, Wiliński (2015), who analyzed the politics-related language corpus from two online sources, namely, google.com and yahoo.uk, found 451 metaphorical discourses attached to 29 sports source domains and justified this appearance with a large volume of political metaphors that included boxing, baseball, football, and horse racing source domains.

In the second approach, various works utilizing conceptual metaphors in political discourse employ the source domain 'boxing', a form of martial arts bearing individual combat characteristics, not based on team collaboration. Howe (1988) conducted metaphorical research on the rhetoric of politicians in contemporary American politics between 1980 and 1985 and noted that politics is frequently seen as a struggle against established norms with boxing emerging as a useful domain source to denote head-to-head competition between powerful politicians. Wiliński (2022) examined 145 boxing-related idioms from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and identified their use in political settings. Boxing-related idioms have been found to frequently emerge in political discourse due to the similarities between a boxing match and political contests. Hanh (2022) investigated online Vietnamese newspapers and discovered that metaphors derived from gaming source domains such as 'gambling', 'cards', 'chess', and 'Chinese chess' were frequently used in political discourse. However, her research did not fully exploit the source domain 'sports', including 'boxing match' acting as a source domain to clarify the resemblance in activities within the target domain of politics. This research aims to gain an understanding of the conceptual model 'POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH' and other derived metaphors in the political discourse of online Vietnamese newspapers. As a result, it adds to a better understanding of how Vietnamese media think about politics in general, as well as how politicians respond when making significant national decisions.

## III. METHODOLOGY

In order to carry out analyses and research into metaphors with the source domain 'boxing' in online Vietnamese newspaper political discourse, the researchers implemented quantitative, qualitative, and discourse analyses. The corpus was analyzed using two major methods: (1) examining papers to identify metaphors used with themes related to national and international political issues; and (2) finding keywords belonging to the source domain and citing their appearance in different contexts of political discourse. The surveyed corpus consisted of 38 online newspapers in the Vietnamese language, from which a total of 388 articles published between 2013 and 2023 were obtained for analysis. All newspapers are mainstream news sites managed and regulated by the Ministry of Information and Communications or copyrighted

websites licensed by the ministry and run by other ministries or industries. The researchers then proceeded to identify conceptual metaphors used in the articles in accordance with the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) proposed by the Group P. (2007) by following four steps:

1. Study the entire discourse in each article to establish a general semantic understanding;
2. Mark words or phrases with semantic conflict within the context;
3. Look up marked words or phrases in a dictionary to determine whether their meanings could be understood in relation to other words within the context;
4. If not, identify them as metaphors.

Words or phrases creating semantic conflict then become “metaphorically expressed words/ metaphorical linguistic expressions”. Finally, the discourse containing metaphorically expressed words is called “metaphorical statement”.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Boxing is a sport in which two combatants wear specialized gloves and use jabs, punches, footwork, and head and body movements to defeat their opponent. When the source domain ‘boxing’ is projected onto the target domain ‘politics’, the characteristics of the source domain, mainly concerned with terms such as ‘fighter’s ranking’, ‘several strikes’, ‘strike delivering strategies’, ‘gimmicks’, ‘rules’, ‘win’, and ‘loss’, are activated, creating mapping similarities between the two domains. Within this context, politicians are considered fighters, while their respective policies are considered strikes in the boxing ring. In combat, the striking done by the fighters plays a pivotal role in determining the outcome of the match. In the political arena, the policies and decisions made by politicians play the same role in deciding the political outcome of a nation. Thus, the rules of boxing could then be inferred as the rules of the political arena, with all types of strikes against the opponent following the common international set of rules.

The conceptual metaphor ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ is a common concept in different cultures and bears a strong foundation of experience. This metaphor includes two spatial domains, “source” (boxing) and “target” (politics), within which characteristics of the source domain are projected on the target domain through partial projection principles, causing the target domain to hold some knowledge fragments of the source domain. The conceptual structure ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ is expressed through a mapping diagram in Table 1 below:

TABLE 1  
MAPPING DIAGRAM OF THE METAPHOR “POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH”

| Characteristics of the source domain<br><i>‘Boxing match’</i> |   | Characteristics of the target domain<br><i>‘Politics’</i>   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Strikes in boxing matches                                  | → | Political campaigns and actions                             |
| 2. Boxing tactics/ techniques                                 | → | Political strategies/ techniques                            |
| 3. Fouls/ Violations in boxing matches                        | → | Unethical political behaviour/ unfavourable political state |
| 4. Rules of boxing matches                                    | → | Rules in the political arena                                |

Through the researched corpus, multiple appearances of the metaphoric expression ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ were found with specific metaphorically expressed words attached to each individual characteristic of the source domain ‘boxing’. Metaphorical expressions help readers visualize the political arena as complex, filled with strategic moves and dramatic tension, much like developments in a boxing match, even in terms of risks and dangers. According to the projection schema, the researchers identified the following four derived metaphors.

##### A. The Conceptual Metaphor ‘A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN/ ACTION IS A HARD STRIKE’

Based on characteristics of the source domain, the basic metaphor ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ engenders the derived metaphor ‘A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN/ ACTION IS A HARD STRIKE’, encompassing 107 metaphorically expressed words. The source domain ‘a hard strike’ provides basic metaphorical linguistic expressions, such as ‘strike’, ‘lethal strike’, ‘dangerous strike’, ‘hefty strike’, ‘iron punch’, ‘iron fist’, ‘direct strike’, ‘strike straight to the face’, ‘a powerful slap’, ‘a heavy blow’, ‘dealing a blow’, ‘knockout strike’, ‘a heavy punch’, and ‘lightning punch’. These words refer to knowledge about a boxing match where a fighter deals the finishing blow to his/ her opponent. With some flexibility, the target domain ‘politics’ adopts knowledge from the source domain ‘boxing’ and creates an abundance of metaphorical expressions to describe politicians or other ruling authorities amidst political strife, where they fight with calculated strikes and employ tactics with cautious consideration to safeguard the ideologies and benefits of the organizations or nations that they represent. The frequencies of occurrences of these metaphorically expressed words are reported in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2  
FREQUENCIES OF OCCURRENCES OF METAPHORICALLY-EXPRESSED WORDS 'A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN/ ACTION IS A HARD STRIKE'

| Source Domain's Attributes (Boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words                                              | Frequency | Source Domain's Attributes (Boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words                                                         | Frequency |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| A heavy blow                        | Ra đòn hiểm/ cú đòn/ cú đòn hiểm hóc 'hard strike/ strike/ lethal strike'   | 20        | A heavy blow                        | Cái tát mạnh/ cú giáng mạnh/ giáng đòn 'a powerful slap/ a heavy blow/ dealing a blow' | 7         |
|                                     | Ra đòn/ ra đòn nặng ký 'strike/ hefty strike'                               | 7         |                                     | Cú đánh knock-out 'knockout strike'                                                    | 6         |
|                                     | Cú đấm thép/ quả đấm thép 'iron punch/ iron punch'                          | 34        |                                     | Cú đấm/ cú đấm mạnh/ cú đấm sấm sét 'punch/ heavy punch/ lighting punch'               | 18        |
|                                     | Cú đấm thẳng/ cú đấm thẳng mặt 'direct strike/ strike straight to the face' | 11        |                                     | Nắm đấm/ nắm đấm sắt 'fist/ iron fist'                                                 | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>107</b>                                                                  |           |                                     |                                                                                        |           |

When conceptualizing 'A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN/ ACTION IS A HARD STRIKE', the authors may see political events like the developments of a boxing match in the ring where fighters possess power and use it to deliver blows and gain an advantage. This draws similarities to the challenges and opportunities faced by politicians, organizations, and nations. A match becomes thrilling as boxers utilize their strength and skills to knock out their opponents, and a political struggle becomes intense as politicians engage in a contest of will and intellect to defeat the opposition and achieve a desirable outcome. In online Vietnamese newspaper discourse, a successfully executed strategy or political action is depicted as a heavy blow that is usually metaphorically expressed as the powerful 'iron punch' of a boxer in the political arena. For example:

1. *Đại học đa lĩnh vực: 'Quả đấm thép' của giáo dục đại học Việt Nam.* (dantri.com.vn, 29/08/2018)  
[Multi-disciplinary universities: 'The iron punch' of Vietnamese university education.] (dantri.com.vn, August 29, 2018)
2. *Thủ tướng: Không thể thiếu những 'quả đấm thép' của nền kinh tế!* (dantri.com.vn, 17/01/2020)  
[Prime minister: there cannot be a lack of 'iron punches' of the economy!] (dantri.com.vn, January 17, 2020)
3. *Đòn lực cho hai 'quả đấm thép' tăng trưởng.* (xaydungchinh sach.chinhphu.vn, 12/04/2023)  
[Charging up for two 'iron punches' of growth.] (xaydungchinh sach.chinhphu.vn, April 12, 2023)

In metaphorical expressions 1, 2, and 3 above, 'iron punch' indicates the impact of a government policy deemed to be successful, possessing the capability to alter a certain political scenario that was previously ineffective and poorly operated. In the first expression, the establishment of multi-disciplinary universities has a strong effect; therefore, it is likened to an 'iron punch' for the course taken by the higher education system towards globalization. In expression number 2, the statement made by Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc means state-owned businesses play a role akin to the economy's 'iron punch'. For them to fulfill such a role and attain a central position in the economy, there is a need for business restructuring and reform in accordance with international standards, relying on technological advances. Finally, in example 3, according to Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, boosting domestic consumer demand and expediting the disbursement of public funds are considered two of the three driving forces that the Vietnamese government actively implements, without heavy reliance on external factors. These are seen as two "iron fists" powerfully impacting the economy to generate momentum for growth and development.

In a boxing match, fighters have to pick the right moment to deal a decisive blow to their opponent. This is also the case in politics; the mapping similarities between fighters and politicians include fighting techniques and striking at the right moment. Among the metaphorical expressions found, actions taken or decisions made by politicians to stifle opposition in the political arena are metaphorically expressed as lethal or heavy strikes.

4. *'Đòn đánh phủ đầu' của Nga-Mỹ có khiến đối phương bất ngờ?* (dantri.com.vn, 12/08/2015)  
[Did 'The first strike' between Russia-America catch the opponent by surprise?] (dantri.com.vn, August 12, 2015)
5. *Phe Dân chủ ra "đòn hiểm" nhưng Trump có chiến lược phản công lợi hại.* (dantri.com.vn, 30/09/2019)  
[The Democrats delivered a 'fatal blow' but Trump had a lethal counterattack] (dantri.com.vn, September 30, 2019)
6. *Tổng thống Trump ra đòn nặng ký: Rút chuỗi cung ứng toàn cầu ra khỏi Trung Quốc.* (dantri.com.vn, 05/05/2020)  
[President Trump dealt a heavy blow: Taking the world supply chain away from China] (dantri.com.vn, May 05, 2020)

Dealing 'the first strike', 'a fatal blow', or 'a heavy blow' are all tactics in combat. During their fight, by observing opponents' strengths, weaknesses, and overall ability, fighters may find their window of opportunity and deal the decisive blow. This tactic is similar to the strategy employed by politicians in the arena. Before dealing a heavy blow to opponents, politicians must rely on their judgment of the political scene and analyze their opponents' strengths and weaknesses to take appropriate actions at the right moments. For example:

7. *Tuy nhiên, dù Mỹ hay Trung Quốc hành động, một "cú đấm" mạnh sẽ không chỉ gây thương tích cho đối phương mà còn làm đau cả người ra đòn.* (tuoitre.vn, 28/03/2020)  
[However, whether or not the United States or China make a move, one heavy ‘**blow**’ would not only inflict damage on the opponent but also the striker.] (tuoitre.vn, March 28, 2020)
8. *Giáo chủ Iran dọa trả đũa bằng "cái tát mạnh và nắm đấm sắt".* (dantri.com.vn, 11/11/2011)  
[Iran's Supreme Leader threatened retaliation with "a powerful slap and iron fist".] (dantri.com.vn, November 11, 2011)
9. *'...' Trung Quốc cố tình gây căng thẳng, khiêu khích trên Biển Đông để "tung một cú đấm thẳng" bằng hình thức chiến tranh phi đối xứng vào thẳng chính sách "đòn can thiệp khu vực" truyền thống của Mỹ.* (baochinhpvu.vn, 23/05/2014)  
[China deliberately gauged tension and provoked in the South China Sea in order to ‘**deal a direct blow**’ in the form of asymmetric warfare directly targeting the US's traditional “regional intervention” policy.] (baochinhpvu.vn, May 23, 2014)

Strikes in a boxing match such as ‘a heavy blow’, ‘iron fist’, and ‘a direct strike’ are projected onto politics to refer to punitive measures implemented by political leaders or factions, making it easy for the reader to take in the tense, thrilling, and adventurous atmosphere of a political arena. Of course, when the negotiation process between opposing sides is carried out using physical force, this may lead to the severance of diplomatic ties or even trigger the onset of an armed conflict. However, it is similar to fighters in a boxing ring determined to deal the ending blow because this means that the match has reached its climax and is awaiting an inevitable knockout. At this point, there is bound to be a winner, a loser, or a draw, just as there is in politics.

#### B. Conceptual Metaphor ‘POLITICAL STRATEGIES ARE BOXING STRATEGIES’

Since politics is metaphorically expressed as a boxing match, boxers’ tactics play an important role in deciding the outcome of the match. The conceptualization of political strategies as boxing tactics reflects the volatile nature of the political arena, where fierce struggle between evenly matched opponents makes it difficult to predict the outcome. When projecting this characteristic onto the target domain “chính trị”, or ‘politics’, the researchers found metaphoric expressions describing the flexibility, agility, and fierceness that politicians display when proactively using fighting strategies, controlling and monitoring the tempo of the game. The frequencies of occurrences of metaphorically expressed words are reported in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3  
FREQUENCIES OF OCCURRENCES OF METAPHORICALLY-EXPRESSED WORDS ‘POLITICAL STRATEGIES ARE BOXING STRATEGIES’

| Source Domain's Attributes (boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words | Frequency | Source Domain's Attributes (boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words | Frequency |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Boxing strategies                   | Đòn gió ‘Feint’                | 19        | Boxing strategies                   | Tung đòn ‘Dealing a blow’      | 23        |
|                                     | Nhà đòn ‘Jab’                  | 3         |                                     | Phản công ‘Counterattack’      | 4         |
|                                     | Phản đòn ‘Counterstrike’       | 18        |                                     | Đòn phủ đầu ‘First strike’     | 7         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>74</b>                      |           |                                     |                                |           |

In the boxing ring, ‘deliberately missing on purpose’ (also known as ‘feinting’) is a tactic to distract an opponent from the actual attack. In boxing, ‘feinting’ is a strike that comes before the actual strike, opening up an opportunity for the latter to be more effective. When projected onto the target domain ‘political strategies’, ‘feinting’ is metaphorically expressed for strategies deployed by politicians in order to throw off or intimidate the opponent, thereby imposing a level of unpredictability in their political movements. In the examined corpus, the researchers found 74 metaphorical of this type. For example:

10. *'Đòn gió' cho bỏ tức.* (thanhvien.vn, 25/10/2021)  
[‘**Feinting**’ to relieve stress] (thanhvien.vn, October 25, 2021)
11. *Đòn gió để tránh đòn thật.* (kinhtedothi.vn, 17/02/2021)  
[**Feinting** to dodge the real attack] (kinhtedothi.vn, February 17, 2021)
12. *Belarus: Dùng đòn gió để không đòn thật.* (kinhtedothi.vn, 03/09/2020)  
[Belarus: Using **feints** to avoid actual attacks] (kinhtedothi.vn, September 03, 2020)

In metaphoric expressions 10, 11, and 12, ‘feints’ appear in the political context to refer to the behavior of politicians and nations in high-tension political situations. The ways ‘feints’ are delivered refer to political actions aimed at the opposition in order to create political pressure. In 10, ‘feinting’ is indicative of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s threat to expel ten ambassadors of European nations, which he later backpedaled on. This is only a measure to ascertain the opponent’s movement, bearing similarities to ‘feints’ in boxing. In 11 and 12, these expressions refer to the way Russia threw a feint jab at the EU when making a statement about the possibility of severing diplomatic relations with the organization due to its prolonged sanctions against Russia.

In boxing, ‘jabbing’ is also a tactic commonly used by fighters. ‘Jabbing’ is a quick blow with the purpose of gauging what type of move the opponent is aiming for in order to read their game and deal game-winning blows. ‘Jabbing’ also indicates the precursor move, setting up the opponent before dealing the actual strike. In the political arena, ‘jabbing’ refers to probing moves before implementing strategies. For example:

13. *Trung Quốc nhá đòn “tẩy chay” với Philippines.* (tuoitre.vn, 20/07/2016)  
[China **jabbed** at Philippines by “going cold on them”] (tuoitre.vn, July 20, 2016)
14. *Bản tin nóng công nghệ: Samsung được nhờ giải cứu “khủng hoảng lợn”, OPPO nhá đòn Plus để thực bán F3.* (laodong.vn, 02/05/2017)  
[Breaking Tech News: Samsung has been asked to relieve “the pig crisis”, OPPO **jabs** with Plus to actually sell F3]. (laodong.vn, May 02, 2017)

In expression 13, ‘jabbing’ refers to China’s call for consumers to boycott products from the Philippines and the U.S. after the international arbitration court ruled that China illegally prevented Filipino ships from docking at the Scarborough Shoal, which has been under Beijing’s control since 2012. In expression 14, ‘jabbing’ points to the fact that OPPO released the F3 Plus into the Vietnamese market in order to mislead its competitor Samsung, while the then-up-and-coming F3 is, in actuality, the strategic commercial product of OPPO.

Boxing tactics also include counterattacks. When projected onto the target domain ‘politics’, counterattacks may signify business, economic, or diplomatic policies implemented in response to an adversary’s offensive action. For example:

15. *Cuộc chiến công nghệ: Cú phản đòn của Trung Quốc khiến Mỹ bất an.* (vietnamfinance.vn, 23/11/2023)  
[Technological battle: **The counter strike** by China has caused anxiety for America.] (vietnamfinance.vn, November 23, 2023)
16. *Cú phản đòn của ‘ông lớn’ taxi: Xe ôm ngán ngẩm, GrabBike bắt đầu lo.* (nguoiduatin.vn, 04/10/2017)  
[**The counter strike** of taxi ‘big bosses’: Motorbike taxi drivers are frustrated, GrabBike has started to worry.] (nguoiduatin.vn, October 04, 2017)

In expression 15, Huawei’s launch event for their smartphone line is regarded as a powerful ‘counterstrike’ at their major U.S. and Japanese competitors. In expression 16, two Vietnamese ride-sharing transportation giants’ simultaneous business expansions into motorbikes, buggies, and auto-rickshaws are framed as a powerful ‘counterstrike’ against Mai Linh and Vinasun, two major taxi businesses in Vietnam.

### C. Conceptual Metaphor ‘UNETHICAL POLITICAL BEHAVIOR/UNFAVOURABLE POLITICAL STATE IS A VIOLATION OF RULES’

Sports in general and boxing specifically all promote ‘fair play’. Sport participants have to follow rules and avoid violating them as best they can. In actuality, however, some boxers sometimes resort to gimmicks, subtle misconduct, or foul play to win. When the source domain ‘violation of rules’ in boxing is projected onto the target domain ‘unethical political behavior’, the source domain provides metaphorical such as ‘hitting below the belt’ or ‘tripping’, forming metaphors for politicians’ ethically dubious acts to undermine the opposition. The researchers found 25 such metaphorical. The frequencies of occurrences of metaphorically expressed words are reported in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4  
FREQUENCIES OF OCCURRENCES OF METAPHORICALLY-EXPRESSED WORDS ‘UNETHICAL POLITICAL BEHAVIOR/ UNFAVOURABLE POLITICAL STATE IS A VIOLATION OF RULES’

| Source Domain’s Attributes (boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words                  | Frequency | Source Domain’s Attributes (boxing) | Metaphorically-Expressed Words | Frequency |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Foul play                           | Đánh dưới thắt lưng<br>‘Hitting below the belt’ | 13        | Foul play                           | Ngáng chân<br>‘Tripping’       | 12        |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>25</b>                                       |           |                                     |                                |           |

When the source domain ‘violation of rules’ is activated and projected onto the target domain, it is implied that aspects of a politician’s behavior and political states of affairs, including defense, diplomacy, healthcare, or education policies, are analogous to situations in the boxing ring. Since politicians are expected to abide by the laws and behave in accordance with moral standards, code-breaching behavior may be framed as foul play, similar to boxing. In online Vietnamese media discourse, instances of improper conduct by politicians are expressed using the metaphorical lead ‘hitting below the belt’, which is a universally condemned, rule-breaching strike in boxing. For example:

17. *Bóng đá Việt Nam cần một cuộc tranh tài sòng phẳng để lựa chọn được người thực sự xứng đáng, chứ không phải kẻ bước lên ngôi “mình chui” bằng thủ đoạn ‘đánh dưới thắt lưng’ người khác.* (tienphong.vn, 26/04/2018)  
[Vietnamese football needs a fair face-off to determine who is truly worthy, not someone who becomes ‘leader’ by ‘**hitting below the belt**’ of others.] (tienphong.vn, April 26, 2018)
18. *“Đánh dưới thắt lưng” huấn luyện viên Hữu Thắng.* (nld.com.vn, 18/09/2017)  
[‘**Hitting below the belt**’ of Coach Huu Thang] (nld.com.vn, September 18, 2017)

Both of the above examples refer to political actions taken by figures of authority in Vietnamese sport amidst the turbulence surrounding candidate choices for Director of the Vietnam Football Federation and the head coach of the

national football team. To be more specific, a smearing campaign, rigged election procedures, anonymous complaints, and other underhanded tactics to remove a potential candidate for a leadership position are viewed in light of boxing rules as instances of unsportsmanlike conduct and conceptualized as ‘hitting below the belt’—a prohibited strike in boxing.

In the case of Vietnamese journalism, dramatization, disinformation, and other methods of manipulating public opinion are sometimes used to discredit high-profile journalists and press agencies. The metaphorical lead ‘hitting below the belt’ manifests itself with flexibility in metaphor expressions indicating the aforementioned unscrupulous methods. For example:

19. *Toàn cảnh vụ ‘đánh dưới thắt lưng’ nhà báo Thu Uyên.* (nguoiduatin.vn, 30/11/2013)  
[Full overview of the ‘hitting below the belt’ of journalist Thu Uyen]. (nguoiduatin.vn, November 30, 2013)
20. *Giới bóng đá những ngày qua lại một phen xì xào về những đòn đánh ‘dưới thắt lưng’ nhằm vào Phó chủ tịch Cao Văn Chóng. Người ta không lạ bởi giai đoạn vừa qua, bóng đá Việt Nam gặt hái nhiều thành tựu và trong đó, truyền thông đóng góp vai trò không nhỏ.* (tienphong.vn, 25/10/2022)  
[The football world is once again undergoing drama due to ‘hits below the belt’ aimed at Vice President Cao Van Chong, which surprises no one as the media plays a not-so-subtle role in recent achievements by Vietnamese football.] (tienphong.vn, October 25, 2022)

Example 19 refers to unscrupulous methods aimed at tarnishing the reputation of a renowned journalist while simultaneously discrediting an influential press agency. Similarly, in expression 20, the Vice President for Communications and Diplomacy of the VFF has taken some ‘hits below the belt’ that were delivered to forestall his re-election.

Additionally, the metaphorical lead manifests itself in news about business conduct, where poaching, or recruiting employees from rival businesses, and buying successful outlets from competitors are depicted as detestable yet common practices among insurance companies. Example 21 below is the title of a news article that reports that CEOs in Vietnam’s insurance industry are committed to following the industrial code of conduct, including relinquishing the practice of buying and selling outlets. However, successful insurance outlets are being offered at very high prices—literally translated to ‘as expensive as fresh shrimp’—and insurance companies are still poaching talents from rivals. This phenomenon is also similar to a ‘hit below the belt’ in boxing, a violation of the rules.

21. *Nhân sự bảo hiểm: Những đòn đánh ‘dưới thắt lưng’.* (sme.misa.vn, 30/09/2012)  
[Insurance personnel: ‘Hits below the belt’.] (sme.misa.vn, September 30, 2012)

In general, in Vietnamese-language online newspaper discourse, it is fairly common for political misconduct to be metaphorically expressed as foul play in boxing. This conceptualization contributes to uncovering flaws in the system of governance and drawbacks of policies, aids readers in better understanding political affairs, and perhaps puts pressure on politicians to reform or alter policies and practices.

#### D. Conceptual Metaphor ‘RULES IN THE POLITICAL ARENA ARE RULES OF BOXING MATCHES’

Boxing is a combat sport with its own set of rules established internationally, requiring players to understand and abide by the rules. The political arena is also operated under general laws and principles that are immovable. When receiving the attributes of the source domain, metaphorical expressions reflect how politicians control the political arena in accordance with the rules of boxing. The researchers found 34 metaphorically expressed words, as shown in Table 5 below:

TABLE 5  
THE FREQUENCIES OF METAPHORICALLY-EXPRESSED WORDS OF METAPHOR ‘RULES IN THE POLITICAL ARENA ARE RULES OF BOXING MATCHES’

| Source Domain’s attributes (Boxing) | Metaphorically-expressed words  | Frequency | Source Domain’s attributes (Boxing) | Metaphorically-expressed words   | Frequency |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Rules of boxing matches             | (Cuộc) so găng ‘Boxing (match)’ | 14        | Rules of boxing matches             | Găng tay đấm bốc ‘Boxing gloves’ | 6         |
|                                     | Tháo găng ‘Taking off gloves’   | 5         |                                     | Hạ đo ván ‘Knock out’            | 9         |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>34</b>                       |           |                                     |                                  |           |

Within the rules of the game exist non-negotiable regulations such as deciding on wins and losses, rule violations, types of punches, and codes of ethics and conduct. Projecting the attribute “rules of boxing matches” onto “rules in the political arena” activates the use of metaphorically expressed words such as ‘boxing (match)’, ‘taking off gloves’, and so on. In boxing, “boxing match” is a phrase that expresses the fight between two opponents within the same weight class in the ring. Among political metaphorical expressions in online Vietnamese newspapers, a ‘boxing match’ between opponents of the same caliber is mapped onto the target domain to indicate equal competition between government policies. In example 22 below, ‘boxing match’ refers to the debate over various options for adjustment of wage increases for civil servants paid from the national budget.



22. *Điều chỉnh lương tối thiểu: Cuộc “so găng” giữa các kịch bản.* (congthuong.vn, 21/07/2016)  
[Adjusting minimum wage levels: A “**boxing match**” between different scenarios.] (congthuong.vn, July 21, 2016)

The characteristics of the development of a boxing match are also projected onto the development of political negotiations. The lexical item “taking off the gloves”, originally indicating the temporary postponement of a boxing match, is employed to signify the stoppage of political conflicts between politicians in example 23 below; conversely, the inverse movement is ‘taking off negotiation gloves’ in order to step into a fearsome battle as in example 24 below. When “boxing gloves” are put on, as in example 25, it implies that a politician decides to deal new, stronger blows against the opponent.

23. *Mỹ-Trung đã ‘tháo găng’, bước vào Chiến tranh Lạnh mới vì virus Corona.* (baogiaothong.vn, 06/05/2020)  
[The US and China have ‘**taken off their gloves**’, stepping into a new Cold War due to the Corona virus.] (baogiaothong.vn, May 06, 2020)
24. *Các nhà phân tích nói rằng, giờ là lúc “găng tay đàm phán đã tháo” ám chỉ không còn sự lạc quan còn sót lại từ thỏa thuận thương mại Mỹ-Trung giai đoạn một (được ký vào giữa tháng Giêng vừa qua).* (baogiaothong.vn, 06/05/2020)  
[Analysts say that now is the time to ‘**take off negotiation gloves**’, indicating the absence of remaining optimism from phase one US-China trade agreement/ deal (signed in the past mid-January)] (baogiaothong.vn, May 06, 2020)
25. *‘Găng tay đấm bốc’ rõ ràng đã được tung ra vì sự mâu thuẫn của ba cường quốc lớn nhất thế giới, ở các điểm nóng trên tất cả các châu lục, dù ở Châu Âu, Viễn Đông, Trung Đông, bán đảo Triều Tiên và những nơi khác.* (dantri.com.vn, 04/01/2019)  
[Putting on ‘**boxing gloves**’ has clearly been initiated due to the conflict among the world’s three largest superpowers in the world, in hotspots across all continents whether in Europe, the Far East, the Middle East, the Korean Peninsula and elsewhere.] (dantri.com.vn, January 04, 2019)

Another similar attribute between the source domain and target domain lies in how the state of defeat is determined in the ring. In boxing, a fighter is determined to be ‘knocked out’, meaning that they are unable to continue the fight. In the political discourse in online Vietnamese newspapers, this attribute of the source domain is mainly mapped to refer to conflicts over policies and political systems where the victory belongs to the stronger side, though the winning side itself may involve a lack of transparency or negativity. For example:

26. *Quốc nạn có nguy cơ hạ đo ván quốc sách.* (vneconomy.vn, 07/06/2012)  
[The national disasters are likely to **knock out** the national policy.] (vneconomy.vn, June 07, 2012)

Example 26 reflects the current situation in which the Vietnamese government has been undermined by corrupt hands. National resources have been diverted into the pockets of individuals and interest groups, reducing the efficiency of national policies. With this situation, it can be concluded that national policy has been ‘knocked out’ by the national disaster.

In the political discourse in online Vietnamese newspapers, there is clearly a widespread appearance of metaphors with the source domain ‘boxing’. Most attributes of the source domain have been chosen, activated, and projected onto the target domain ‘politics’. Perceiving politics as a boxing match, the authors of news articles have conveyed information about the political aspects of different nations through a scenario of a risky and dramatic boxing match, making the readers perceive the challenges inherent in the political arena. The actions and strategies of politicians greatly influence the benefit of a nation and its people. The target domain ‘politics’ is conceptualized through the source domain “boxing”, which has contributed to the clarification of the challenges as well as the political prowess of politicians in their respective historical roles in the political arena, so that their policies are powerful enough and demonstrate the political fortitude of the leaders of organizations, parties, and nations. Moreover, it is easy to see that the entire conceptualization of ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH’ is manifested by the mapping schema inherent in the consciousness of the authors, formed by the correspondences in experience and knowledge about ‘the boxing match’, about the experiences relating to the knowledge of a combat sport within a universal and specific cognitive frame.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the terminology of sports seems to have been flexibly and creatively utilized in aiding the formation of political metaphorical expressions that impact the perception and behavior of readers or serve the purpose of public propaganda and influence. The source domain is exploited for conceptual metaphors in political discourse, while at the same time reflecting the intentions of politicians when using conceptual metaphors. Boxing is a combat martial art sport characterized by individual tactical striking techniques. As a result, this sport has become a useful source domain for metaphorically addressing political issues. Metaphors are an essential part of a political discourse style, with politicians/ governments often using various metaphors in order to change people’s attitudes towards politics. Even on certain occasions, they serve to create a positive public image for politicians and their respective parties or organizations, with a view to attracting support or justifying their political actions.

## V. CONCLUSION

Through the clarification of the mapping and stimulation mechanism and pointing out the similarities in characteristics between the two spatial domains ‘source’ and ‘target’ in the conceptual metaphorical structure ‘POLITICS IS A BOXING

MATCH', it can be concluded that the thinking about politics of the authors all stems from background knowledge, established on the basis of human practical experience in general and the unpredictability and harshness of the political environment in general and of boxing matches in particular. From the decoding of the formation and projection mechanism in metaphors with the target domain 'politics', it can be seen that there is a level of consistency in the thinking of authors when rationalizing 'politics' as a boxing match with all the relevant characteristics of participants, rules, strikes and punches, and deciding the outcome in the arena. Sportifying political activities combined with language exaggeration has caused political scenarios to bear shades of a sports competition, requiring the resilience, agility, quickness, endurance, and willpower of politicians. The rules and impartiality in sports are similar to the requirements for politicians to abide by the rules of the political arena. Types of rule violations and negative reactions to political scenarios are often reflected upon with criticism. Strategies used in boxing and other tactics of politicians are viewed in unison. Losing in the ring is akin to the failure of politicians in the political arena or the failure of political organizations. A real-life boxing match ideally ends with a knockout by the fighter causing their opposition to drop to the ground, whereas competition in the political arena ideally ends with the failure of the opposition as they are unable to affect the outcome of the political situation. It is easily observable that the entire conceptual metaphor 'POLITICS IS A BOXING MATCH' is demonstrated through an imagery schema already established in the subconscious of the authors, formed by the correspondences in experience and available knowledge about 'a boxing match', about experiences relating to this combat sport within a universal cognitive frame; however, metaphorical expressions also manifest the distinct features of Vietnamese thinking.

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# The Effect of Job-Related English Learning Materials for Mobile Learning Implementation on Students' English Mastery

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**Abstract**—This study aims to test the effectiveness of the Job-Related English Learning Material (JRELM) for Mobile Learning Implementation for teaching English at Bali State Polytechnic, Indonesia. Regarding English language aspects and skills, JRELM includes grammar, vocabulary, reading, speaking, listening, and writing materials. This study was conducted by following the pre-test and post-test control group design. This study involved 48 students; 24 were in the experimental group, and the other 24 were in the control group. They were the 2nd-semester students of the electrical engineering study program at the Bali State Polytechnic. To collect the study data, the researchers used pre-test and post-tests to measure the students' English mastery. Validity and reliability tests were conducted to ensure the pre-test and post-test were valid and reliable before being used to collect the study data. The researchers used the results of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group and control group to get the N-gain scores. Then, the N-gained scores were further analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test to identify the effectiveness of JRELM on students' English mastery. The data results show that the JRELM for mobile learning significantly affects students' English mastery. It is because the JRELM can be accessed at any time, it is provided with exciting learning materials, and it helps students focus on learning with relevant material according to the professional field. Thus, this study concluded that JRELM effectively improves students' mastery of English.

**Index Terms**—learning material, English electrical, student's needs, model development

## I. INTRODUCTION

Polytechnics are higher education institutions with the authority to provide vocational education in various scientific and technological disciplines, producing graduates who are ready to work and have applied skills up to the bachelor's level (Kemdikbud, 2014). Bali State Polytechnic (hereinafter BSP) is one of the vocational education institutions in Bali. It offers 60% to 70% practices and 40 % to 30% theories of various vocations. Learnings center practical industrial demands for national, regional, and international markets. BSP's mission is to become a quality vocational higher education institution that produces internationally competitive professional graduates by 2025. To achieve this vision, BSP strives to implement a quality learning process to produce reliable personnel who meet market demands in engineering, trade, and tourism.

Besides, BSP also wants to establish sustainable collaboration with educational institutions, government institutions, businesses, professional associations, and the public nationally and internationally. Thus, in the BSP curriculum, English is considered a crucial subject. However, to meet the objective of BSP, the English subject in the BSP curriculum can be classified as English for occupational purposes (EOP). Chauvin et al. (2020) explain that EOP focuses on improving English language skills related to the students' targeted jobs. Moreover, Kamil and Muhammad (2021) added that EOP should ensure that the students can communicate in English to do the jobs that the students target in the future. Therefore, the instruction, especially the learning materials, should meet the student's needs.

Referring to the vision of the BSP as an institution that produces professional workers that suit the industries' needs in engineering, commerce, and tourism as the foundation and direction of development, a curriculum that refers to

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industrial needs is an absolute necessity. Therefore, the curriculum implementation must continuously be monitored and adapted to the development of the need for English in the industry, which absorbs BSP graduates for all majors and study programs.

Some previous studies have been done in the EOP field. Masadeh and Alahmed (2016), in their study, have identified the students' needs at Najran University. They used two questionnaires to collect the data they needed, one for collecting data from the faculty members and another to collecting the data from the students. Their study found that to meet the student's needs, the learning materials should provide them with reading and writing exercises related to faxes and emails, information sources, office communication, report writing, tactful language, and various business letters. Rautenbach et al. (2018) conducted a study to develop English language materials to meet the students' needs in technology universities. From the studies conducted, it was found that universities in the technology sector aim to produce graduates who suit the company's needs so that they can quickly get suitable jobs. Seeing the status of English as a globally accepted lingua franca, more and more people are interested in studying EOP to obtain wider job opportunities. In other words, a needs analysis is crucial to organize an appropriate EOP according to student needs. In order to obtain valid and reliable data, the needs analysis method must be correct. For this reason, Rautenbach et al. (2018) analyzed existing needs analysis methodologies by involving stakeholders to review these methodologies to develop an EOP curriculum for Tourism Management at the South African University of Technology.

Quality learning materials support the teaching and learning (Kobayashi, 2023). Learning materials are the students' sources of learning and essential tools to help teachers conduct effective instruction (Kosanke, 2019; Yusrina et al., 2021). From class observations and confirmation from English teaching lecturers, students often have difficulty learning ESP because it should provide students with more specific learning and assignments and competency in English based on their field (Klimova, 2015; Medrea & Rus, 2012). One of the problems in the ESP class is the obstacle of providing lessons according to the competence and field of the course. This happens because ESP is concerned about the needs of students in terms of their work or specialization background (Basturkmen, 2010).

Furthermore, ESP is different from general English because, in ESP, the teachers need to teach specific English and knowledge to the students (Suryadi, 2021). However, appropriate and quality learning materials for ESP are not always available. The lecturers in the BSP Electrical Engineering Study Program also faced the absence of quality and appropriate English learning materials for EOP. Therefore, the solution to that problem is developing learning materials appropriate to the student's needs so that the learning material can support the objective of English subjects in the study program.

Regarding language learning materials, Job Related English Learning Material (hereinafter JRELM) for EOP was designed and developed to give and utilize information and provide experience using the target language. The JRELM was designed to promote language learning by adopting Tomlinson's (2012) six basic principles. First, good language learning materials will make students interested in learning and positively impact their learning achievement. Second, good learning materials will make students comfortable learning and using the target language. Third, good learning materials will make students confident using the target language. Fourth, learning materials must be appropriate to students' needs and useful for their daily lives. Fifth, good learning materials provide various learning activities for students to learn according to their learning style. Sixth, learning materials provide material on topics that are appropriate and understood by students. The learning material should be related to students' interests and needs. Regarding English aspects and skills, the JRELM for EOP was designed and developed to include teaching materials for teaching grammar and vocabulary and developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

The JRELM was developed to meet the students' English communication needs in the electrical engineering field. Therefore, the learning materials were designed based on the topics generally discussed in electrical engineering. The importance of providing the students with learning materials that meet their needs includes the learning materials will encourage the students to love the learning materials, make deeper connections to learning, make the students learn English language and electrical engineering at the same time, make the students experience knowledge in a larger context; provide the students with authentic materials, make the learning process more student-centered; help the English teachers to specify the language skills that they should cover; and align the learning materials with current popular instructional models. JRELM entails linking written texts to spoken skills. Designing JRELM units of lessons that focus on developing language skills in electrical engineering implies guided practice as they develop language skills for meaningful communication through whole texts (Cutting et al., 2002). JRELM can potentially improve students' English skills because students are allowed to communicate in English during the learning process and when completing assignments. Through this learning process, students will become more productive and try to connect new information obtained with previous knowledge (Kucherenko, 2013).

The present study aims explicitly to identify the effectiveness of JRELM. This is because even though JRELM has been proven to meet the student's needs, it has not been proven empirically to be an effective learning material to improve students' mastery of English. Therefore, the study aims to identify the effect of the JRELM on electrical engineering students' English mastery.

## II. METHOD

Since the study's objective is to identify the effectiveness of the JRELM on students' English mastery, this study was conducted by following a quasi-experimental method. Specifically, this study followed the pre-test and post-test control group design. This study was conducted at BSP, and the study population was all the electrical engineering students at BSP. Forty-eight students from two different classes were involved as the study's samples. One class with 24 students was assigned as the experimental group, and another with 24 students was selected as the control group. The experimental group was taught using the JRELM, while the control group was taught using the conventional learning materials.

The two groups were given English mastery tests through pre-test and post-test. Before the researchers used the tests, the pre-test and post-test were evaluated to check their validity and reliability. When the tests have been proven to be valid and reliable, then those tests were used to measure students' English mastery. The pre-test was given to the experimental and control groups before the experimental group was taught using JRELM. On the other hand, the post-test was given after the experimental group had been taught using JRELM, and the control group was taught using conventional learning materials for ten sessions. The pre-test and post-test results were transformed into N-gain scores. Then, those N-gain scores were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics using an independent sample t-test. The researcher used SPSS version 20 for Windows to do the statistical analysis. Furthermore, the researchers also measured the effect size of the JRELM using Cohen's *d* formula.

### III. FINDING

This section explains the results of the study. This section starts with an explanation of the results of the pre-test and post-test by comparing the descriptive statistics results of the N-gain scores of the experimental and control groups. Then, it follows the N-gain scores' normality and homogeneity test results. After that, the results of the independent sample t-test are discussed. Finally, this section also provides the effect size of the JRELM on students' English mastery.

#### A. Descriptive Statistics Results

The pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups were transformed into N-gain scores. Then, the N-gain scores of the experimental and the control groups were analyzed using descriptive statistics analysis. The results of the descriptive statistics analysis can be seen in Table 1 below. Table 1 shows that the experimental group has higher N-gain scores than the control group. The differences can be seen from the two groups' mean, minimum, and maximum scores. Those scores indicate that the experimental group has better English mastery than the control group. However, an inferential statistics analysis is needed to determine the difference between the experimental and control groups' English mastery. Therefore, the researchers continued the analysis using an independent samples t-test. Before the researchers did the inferential statistics analysis, they did normality and homogeneity tests to decide the proper inferential statistic to analyze the data.

TABLE 1  
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS RESULTS OF THE N-GAIN SCORES

| Statistics     | Experimental | Control            |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Mean           | 28.5417      | 17.2083            |
| Median         | 26.5000      | 17.0000            |
| Mode           | 25.00        | 17.00 <sup>a</sup> |
| Std. Deviation | 8.32481      | 4.33368            |
| Variance       | 69.303       | 18.781             |
| Range          | 38.00        | 18.00              |
| Minimum        | 12.00        | 8.00               |
| Maximum        | 50.00        | 26.00              |
| Sum            | 685.00       | 413.00             |

#### B. Normality Test Result

The study data should be normally distributed to analyze the data using independent samples t-test. Since the number of samples in this study was less than 100, the researchers used the Shapiro-Wilk normality test. The result of the normality test of the study data can be seen in Table 2 below. The data in Table 2 show that the Sig. value of the data from the experimental and control groups was higher than the alpha 0.05. From that result, it can be assumed that the data were normally distributed.

TABLE 2  
NORMALITY TEST RESULT

| Group        | Shapiro-Wilk |    |      |
|--------------|--------------|----|------|
|              | Statistic    | df | Sig. |
| Experimental | .961         | 24 | .465 |
| Control      | .982         | 24 | .933 |

### C. Homogeneity Test Result

After confirming the data to be normally distributed, the researchers continued the analysis using a homogeneity test. The researchers used the Levene Statistic to check the homogeneity of the data in this study. As shown in Table 3, the result indicates that the data were not homogenous. It is because the Sig. value was lower than the alpha 0.05.

TABLE 3  
HOMOGENEITY TEST RESULT

| Levene Statistic | df1 | df2 | Sig. |
|------------------|-----|-----|------|
| 6.904            | 1   | 46  | .012 |

### D. Independent Samples T-Test Results

Even though the data were not homogeneous, since the data were normally distributed, the researcher still analyzed the data using an independent samples t-test. However, the researchers used the “Equal variances not assumed” result to determine the effect of JRELM on students’ English mastery. Based on the independent samples t-test results, as shown in Table 4, the Sig. value for the “Equal variances not assumed” was lower than the alpha 0.05. Therefore, this study found that JRELM affects students’ English mastery.

TABLE 4  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS

|                        |                             | t-test for Equality of Means |       |                 |                 |                       |                                           |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|
|                        |                             | t                            | df    | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |
|                        |                             |                              |       |                 |                 |                       | Lower Upper                               |
| <b>English Mastery</b> | Equal variances assumed     | 5.92                         | 46    | .000            | 11.33           | 1.92                  | 7.477 15.19                               |
|                        | Equal variances not assumed | 5.92                         | 34.61 | .000            | 11.33           | 1.92                  | 7.44 15.22                                |

### E. Effect Size Test Result

To identify the effect size of JRELM on students’ English mastery, the researchers calculated it using Cohen’s d formula. Based on the result of the calculation, it was found that Cohen’s d result was 1.7. According to Cohen (2013), when the score exceeds 0.8, it indicates a large and significant effect. Thus, it can be said that this study found that JRELM has a large and significant effect on students’ English mastery.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Cohen's } d &= (M_2 - M_1) / SD_{\text{pooled}} \\
 &= (17.2083 - 28.5417) / 6.636386 \\
 &= 1.707767.
 \end{aligned}$$

## IV. DISCUSSION

This study found that JRELM positively impacts students’ English mastery, especially the English language related to electrical engineering jobs. It gives them a strong foundation for effectively facing the challenges of the electrical engineering workplace. Integrating aspects of English with themes and practical activities in electrical engineering is a very effective way to activate students’ listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through an authentic learning model. This approach provides students with learning experiences relevant to the real world and helps them develop their English skills in the context of electrical engineering. Implementing this approach can significantly benefit students and help them become better prepared to face challenges in an increasingly globalized world of work. Students will have a more engaging and valuable learning experience as they can connect their English skills with real-world contexts in electrical engineering. Since JRELM was designed based on students’ language needs in the context of electrical engineering, allowing them to have communication competence as one of the requirements for working in the electrical industry.

In the ESP context, learning materials that align with the student’s needs potentially improve the student’s motivation to learn (Lapele, 2019; Rohimajaya et al., 2021). When the students learn the materials related to their targeted job, they will consider it essential to support their future success (Apriliana & Basikin, 2021). Vocational school students are determined and already have their targeted jobs. They will be interested in studying things to help them reach that targeted job (Gustavsson & Persson Thunqvist, 2019; Saliruddin, 2014). They are willing to study harder for the subjects they believe will help them reach their future jobs. Therefore, they will work hard to master that subject. In other words, learning materials that fit students’ needs will provide the students with extrinsic motivation, the external things that drive someone to do something (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, that learning material will boost the students’ learning motivation. When the students have good learning motivation, they usually learn better (Kusurkar et al., 2013; Lo et al., 2022).

Besides, JRELM was provided with various media, pictures, videos, and an online quiz. Various media use has proven effective in improving students' English mastery (Long, 2022; Pham & Li, 2022). JRELM provides the students with various media that can be accessed online. Pictures illustrating the topic and things the students learn can help them understand the learning materials (Boerma et al., 2016; Ratminingsih et al., 2022). Using pictures is very helpful for teaching vocabulary because pictures can illustrate the words so that the students can guess the meaning of the words by seeing the pictures (Rosenthal-von der Pütten & Bergmann, 2020). Besides, in learning English as a foreign language, providing pictures as translation is more attractive for the students to study vocabulary than providing word-to-word translation (Liando et al., 2022). In addition, pictures can also help the students with the four language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. In listening and reading, pictures that illustrate the content of the writing or the audio will help the students to understand the text or the audio because the pictures can create context and provide the students with clues about what the text and audio will be about (Abas, 2023; Suryaningtyas, 2011). In speaking and writing, providing students with pictures related to the speaking or writing tasks that they have to create will help them get an idea of what they have to say or write.

Similar things also happen with the use of videos. Interesting videos containing the learning materials that the students have to study can also help them improve their vocabulary and English language skills (Hu et al., 2021). Videos that combine audio and pictures can improve the student's motivation to study. Besides, videos can also bring context so the students can guess the meaning of words or sentences in the videos (Barani et al., 2010). That is why watching English movies has been reported to be able to improve students' English mastery. Thus, some studies recommended that watching movies can be an alternative way to learn English independently.

The other thing that makes JRELM successful in improving students' English mastery is that it is provided with online quizzes, and the materials can be accessed online. An online quiz can be a fun activity for the students, especially the gamified-online quiz (Wang & Tahir, 2020). Besides, it helps the students monitor their learning progress. Online quizzes provide students with instant results and reviews (Zainuddin et al., 2020). The online quiz results make the students aware of their current abilities. If they get a low score, they need to study more, and they can check what part they need to focus on by looking at the review results. The students can identify and study their weaknesses by reading the reviews. Besides, online materials allow students to learn from anywhere and anytime through various gadgets. Nowadays, students can study using their smartphones. Thus, online learning materials will provide flexibility for the students to study (Wang et al., 2023).

## V. CONCLUSION

The JRELM for English improves students' learning outcomes and language skills, particularly in electrical engineering. The fact that the average post-test score was higher than the pre-test for students taught using conventional materials suggests that the JRELM for EOP approach has made a meaningful impact on the students' learning. This study has proven the value of integrating JRELM as EOP teaching materials into the learning process for electrical engineering students. The focus on practical skills, industry relevance, and language proficiency seems to have resulted in improved learning outcomes and enhanced language skills. This integrated approach aligns well with preparing students for successful careers in electrical engineering.

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# Sociocultural Theory in Practice: Addressing Issues Affecting English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teaching-Learning in Hail Remote Schools

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**Abstract**—Sociocultural theory aims to explain how physical and cultural environments shape learning. The research uses Vygotsky's sociocultural theory as the lens to investigate sociocultural issues faced by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in remote areas. Teaching in these areas presents difficulties and obstacles due to geographic distance. This qualitative study was designed to investigate the difficulties encountered by EFL instructors from schools in isolated villages of Hail, Saudi Arabia. Using semi-structured individual interviews with eight EFL teachers, the research uncovers various obstacles affecting the efficacy of EFL teaching. The primary issues identified are religious conservatism and cultural differences, lack of support from family and environment, geographic distance and resource constraints, and lack of awareness of future opportunities. The study highlights how differences in educational quality are made worse due to geographic remoteness. The project seeks to improve EFL instruction in remote places by offering a deeper knowledge of these issues, ultimately working towards equity in learning environments.

**Index Terms**—EFL, remote areas teaching, EFL teaching-learning issues, sociocultural theory, Saudi Arabia

## I. INTRODUCTION

English facilitates global communication and commerce and it is considered a crucial global language (Ke, 2015; Pan & Block, 2011; Ricento, 2012). As a global language, it promotes monolingualism (Alshammari et al., 2021; Lin, 2013). English is extensively used in commerce, science, and technology, making it the predominant language worldwide (Pennycook, 2017). English offers numerous business opportunities and facilitates international trade. Using English as the universal language in business has led to increased global trade (Sing, 2017). English also plays a crucial role in politics, facilitating international communication and relations (Xhemaili, 2022).

Strengthening the basic components of society is a prerequisite for economic growth and development, with education and training being two of the most crucial means to achieve this (Bouzahzah et al., 2016; Singh et al., 2022). Moreover, through education, governments provide people with the skills and information needed to succeed in various industries. Education also aids in improving living conditions, cultivating civic engagement, and stimulating originality and creativity (Kim & Ahn, 2019). It facilitates a person's capacity to grow personally and professionally and to achieve goals.

The setting of EFL learning has recognised language as a necessary skill for global communication (Shen & Chiu, 2019). The communicative approach has emerged as the main paradigm for language instruction in EFL teaching and learning and has achieved international prominence due to its strong emphasis on developing effective communication skills (Hattani, 2018). This study fills in the gaps by addressing the challenges associated with providing EFL instruction in remote villages. This study aims to identify the obstacles and challenges hindering the effectiveness of English language teaching in these areas. Understanding these challenges is crucial as they impact the quality of education and the opportunities available to students in remote villages.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Following the discovery of oil, English was introduced to Saudi Arabia in 1930 as a business language. It was added to the curriculum in Saudi schools in 1950 (Alrashidi, 2015). English is taught as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. Numerous studies have identified challenges in teaching English, including inadequate training and teacher incompetence (Alfahadi, 2014). In addition, there are insufficient teaching aids available in classrooms, such as instructional videos, language labs, and recording cassettes (Al-Mutairi, 2008; Al-Rashidi, 2015). There is also the challenge of traditional teaching techniques like rote memorisation and the use of Arabic rather than English for explanations, which puts teacher-centred education against student-centred learning (Al-Rashidi, 2015).

It is well-recognised that people residing in rural and remote places have limited access to resources and opportunities compared to those living in cities (Dew et al., 2018). However, several factors greatly impact the lives of those residing in remote areas. One of these factors is insufficient infrastructure. Rural infrastructure and modernisation levels contribute

to the advancement of rural development (Du & Jiao, 2023), including basic services, distance to specialised services, and lack of opportunity (Ma et al., 2022). Inadequate healthcare and educational facilities in these areas further restrict residents' opportunities for social and economic progress (Song, 2023).

Education has always been regarded as a means to promote social progress. However, English teachers in isolated communities face challenges, including the persistent lack of educational options and resources in rural regions (Tang, 2023). The lack of classroom resources has been identified as a grave challenge (Premovic, 2016). Barriers to professional growth and a lack of community or parental support have also been identified as significant challenges (Hurley, 2018). Additionally, they struggle to motivate students due to their diminished interest in English compared to other languages or their mother tongue (Malik et al., 2022; Tiwari, 2020).

Learners also struggle with English competency due to their dependency on native tongues (Shan & Aziz, 2022). Financial difficulties faced by students and their families may limit their ability to purchase essential educational supplies, hence impacting student achievement (Shang & Li, 2022). The inability to match educational content with the local cultural context and linguistic disparities further contribute to students' disinterest (Shan & Aziz, 2022). Lack of sufficient community support can also disrupt students' motivation and development of English language proficiency (Hardré, 2011). Thus, it is important to address these challenges in order to improve the standard of English instruction in isolated communities. Community cooperation and local solutions may also be helpful in this regard.

Rural areas have been extensively investigated in the literature; however, very little is known about the educational outcomes of remote schools in Hail. English teachers in remote schools shoulder great responsibilities. They are essential in facilitating the teaching and learning process and are indispensable to its success. As a result, educators are required to impart knowledge more imaginatively and creatively. This study aimed to ascertain the difficulties educators face when instructing English in remote areas of Hail City.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study draws on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. According to Liu (2023), sociocultural theory highlights how teaching and learning are interactive processes influenced by cultural effects and social interaction. Teaching EFL in remote areas sheds light on how the cultural and social aspects impact the challenges faced in this context. This theory illustrates that learning will never happen in an empty place, and every learning environment is unique and not comparable to others, thereby exerting its own effects on the learning process. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory strongly emphasises the role of social and cultural interaction in the learning process. By applying this theory to the challenges educators face in remote areas, it becomes clear that social and cultural variables, in addition to curricula and educational resources, impact these problems (Sholeh, 2022). English may be rarely used in everyday life in isolated areas, discouraging people from learning the language. Instructors may find it difficult to engage students or offer learning opportunities pertinent to their everyday lives. Thus, the sociocultural theory holds that learning is shaped by the social and cultural environment in which it occurs (Jaramillo, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). The theory also highlights the significance of interpersonal interaction in the learning process. Therefore, training teachers and developing their skills through programmes that reflect local context needs can enhance teaching effectiveness (Jaramillo, 1996).

In remote villages, schools may lack the necessary educational tools and sufficient support from the local community and family. These elements make it more difficult for teachers to employ effective teaching techniques, making teaching English more challenging. Additionally, students' learning and engagement can be increased by incorporating aspects of the local culture into English classes (Ratri, 2024). This makes education more relevant and meaningful to the students. Through the lens of this theory, the research can provide a deep understanding of the specific challenges and offer insights into teaching strategies suitable for the current situation.

### IV. METHODOLOGY

#### A. *Research Design*

This study uses a constructivist approach that can be studied and examined through a qualitative inquiry (Chai et al., 2013). This qualitative study used individual interviews to examine participants' perceptions and beliefs concerning the obstacles and challenges associated with teaching EFL in remote areas in Hail City. According to Creswell and Poth (2016), the goal of qualitative research is to understand the meanings and interpretations individuals attribute to their experiences by investigating events in their natural environments. This study's use of individual interviews enables a comprehensive investigation of the teachers' opinions and impressions of the challenges they face when instructing EFL in rural locations. In addition to capturing a wide range of individual experiences, this approach offers context-specific insights that can guide practice and policy. The creation of focused initiatives to address the particular demands and obstacles educators face in comparable situations can benefit from such a comprehensive analysis.

#### B. *Research Instrument*

Research instruments are the tools used by researchers to gather and generate data, which is anticipated to be in empirical form. These instruments are designed in alignment with the chosen research methods or data collection techniques (Gallant & Luthy, 2020). In this research, the researcher was involved in collecting data directly. After

obtaining the ethics approval from the Hail University Research Ethics Committee (REC), approval was granted for the study (approval No. H-2024-412). Standards of ethics were strictly adhered to during the entire research process. Eight semi-structured individual interviews were conducted physically in remote schools. Each interview lasted 30-45 minutes. The researcher assured adherence to ethical guidelines. After obtaining permission, the interviews were conducted in a private room in the school (secretary room and empty classes). The interviews were recorded for accuracy purposes and then transcribed by the researcher. The researcher travelled to five remote schools in the Hail region and met teachers individually after obtaining their consent. The study employed purposeful sampling of eight EFL teachers in remote schools in Hail, Saudi Arabia.

### C. Data Analysis

The individual interviews were conducted in Arabic, as it is the native language of the author and participants. The researcher used NVivo software by QSR International Pty Ltd., a sophisticated instrument, to carefully analyse the data. This software is renowned for making qualitative data analysis easier, enabling researchers to find and investigate intricate patterns in huge datasets.

As the researcher specialises in EFL, the transcripts were translated into English. Afterwards, the translated transcripts were handed over to an expert in English translation to ensure the accuracy of the translation. Subsequently, the eight interviews were analysed following thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006).

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted in the most remote villages of Hail City, which are located more than 80 km north of the city centre. In this study, the researcher conducted individual interviews with teachers who hold a bachelor's degree in English teaching and have been teaching in remote schools in Hail for several years. Based on the results examined, the following sociocultural challenges were identified as barriers to teaching and learning EFL at schools in remote areas of Hail.

### A. Religious Conservatism and Cultural Differences

Religious effects against learning English in remote schools and cultural differences were the most common themes in teachers' data (26 references). Five teachers mentioned that students' families in remote areas are known for their religious traditionalism. This affects their children's beliefs and attitudes towards learning English. They are also strict about learning a foreign language that is not Arabic. Arabic is the language of Islam in which the Qur'an was revealed (Oasilan, 2009). Ibtisam commented: "I suffer from this belief; some children are already filled with this wrong thought, and as a result, we see children with a low motivation to learn English".

Two teachers explained that students come to schools with the belief that English is the language of the disbeliever's people and that those who learn English lack understanding of the Islamic religion. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which asserts that cultural and religious activities play an important role in shaping an individual's way of thinking, their understanding of the world, and how they learn (Vygotsky, 1978). Nada mentioned:

I remember having an excellent student who had been rewarded by other teachers in other subjects in the school, but she was not as good and active in my class. When I suddenly point at her to answer or read aloud, she is very good. One day, I asked her why she was neither participating nor active in class despite her intelligence. She told me that English is not an Islamic language and that her family and relatives informed her that learning English is useless and should be banned from schools.

Fatimah mentioned that learning English has been improving in remote areas if students were not threatened by their families from learning it because of the same belief. This is consistent with research conducted by Gusmuliana et al. (2023) in Indonesia, which demonstrates how attitudes towards the language and culture impact students studying at Islamic institutions or "pesantren" learning a foreign language like English. This is especially true in settings where strict Islamic principles are more deeply embedded. In addition, the language's intimate relationship with Christianity may also explain why many Muslims have historically disliked it (Farid & Lamb, 2020).

According to a prior study, the fear of learning EFL presents a significant barrier for target language learners who fear losing their identity (Rahmat, 2019). Similarly, three teachers described that cultural impact is a big obstacle while teaching EFL in remote areas. They noted that students and their families fear losing their Arabic identity when learning a foreign language such as English. They believe learning English will weaken their Arabic language proficiency and make them less interested in their original culture. Ibtisam described the nature of these remote areas as 'Bedouin', which refers to nomadic Arab people found in the desert of the Middle East and are known for their distinctive harsh culture (Weber, 2018). Ibtisam mentioned that they are very strict about their values and customs, and as such, they cannot easily change their beliefs about something they believe contradicts their customs and values. The participant commented further:

Students and their families see English as a borrowed language that may affect their Arabic identity. In a community of Bedouin, they may feel 'ashamed' speaking English in front of their families and friends, or they cannot utter one word in English while others are speaking Arabic. They see this as a shame and may restrict someone from speaking English or practising it as this is against their culture or unnecessary.

This is also similar to Ortiz García and Pinilla's (2023) study, which examined rural families in isolated areas and found that they have a misconception about education. Layla commented:

Most of the time, students' families prohibit them from watching English cartoons or programmes on TV without direct translation into Arabic or dubbing. As a result, they lost the benefit of the main English sounds and aim of the language. Instead, they only focus on the Arabic translation and dubbing sound instead of watching it in English. Consequently, when students encounter the English language at school, it is often their first exposure.

Layla further commented: "They already have low proficiency in English". The participant refers to this as one of the effects of low student proficiency in English. This confirmed the result of the literature that learners should be extensively exposed to English since it is an essential factor in learning EFL (An Giang, 2022).

According to Mat Razi and Rahmat (2020), a new language cannot be learned without an understanding of the culture in which the target language is used. They assert that learners should be familiar with the target language's culture. From the standpoint of the learning process, students should integrate their own culture with English culture to improve their comprehension of the language. However, if they solely employ foreign culture during the learning process, they may become less motivated to study the language.

It is important to dispel this misconception and concern by highlighting the importance of learning English as a foreign language and how it does not threaten their cultural backgrounds, Arabic identity, or mother Arabic language. Awareness of learning English without any negative effect on current values and beliefs will help learners understand and overcome their fear of the obstacles of learning English.

### *B. Lack of Family and Environment Support*

This was the second common theme from analysing teachers' data (22 references). Three teachers mentioned that the environment is not conducive to learning English due to a lack of family and environment support. For instance, families are not supporting their children with devices and tools rich in teaching English. They noted a lack of English-language programmes for children to watch at home due to geographic remoteness. Seham stated:

Nowadays, it is rare to find a child without an iPod, iPad, or any kind of device at home to play with. Still, it is uncommon for families to let their children download learning apps such as alphabetical or colour teaching apps. When I ask them what apps they use at home, I see the main focus is watching YouTube for trendy Arabic cartoons. They did not find support from families to give them an idea about English before coming to school. I observed that they are already skilled in Arabic basics but lack English skills.

In contrast, two teachers mentioned that the low economic and financial status of families in remote areas hindered students' progress in learning English. Specifically, these families are unable to afford electronic devices that would expose their children to English language components. This justification was mentioned in the literature by Hoque (2018). According to Hoque (2018), students from wealthy homes have greater access to resources, such as a variety of books and materials, in a cosy home setting, which fosters their positive attitudes towards learning English. Ibtisam recalled her previous teaching experience at a remote school six years ago:

I remember a student in intermediate school saying all her friends had no laptops except her, and all her classmates had a TV with only the Saudi Chanel and a few Arabic channels. So, she was dealing with English easily and was motivated to learn the language. She was very smart. When I inquired further, I found that she listened to English songs and watched some English movies on her laptop. Therefore, environmental conduciveness plays a significant role in easing or making language difficult.

This finding justifies the study of Athiyyaturrahmah et al. (2023), who clarified that students with good English skills mostly live in the city, while students in remote schools tend to be less proficient in English due to a lack of family and environment support.

Manal stated that the main issue is that most parents in remote areas are illiterate. They do not have the ability to support their children's learning, such as foreign language. Consequently, they are unable to assist their children with homework, monitor their progress, or understand the challenges they experience due to a lack of knowledge. In addition, they are indifferent to their children's learning. They do not place any value on learning itself, regardless of any subject. They are also unable to motivate their children based on their illiteracy and inability to attach importance to learning in general. Nasution et al. (2021) claim that a child's chances of achieving academic success decrease if their parents are inattentive and do not even have the time to educate them.

Another challenge identified is limited external interaction. Two teachers noted that geographic distance (remoteness) isolates learners from practising English with foreigners. They mentioned that lack of interaction with native speakers and language exposure is a big obstacle in remote schools. Moreover, practising English and making it a real-life context that can be produced and received simultaneously is crucial. According to Layla,

I can tell that I am teaching effectively, and my classes are interactive. However, without practising English outside of the classroom, this may be a big obstacle. The students do not practise outside the classroom or in their daily routine, making them lag a little behind.

It was found that the primary environmental factor contributing to the inadequate development of EFL learners' language skills in EFL settings was a lack of practice both inside and outside the classroom (Seraj & Hadina, 2021). Moreover, limited exposure has an impact on English language learners as it reduces their opportunities to practise and use the language in natural settings (Mudra, 2024).

A lack of environmental stimulation was found to be a challenge in teaching EFL in remote areas. Two teachers mentioned that remote villages lack a rich environment that is full of cultural experiences related to the English language, which may cause obstacles regarding understanding and using the English language effectively. Seham illustrated the difference between urban and remote areas:

Urban areas are full of different cultures that may be found everywhere and anytime daily, and anyone can hear the English language by chance in different places. However, this is not the same in remote areas, which tend to be more traditional and closely knit.

According to Methal,

The influence of the community can weaken language skills. Students are affected by their surroundings, where most communities have limited English proficiency due to the lack of environments requiring its use. In contrast, cities, with their universities, institutes, factories, large markets, hotels, and hospitals, expose people to diverse cultures and necessitate the use of the language, often compelling them to use it without hesitation.

The sociocultural theory emphasised the importance of interaction between the environment and learners, as well as how their surroundings play a big role in language learning (Bi, 2023). This challenge can be addressed by enhancing online training programmes to stimulate investment in small, leading projects in remote areas. In addition, improving the infrastructure of remote areas and providing work opportunities through the Internet can enhance and support English learning by fostering a better and more conducive environment.

### *C. Awareness Gap of Future Opportunities*

This theme was less evident in teachers' data (18 references). Two teachers mentioned that competition is high in urban areas, whereas experience is more important in rural villages. This factor made students in remote areas less motivated since there is no encouragement to make them compete with each other, and job opportunities are lower than in urban areas. There may be a lack of job opportunities requiring English language skills, which also reduces their motivation to learn the language.

Mariam illustrated that students do not see attractive opportunities due to the surrounding social environment and lack of encouragement from parents and the environment itself. Methal mentioned that a lack of awareness of the benefits indicates that students may not fully understand the importance of learning a foreign language and its future opportunities. According to Manal,

Ambition plays a crucial role in motivating students to study and excel. A lack of ambition can result in poor academic performance and slow progress in language learning. The absence of successful role models who have achieved success using a foreign language may diminish students' motivation. Additionally, the surrounding environment and the lack of clear goals and specific ambitions can lead to a reduced commitment to lessons and language-related activities, resulting in a decline in skill levels.

Mariam commented that the absence of role models, including successful people from rural areas who have acquired English and succeeded, might lower students' ambitions and give them the impression that their ambitions are unachievable. She also mentioned that a lack of understanding of the language's significance might demotivate students in rural areas since they may not see the advantages of learning the language or the opportunities it will present to them later in life. Mariam further emphasised that the lack of local career prospects significantly impacts learning English. Methal illustrated that students might feel that studying the language has no immediate value in rural places with few job options requiring English language proficiency, which impacts their desire.

Based on Zhang's (2023) findings, English language learners' learning outcomes are directly impacted by their learning environment. Fatimah illustrated that local knowledge saturation significantly impacts EFL learning. She mentioned that students in rural locations may feel that learning English has no immediate advantage to their daily lives or future jobs due to the low use of the language in their local contexts. Fatimah also mentioned that there is a lack of personal appreciation: "If a kid does not receive appropriate encouragement from the community, they may lack the moral support that improves their ambition". She further noted that "students' motivation may suffer if their experience of studying English is unpleasant or discouraging as a result of inadequate instruction or a lack of comprehension of the subject matter." Another teacher pointed out that a major contributing element is rural students' obsession with everyday living, which can lead to a lack of homework follow-up and absorption in the language.

In second or foreign language learning, motivation to learn English and explaining its advantages for future prompts is an important factor contributing to the success of learning languages (Riyanti, 2019). Ulfa and Bania (2019) argue that the biggest element affecting students' motivation in EFL learning comes from the teachers themselves.

Language teachers should also recognise that their role extends beyond simply motivating their students (Rahman & Sahayu, 2020). Raising awareness of the value of English, improving instructional materials, and providing students with positive role models and useful experiences are all necessary to increase motivation and ambition.

### *D. Geographic Distance and Resource Constraints*

The theme of geographic remoteness and resource constraints was the least common in teachers' data (11 references). Two teachers mentioned that the frequency of teachers' absences due to long travel distances is one of the obstacles affecting EFL teaching in remote areas. The remote schools in which the study was conducted are far from the centre of Hail, ranging from 70 km to 200 km. Teachers were asked about the cost of their transportation or whether they live in

those remote areas, but all four teachers answered they travel by car every day. Two teachers mentioned that this made them negligent in attending school as much as possible. Manal mentioned that while they were absent one day, the school provided another teacher who gave them free play time in the class without engaging them in any learning or teaching activities. The teacher simply ensured that the students did not create any disturbance during their free time because their teacher was absent. This is consistent with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which recommends that continuous interaction between teacher and student is crucial in sociocultural settings for effective learning as the teacher's presence is significant in guiding the students in their learning and offering continuous support even if the students work independently (Kozulin et al., 2003).

Three teachers mentioned that the lack of professional development related to English teaching is one of the challenges due to the long distances. Nada shared her experience of never having an opportunity to attend a workshop or training institute in remote areas. She commented: "Limiting professional development and training programs that focus on the latest English teaching strategies can be a barrier to improving educational quality". This finding aligns with Shang and Xie (2019), who found that those in this region are typically more receptive to innovative pedagogy compared to EFL teachers in more rural traditional cities.

The difficulty teachers have accessing advanced training programs due to the remoteness of rural areas may limit their ability to enhance their language teaching skills. Two teachers mentioned that attracting and retaining qualified English teachers can be challenging in remote villages. A shortage of specialised teachers means that students may receive inadequate or ineffective education. Mariam stated:

I asked one of my students in year 11 about the reasons for her low level in English. She mentioned that she was taught English in year 11 by a math teacher since the school was very far away. Hence, they could not employ an English teacher, and there was a shortage of other teachers because of the remoteness of the school.

Similar to the literature, which found that lack of resources is regarded as one of the challenges faced by remote schools due to geographic remoteness (Ajani, 2023), Fatimah indicated that the school's economic conditions and logistical challenges, including limited financial resources, could impact teaching EFL. In addition, the availability of necessary educational tools or materials, improvements to the learning environment, and providing quality infrastructure, such as technology labs or libraries, are essential for practical English lessons.

This shortage hinders continued social interaction and a successful learning process, which is central to Vygotsky's theory (Shi, 2017). This theory emphasises the importance of social support and learning resources, as the lack of these resources can hinder learning opportunities and cognitive development.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The study highlights important challenges EFL teachers in Hail City's rural schools must overcome. These challenges include religious traditionalism, a lack of environment and family support system, a lack of awareness of future opportunities, geographic remoteness, and resource constraints. These challenges affect teachers' productivity and morale, which in turn affects how well students learn. The study's limitations, however, are its reliance on qualitative data and limited regional emphasis, which might not adequately represent the larger educational setting. To provide more comprehensive insights, future research should explore comparative studies across various locations and incorporate quantitative metrics. To further address these challenges and raise the standard of education, it may be helpful to investigate methods for boosting teacher support and engagement in remote locations.

The study emphasises the significance of allocating more funds towards instructional materials for remote schools in order to close the gap between urban and rural environments and ensure education equity. It is also crucial to supply sufficient resources, infrastructure, and technology. The unique challenges of remote locations can be addressed by providing professional development programmes for EFL teachers, with an emphasis on doable solutions to resource constraints, student motivation and engagement, and instructional modification. Technology integration, supportive learning communities, and culturally appropriate content can help to increase student motivation in remote learning situations. Innovative approaches, including virtual collaboration, mobile resource units, and remote teacher training, are needed to address geographic isolation. Ultimately, focused interventions and support systems are required to guarantee students in these communities' fair educational opportunities.

The research suggests that Vygotsky's sociocultural theory needs to adapt to the issues of remote educational settings. It highlights that effective learning in isolated areas requires not just social interaction and cultural relevance but also equitable access to resources and support. Therefore, the theory should consider geographic and socioeconomic factors to address the complexities faced by educators and learners in these environments.

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# Formulas Against the Evil Eye in the University of Jordan

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**Abstract**—This paper reports on the findings of a contrastive study exploring the frequency of the use of formulas against the evil eye. It also explores the different categories of compliment responses. The subjects are 100 female and male native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English. The data are elicited through a DCT that consists of 10 situations. Analysis of the data showed that formulaic expressions were used by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English to keep the evil eye away from the speakers. There were no significant differences between the female and male students in complimenting. The participants employed different types of compliment responses. The most frequent category was to accept compliments. A future study is recommended to examine the similarities and differences between the compliments used by teachers and students using online classes.

**Index Terms**—compliments, compliment responses, evil eye, formulas, strategies

## I. INTRODUCTION

There are different languages in the world. Language is a tool that people use to coordinate with each other. It emerges when two people or more do things together. It is influenced by religion, culture and the traditions of societies. We use language to express different functions such as apologizing, giving orders and warnings. Austin (1962, p. 5) indicates that “the uttering of the sentence, or is part of, the doing of the action”. Actions that are performed using utterances are called speech acts. Different kinds of speech acts can show positive politeness. Politeness can be defined as an expression of the linguistic and non-linguistic care for the feelings of other people. It is used to show concern for the face of people. Politeness can be expressed by invitations, jokes, greetings and compliments.

Holmes (1995) claims that a compliment is a positive politeness device. It is a speech act that implicitly or explicitly gives credit to a person other than the speaker. It focuses on something relating directly to the addressee. The main function of compliments is affective. They are used to express solidarity. They also present a positive critical evaluation of a specific aspect of the recipient’s behavior, appearance or possession. They can provide praise, encouragement, and appreciation. These devices can express envy or the desire to have what the hearer’s possession, too.

Another aspect of linguistic politeness is compliment responses. It refers to how people respond to the compliments they receive. They are correlated with the compliments that they come after. Pomerantz (1978) identifies three categories for compliment responses. The first category is acceptances. People can show acceptance by using appreciation tokens or when they express agreement. When a recipient receives a compliment, he can accept or reject it. The action of accepting a compliment is called model behavior. Accepting a compliment is usually performed with appreciation. The second category is rejections. Rejecting a compliment is referred to as puzzling or troublesome behavior. It is regularly performed with disagreement. The last class is self-praise avoidance. The credit may be shifted from the speaker to the participant.

Language is related to culture. The expression of compliments varies from one culture to another. The belief in the evil eye ‘*alhasad*’ and its effect on our lives is universal. The word evil means harmful or tending to harm. Some people believe that it is invoked when someone shows admiration for a possession, physical features, or certain characteristics. Qamar (2013) states the evil eye could cause misfortune, serious diseases, or lead to death. Some Arabs tend to use religious references when they respond to compliments. Mughazy (2000, p. 156) states that “responding to a compliment is not a matter of saying thank you, but involves making choices based on one’s beliefs about the social structure and the world”. We often hear the expression *maaf’aallah*, ‘may Allah protect you’, in everyday interactions. It is considered a way to express feelings and beliefs.

This paper is a contrastive study to show the similarities and the differences between female and male Jordanian and American students in responding to compliments directed at the topics of possession, physical appearance, skill and attributes. It explores the use of compliments responses against the evil eye at the University of Jordan. The researcher also examines compliment responses to find out the strategies used by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English. The researcher seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Do the native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and the native speakers of American English students at the University of Jordan use any compliment responses against the evil eye?
2. What are the compliment response strategies used by the Jordanian and American students at the University of Jordan?

3. What are the similarities and differences across genders in the expressions used by the Jordanians and the Americans at the University of Jordan?

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Compliment and compliment responses have attracted the attention of many scholars in both the Arab and the Western world. Some studies examined the use of compliment and compliment responses by native speakers of Arabic in Arab countries (Mughazy, 2000; Al-Gamal, 2011; Al-rousan & Awal, 2016; Alqarni, 2017). Other studies included a contrastive analysis across cultures (Quran, 2012; Sakirgil & Cubukcu, 2013; Cuesta & Ainciburu, 2015; Cuesta & Yousefian, 2015; Shabani & Zeinali, 2015; Jamil, 2016; Alharbi, 2017; Zanella, 2017).

Mughazy (2000) examined the use of Egyptian Arabic speakers of different compliment-responding strategies. The participants were 40 native speakers of Egyptian Arabic aged between 25 and 36 years old (20 female and 20 male). They were professionals who had a university degree. Most of them were teachers of English in public schools. The data was collected through an oral DCT. The results showed that the subjects employed different compliment strategies in different contexts. Complaining was the most frequently used strategy. The second strategy used was to respond with another compliment. The subjects also used evasion and humor. Egyptians used secular formulas that prevent the evil eye. The most frequent was number five in Arabic. Those formulas were more frequently used by women.

Sawalmeh (2001) conducted a study to investigate whether the patterns of compliment responses were universal or culture-specific. He examined the speech acts that were produced by 150 native speakers of American English and native speakers of Saudi Arabic. The data were elicited through naturalistic observation, elicitation, and interviews. The results revealed that the American subjects accepted and rejected slightly more than the Saudi participants. The Saudis deflected more frequently than the Americans did. The complimenter's social status only significantly influenced the deflection response category of both groups. Concerning gender, the respondent's gender and the gender pairings of the respondent and complimenter significantly affected the acceptance response category of both groups. When the respondent and complimenter were from the same gender, the Saudi participants accepted more and rejected fewer compliments. However, the Americans did the opposite.

Golato (2005) examined the sequential organization of the speech acts of complimenting and compliment response. The methodology of conversational analysis was followed in that study. The data were collected from a corpus of 30 hours of face-to-face conversations and 6 hours of audiotaped telephone conversations. The participants were 62 family members and close friends. The ages ranged between 23 to 70 years old. They were from the middle and upper middle class and spoke standard German. Analysis of the data revealed that the Germanic compliments were considered formulaic. The participants used a restricted variety of syntactic forms as well as a limited number of positive adjectives. The positive meaning was not usually achieved by using a verb. Some appreciatory sounds were used. The Germans produced gustatory markers such as 'mmm' to assess food and drink. Sounds of appreciation were also used. For example, 'ooh' and 'aah'. These sounds expressed the surprise of the participants for a given item. The figures showed that 37% of the compliments were about food and drink. The other compliments were associated with appearance, ability, behavior, and possession. Women received more compliments than men.

Ghanim (2009) explored the different strategies that male and female students used while exchanging compliments in different social contexts and settings. The data were elicited through a questionnaire distributed to 180 students at Al-Isra Private University. Analysis of the data showed that males tended to employ hypocrisy when they complimented their superiors at work more than females. The female participants used elaborate and exaggerated forms of compliments on some occasions. The men added some humorous effect to their compliments more than the women. Compliments produced by females seemed to be accepted by men in different contexts, but women rejected the compliments of men in some situations such as clothes and appearance. Both genders were supportive in conversations with friends. Men mainly complimented women on their appearance. Women mostly responded to men on ability, then possession.

Al-Gamal (2011) described the different kinds of complement responses that were used by the participants. There were 45 native speakers of Yemeni Arabic students (30 male and 15 female). The data were collected via a Discourse Completion Test including four situations. The participants preferred to use three types of complement responses. They produced Appreciation Token, Return compliment, and Request Interpretation responses. The speakers did not use all the kinds of compliment responses suggested by Herbert (1989). For example, they did not use the Comment History strategy in their responses. Their responses were lengthy, but the male students used longer responses than the females. Yemeni males applied the Qualification type of compliment response whereas the females did not. Females and Males used complex responses when two responses were uttered for one compliment.

Quran (2012) examined the compliments used by Jordanian Arabic native speakers and native speakers of American English. The subjects were 143 (85 male and 58 female) Jordanians from universities in Jordan and 116 (36 males and 80 females) Americans from American universities. The data were elicited through a DCT which consisted of 12 situations. There were significant differences in the compliments used by the two groups. The Americans did not use compliments that included prayers and common social expressions. The female American and Jordanian participants employed longer compliments than males. They also used intensifiers, interjections, and adjectives that implied stronger emotions.

Sakirgil and Cubukcu (2013) described the compliments in English and Turkish according to their formulas and topics. The data was elicited from naturally occurring talk. The researchers examined 100 American English and Turkish dialogues using the Field Method which was provided by Clark and Bangerter in 2004. They found that Compliment Speech Events could be divided into six categories in English and Turkish. Three compliments were common in both languages. Those compliments were accepting formulas, rejecting formulas, and providing account formulas. In Turkish, most compliment topics were about possessions such as clothing, accessories, and houses or surnames. The subjects used less compliments on performance (skill) and attributes. In English, the highest number of compliments expressed performance. The next category used was related to possession.

Yusof and Hoon (2014) conducted a study to identify the functions and topics of compliments as well as the strategies of compliment responses used by 40 celebrities (20 females and 20 males) in Malaysia. The researchers extracted 220 compliments and responses from Twitter accounts. To analyze the compliments, they formed a corpus. The results showed that there were significant differences in the use of compliments and compliment responses across genders. Females preferred to be complimented on their appearance. However, men preferred possession. Most of the compliments were used to express admiration. The next function for using complement was to establish solidarity. The participants also replaced compliments with other speech acts such as greetings, thanks, and gratitude.

Cuesta and Ainciburu (2015) examined compliments and compliments responses in Arabic and Spanish. The data was collected through a muted video which was recorded in Beirut and it showed family dinner. The participants were asked to act on the dialogues between the characters. The most frequent response used by the native speakers of Spanish was to explain. The subjects also expressed happiness and thanks. In contrast, native speakers of Arabic used compliment responses that expressed good wishes. Other types of compliments were also common such as expressing happiness, invitations to start dining, and offering food. Most frequently, advanced Arab learners of Spanish preferred to use compliments that express good wishes.

Cuesta and Yousefian (2015) analyzed the use of expressions against the evil eye in Arabic and Persian. They also observed the use of courtesy formulas in compliment responses. The subjects were 10 female native speakers of Arabic (ages between 19 and 24) and 10 female native speakers of Persian (aged between 27 and 40 years old). They were requested to see two muted videos and then they created the dialogues between the characters in the videos using their languages. The Persian and Arabic texts were transliterated into a Word document by the researchers. The results showed that women used formulaic sentences and expressions against the evil eye in Arabic. They used the expression 'Maa'jaallah' in compliments about possessions and physical appearance. In Persian, the subjects used different expressions such as "Maa'jaallah, I touch the wood and My eyes are not salty" (Cuesta & Yousefian, 2015, p. 136). Compliments could be explained according to the social and cultural context.

Shabani and Zeinali (2015) investigated compliment response strategies which were considered a sub-category of politeness strategies. The subjects of the study were 26 English native speakers in Canada (13 females and 13 males) and 30 Iranian native speakers (15 females and 15 males) in Iran. They were college students with ages ranging from 17 to 30. The researchers collected the data through a DCT. The researchers found that there was a significant difference between Persian native speakers and Canadian English speakers in using the strategies of accepting, evading, and rejecting. The most frequently used strategy was accepting. There wasn't any significant difference concerning gender.

Khaneshan and Bonyadi (2016) explored the compliment response strategies of 100 advanced Iranian EFL learners of English (50 females and 50 males) in an institute in Iran. The data were collected through a DCT that included four situations. They were related to possession, appearance, clothing, and ability. The figures showed that all the advanced EFL learners accepted the compliment and it was followed by a return compliment in almost all situations. All the participants seemed to be similar in expressing modesty.

Al-rousan et al. (2016) examined compliment responses at Yarmouk University in Jordan. The subjects of the study were 36 students (18 male, 18 female) students. The ages ranged between 18 and 24 years old. The responses were collected through an ethnographic method. A note-taking technique was used to identify compliments from the students. Then the responses were transcribed in English orthography. The corpus of the study consisted of 611 naturally occurring exchanges. The results showed that agreement strategies were used more frequently. Another interpretation was the least frequent response used by the Jordanian students. The results revealed that female students tended to use the appreciation token strategy more than male students. The females preferred to employ comment acceptance and reassignment to respond to compliments. The male students agreed with compliments but not directly. The Arabic-Islamic culture played an essential role in the phrasing of compliments and compliment responses.

Jamil (2016) investigated how 17 Omani lecturers and students (9 male and 8 female) and 18 Australian lecturers and students in Australia (10 male and 8 female) would respond to compliments. The researcher interviewed the subjects. They had to imagine being in different situations, so they were offered compliments about possessions, appearance, character, skills, and culture. Some compliments were produced by the Omanis and Australian such as thanks, return of compliments, agreement, and disagreement. However, the strategies of remaining silent, invocation request, invocation, and advising were only uttered by the Omani students and lecturers. The researcher found that the students and the female lecturers would express their disapproval of compliments from the opposite gender by keeping silent. The gender of the speaker affected the responses of the Omanis more than the Australians. Some Omani lecturers and students requested the addressee to mention God's name because they believed in the evil eye.

Alharbi (2017) investigated how Saudi females responded to English compliments in educational settings in the KSA. The data included 126 compliment responses in imaginary situations. It was collected from 64 lecturers and 62 students. Six respondents from each group were also interviewed. The scenarios included different topics such as possession, appearance and language ability. The majority of lecturers showed acceptance of compliments on their writing ability whereas the students accepted them less frequently. The researcher stated that the lecturers were more reserved in accepting compliments on their ability to speak the language, but the students accepted them. Some students used Arabic expressions and religious phrases such as '*maa/aallah*' with compliments on language ability, appearance, and character.

Alqarni (2017) investigated the speech acts of compliments and compliment responses from a sociolinguistic perspective as realized by eighty Saudi students of English. The study aimed to identify the semantic and structural formulas. It also examined gender differences and the role of the topic of conversation in the realization of compliments. The results showed that the primary form of compliments used by the participants was unbound semantic formulas. The social relationship between the participants did not influence these compliments. Compliments consisted of adjectives rather than verbs. Gender did not affect the use of compliments and responses. The young Saudis might be influenced by English and Western culture when they produced compliments.

Shaari and Maros (2017) provided an overview of previous studies on compliments and compliment responses in Western and Asian contexts. They indicated that cultural globalization or the acquisition of common cultures changed the communication strategies and behavior of people. That happened because of the online social networking experience and media. The studies revealed that modern Malay speakers did not respond to compliments as prescribed by their traditional culture anymore. They had various attitudes and perceptions in expressing speech acts.

Zanella (2017) examined politeness strategies of compliment responses. The study aimed to investigate how Brazilian Portuguese speakers were different from American English speakers when they received compliments. It included 12 students with intermediate and upper-intermediate levels of EFL from a private school in Brazil. The data consisted of 133 responses. The results revealed that the Brazilian Portuguese speakers gave reasons for the compliments that they received. They employed different strategies. The strategies of thanking and returning the compliment followed the strategy of explaining. Rejecting compliments was the least-used strategy. The main difference between Brazilian Portuguese speakers and American English speakers was that the Americans showed higher rates of either thanking or rejecting compliments whereas the Brazilians showed higher rates of explanation. The contrast between the two groups could be associated with the Brazilian cultural boundaries.

### III. CORPUS CONSTRUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

As stated above, the study examined the use of formulaic expressions against the evil eye by male and female native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English. In addition, it shed light on the different types of compliment responses. The subjects of the study were 100 students at the University of Jordan. The participants represented one level of education (after secondary education). The native speakers of Jordanian Arabic were 50 Jordanian students. They were 25 females and 25 males. Their ages ranged between 18 and 45 years old. The native speakers of Jordanian Arabic were selected randomly from different colleges. The students were from different colleges. They were students in the College of Art, Foreign Languages, Business, and Physical Education. The native speakers of American English were 50 Americans (25 female and 25 male). They were taking a course in Arabic for four months at the University of Jordan. Their ages ranged between 18 and 45 years old. The researcher asked the subjects to fill out a Discourse Completion Task (DCT).

The data were elicited through a DCT. Golato (2003) stated that discourse completion tasks were used in different fields because they were simple to use. They helped researchers to have a high degree of control over different variables, too. Two versions of the Discourse Completion Test were provided to the participants in this paper. One version was written in Arabic for the native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. The other version was in English to be given to the native speakers of American English. The test was divided into two sections. The first part of the DCT included demographic information related to gender, nationality, job, college, and age. The participants were asked to complete the first section and then complete the second part of the test. The second section consisted of 10 situations. The students were asked to read the compliments produced by a friend or a teacher and to provide compliment responses to situations related to five topics. Table 1 represents the topics of the compliments in the test.

TABLE 1  
TOPICS OF COMPLIMENTS

| Item no. | Topic              |
|----------|--------------------|
| 1 & 6    | Physical Features  |
| 2 & 7    | General Appearance |
| 3 & 8    | Performance/Skill  |
| 4 & 9    | Possession         |
| 5 & 10   | Attribute          |

The topics of the compliments in the DCT were physical features (hair), general appearance, performance (experience, high marks), and attributes. The researcher specified the relationship between the speakers and the

respondent (friend or teacher) in each situation. The first five situations were informal as they were produced by a friend. The last five situations were uttered by a teacher. Table 2 shows the distribution of items according to the degree of formality and the relationship between the speaker and respondent.

TABLE 2  
DISTRIBUTION OF SITUATIONS

| Item no. | Formality | Status between speaker and respondent |
|----------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1        | Informal  | Friend                                |
| 2        | Informal  | Friend                                |
| 3        | Informal  | Friend                                |
| 4        | Informal  | Friend                                |
| 5        | Informal  | Friend                                |
| 6        | Formal    | Teacher                               |
| 7        | Formal    | Teacher                               |
| 8        | Formal    | Teacher                               |
| 9        | Formal    | Teacher                               |
| 10       | Formal    | Teacher                               |

The status between the speaker and the respondent was specified because it could affect compliments. They might speak much more politely in formal situations (with the teacher). To ensure validity, the DCT used in this paper was given to three judges at the University of Jordan to validate it. Then the researcher made the necessary modifications (See Appendix B).

The Discourse Completion Task consisted of 10 situations and the subjects had to provide the relevant compliment responses. The data were analyzed to show the similarities and differences between the expressions used by the two groups. The researcher followed the framework of compliment response categorization which was suggested by Pomerantz (1978) and Holmes (1986). Table 3 represents Holmes' classification of compliment responses. Pomerantz (1978) and Holmes (1986) classified compliment responses into three types accept, reject or evade.

TABLE 3  
HOLME'S (1986) CLASSIFICATION

| Broad categories      | Sub-categories                                                                                                                                                                        | Examples                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Accept</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciation or agreement token</li> <li>Agreeing utterance</li> <li>Downgrading or qualifying utterance</li> <li>Return compliment</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Thanks", "yes", or smile</li> <li>"I think it's lovely, too"</li> <li>"It's not too bad, is it?"</li> <li>"You're looking good, too"</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Reject</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disagreeing utterance</li> <li>Question accuracy</li> <li>Challenge complimenter's sincerity</li> </ul>                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"I'm afraid I don't like it much"</li> <li>"Is beautiful the right word?"</li> <li>"You don't really mean that"</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Deflect/ Evade</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shift credit</li> <li>Informative comment</li> <li>Ignore</li> <li>Legitimate evasion</li> <li>Request reassurance/ repetition</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"My mother knitted it"</li> <li>"I bought it at that Vibrant Knits place"</li> <li>"It's time we were leaving, isn't it?"</li> <li>"You know, that shop in Cubacade" as a response to the compliment, "Hey they're nice. Where'd you get them from?"</li> <li>"Do you really think so?"</li> </ul> |

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed quantitatively. The results were represented and discussed in three sections. The first section presented the use of formulas against the evil eye by male and female native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. The second section included a contrastive analysis of the use of formulaic expressions by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English. The categories (types) of compliment responses that were used by the Jordanians and the Americans were represented in section three.

##### A. Native Speakers of Jordanian Arabic

Holmes (1995) considered compliments as positive politeness devices that were used to express solidarity and goodwill between the speaker and the recipient. The native speakers of Jordanian Arabic provided a variety of compliment responses against the evil eye. Table 4 below shows the frequency of using formulas against the evil eye in Jordanian Arabic.

TABLE 4  
FREQUENCY OF FORMULAS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE

| Topic of situations | Jordanian Arabic |    |        |    |          |    |        |    |
|---------------------|------------------|----|--------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|                     | Female           |    |        |    | Male     |    |        |    |
|                     | Informal         |    | Formal |    | Informal |    | Formal |    |
|                     | N                | %  | N      | %  | N        | %  | N      | %  |
| Physical Features   | 7                | 28 | 3      | 12 | 5        | 20 | 3      | 12 |
| General Appearance  | 8                | 32 | 6      | 24 | 5        | 20 | 6      | 24 |
| Performance/Skill   | 11               | 44 | 10     | 40 | 10       | 40 | 12     | 48 |
| Possession          | 13               | 52 | 15     | 60 | 13       | 52 | 11     | 44 |
| Attribute           | 3                | 12 | 5      | 20 | 8        | 32 | 9      | 36 |

The figures revealed that the female and male Jordanian students at the University of Jordan used compliment responses against the evil eye in formal and informal situations. In formal situations, the female participants used formulaic expressions more frequently about possessions, 60% of the compliment responses included formulas against the evil eye. This is similar to Mughazy (2000), Cuesta and Yousefian (2015) and Alharbi (2017). Compliments about performance also included formulas about the evil eye, 40%. The topic that included the least formulaic expressions was physical features. However, 48% of the men's responses which were directed at performance or skill consisted of formulaic expressions. Compliment responses about physical features did not include a lot of formulaic expressions, only 12%. There was a significant difference between men and women concerning possession. The female students provided a lot of formulaic expressions when they responded to compliments related to belongings. It seems that possessions are more important to women than to men. They like to talk about money and shopping. Both genders were not very interested in physical features such as hair. The status of the speaker (teacher) affected the compliment responses about physical features.

Regarding informal situations, both genders provided the highest percentage of formulaic expressions when they complimented on possession. It scored 52%. Women used the least number of expressions against the evil eye about attributes. It seems that women think that it is customary to get on well with others. Women like to interact with people. The speakers didn't perform an action that attracted the envy or the admiration of others. Men produced the least number of formulas while they were talking about physical features and general appearance. They scored 20%. The male participants may consider these topics parts of their daily routines. They have their hair cut frequently and they play sports. These activities are not unique to the speakers, so they don't use formulaic expressions.

The results showed that the students believed in the evil eye and its effect on people and life. Table 5 below represents some examples of formulaic expressions used by native speakers of Jordanian Arabic to prevent the evil eye.

TABLE 5  
EXAMPLES OF RESPONSES AGAINST THE EVIL EYE

| Topic of situations | Native speakers of Jordanian Arabic                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     | Informal situation                                                                                                                                    | Formal situation                                                                                                                          |
| Physical Features   | 'Maa/aallah'<br>'May Allah protect you'                                                                                                               | 'Maa/aallah'<br>'May Allah protect you'                                                                                                   |
| General Appearance  | 'Allah yuwafqak'<br>'May Allah help you to succeed'<br><br>'tabaarak Allah'<br>'May Allah bless you'                                                  | 'Allah yahfazlak sihtak'<br>'May Allah keep your good health'                                                                             |
| Performance/Skill   | 'Alhamdulillah'<br>'Thanks to Allah'<br><br>'Allah yuwafqak'<br>'May Allah help you to succeed'                                                       | 'Allah yiziidak film wa nuur'<br>'May Allah increase your knowledge'<br><br>'sallaat an-nabbi saliik'<br>'Mention Prophet PUH'            |
| Possession          | 'infaallah tjuuf sala wijihaa al-xiir'<br>'inshaAllah you will have good days'<br><br>'Allah yitammim sala xiir'<br>'May Allah fulfill what you want' | 'infaallah tjuuf sala wijihaa al-xiir'<br>'inshaAllah you will have good days'<br><br>'Allah yuwafqak'<br>'May Allah help you to succeed' |
| Attribute           | 'Allah yiqawiik'<br>'May Allah give you strength'                                                                                                     | 'baarak Allah fiik'<br>'May Allah give you blessings'                                                                                     |

An important aspect of speech acts in Jordanian Arabic was the significant use of religious-formulaic expressions. The students believed that a compliment response could attract the evil eye, so they used expressions that invoked God's protection. The expression *Maa/aallah* 'May Allah protect you' was frequently used in compliments on physical features, general appearance, and performance. It was used with compliments related to possession and attribute, too. The status of the speaker did not affect the kind of formulaic expression. The students used the same expressions in both formal and informal situations. They used standard Arabic or jargon language (*baarak Allah fiik*) or Jordanian Arabic dialects (*Allah yiqawiik*).



It was noticed that some compliment responses included expressions that could attract the evil eye. According to the data, the topic of performance (getting high grades) received compliments responses such as '*qattaafah*' (clever) and '*wahj*' (monster). These expressions can harm the speaker. It seems that some Jordanians were jealous and envied the speakers.

### B. Native Speakers of American English and Jordanians

It is necessary to use formulaic expressions in Jordan. It is part of the culture. The native speakers of Jordanian Arabic employed religious expressions regardless of the status of the speaker. The highest percentage of the protective expressions was on possession. The native speakers of American English also used them. Table 6 shows the frequency of using responses against the evil eye by the American and Jordanian participants.

TABLE 6  
FREQUENCY OF FORMULAS AGAINST THE EVIL EYE

| Topic              | Native speakers of Jordanian Arabic |    |        |    | Native speakers of American English |   |        |    |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|----|--------|----|-------------------------------------|---|--------|----|
|                    | Situation                           |    |        |    | Situation                           |   |        |    |
|                    | Informal                            |    | Formal |    | Informal                            |   | Formal |    |
|                    | N                                   | %  | N      | %  | N                                   | % | N      | %  |
| Physical Features  | 12                                  | 24 | 6      | 12 | 2                                   | 4 | 2      | 4  |
| General Appearance | 13                                  | 26 | 12     | 24 | 3                                   | 6 | 3      | 6  |
| Performance/Skill  | 21                                  | 42 | 22     | 44 | 3                                   | 6 | 3      | 6  |
| Possession         | 26                                  | 52 | 26     | 52 | 3                                   | 6 | 6      | 12 |
| Attribute          | 11                                  | 22 | 14     | 28 | 2                                   | 4 | 2      | 4  |

The results showed that the native speakers of American English used expressions that invoked the protection of Allah to compliment on physical appearance, general appearance, possession, and performance (skill). The Americans used some formulaic expressions such as *Maafaallah*, May Allah protect you, and May God bless you. The highest percentage of formulaic expressions were given to possession. 12% of the compliment responses included religious expressions. Both Jordanians and Americans produced the highest percentage of compliments against the evil eye on possession. The lowest percentages went to physical appearance and attributes. Belongings were very important for Americans because they related to money and business. This result was contrary to Quran (2012) who indicated that the Americans did not use compliments that included prayers and common social expressions.

It seems that the Americans in Jordan believe in the evil eye and they are affected by the Jordanian culture or Islamic societies. It seems that the topics of physical appearance and attributes may not cause envy to the Americans. It is normal to look after their appearance.

The status of the speaker affected the use of compliment responses against the evil eye for Americans. There was a significant difference between compliment responses produced on possession in formal and informal situations, they scored 12% and 6% respectively. However, there weren't any significant differences in the compliment responses directed at other topics such as performance and general appearance.

### C. Categories of Compliment Responses

The native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and the native speakers of American English produced a variety of compliment responses. Analysis of the data revealed that these speech acts can be divided into three main categories. Table 7 represents the types of responses in Jordanian Arabic.

TABLE 7  
TYPES OF COMPLIMENTS USED BY JORDANIANS

| Types of compliments |                                     | Native speakers of Jordanian Arabic |    |        |    |          |    |        |    |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----|--------|----|----------|----|--------|----|
|                      |                                     | Female                              |    |        |    | Male     |    |        |    |
|                      |                                     | Informal                            |    | Formal |    | Informal |    | Formal |    |
|                      |                                     | N                                   | %  | N      | %  | N        | %  | N      | %  |
| Accept               | Appreciation or agreement token     | 11                                  | 9  | 16     | 13 | 10       | 8  | 9      | 7  |
|                      | Agreeing utterance                  | 93                                  | 74 | 93     | 74 | 98       | 78 | 97     | 78 |
|                      | Downgrading or qualifying utterance | 3                                   | 2  | 3      | 2  | 8        | 6  | 1      | 1  |
|                      | Return compliment                   | 7                                   | 6  | 2      | 2  | 2        | 2  | 3      | 2  |
|                      | <b>Total</b>                        | 114                                 | 91 | 114    | 91 | 118      | 94 | 110    | 88 |
| Reject               | Disagreeing utterance               | 3                                   | 2  | 3      | 2  | 3        | 2  | 2      | 2  |
|                      | Question accuracy                   | 0                                   | 0  | 1      | 1  | 0        | 0  | 1      | 1  |
|                      | Challenge complimenter's sincerity  | 4                                   | 3  | 2      | 2  | 2        | 0  | 6      | 5  |
|                      | <b>Total</b>                        | 7                                   | 6  | 6      | 5  | 5        | 4  | 9      | 8  |
| Deflect/Evade        | Shift credit                        | 0                                   | 0  | 0      | 0  | 0        | 0  | 0      | 0  |
|                      | Informative comment                 | 1                                   | 1  | 2      | 2  | 0        | 0  | 3      | 2  |
|                      | Ignore                              | 3                                   | 2  | 3      | 2  | 2        | 2  | 3      | 2  |
|                      | Legitimate evasion                  | 0                                   | 0  | 0      | 0  | 0        | 0  | 0      | 0  |
|                      | Request reassurance/ repetition     | 0                                   | 0  | 0      | 0  | 0        | 0  | 0      | 0  |
|                      | <b>Total</b>                        | 4                                   | 3  | 5      | 4  | 2        | 2  | 6      | 4  |

The results showed that female and male native speakers of Jordanian Arabic responded to compliments in similar ways. The Jordanian subjects tended to accept compliments. The categories of reject and evade were not common. There weren't any significant differences between males and females. The most common response to a compliment was to accept it. In formal situations, 91% of the compliment responses that the female provided showed acceptance whereas the men produced 88%. Both genders accepted compliments by using agreeing utterances such as '*mumtaaz*' (excellent). They used appreciation expressions or agreement tokens such as '*aah*' (yes), '*fukran*' (thanks), or '*akiid*' (sure). The participants produced downgrading or qualifying utterances. For commenting on an attribute, they produced compliments like '*faadii*' (free), and '*ʔihtam bi-diraastak ʔahsan*' (Your main concern should be your studies). For someone who bought a car, a student complimented with the expression '*bakkiir*' (you are behind). About general appearance, someone replied with a strange expression, '*sirt haikal*' (you are skinny now).

According to the figures, the next category used by the Jordanians was rejection. The Jordanians produced a few rejection responses. There weren't any significant differences between men and women. There weren't any significant differences between formal and informal situations. In formal situations, 8% of the compliment responses of the men included rejections, whereas 5% by the women. In informal situations, the women produced 6% of compliments in which they expressed rejection. They produced utterances such as '*laa qabil ahlaa*' (before it was nicer) and '*mif mafqool*' (impossible). Disagreeing responses were uncommon. A few students avoided showing acceptance or rejection. They produced responses such as '*wa ʔana maalii*' (It is not my concern) and '*laa ʔarud*' (I do not respond).

The social status did not affect the kind of strategy used by the participants. This finding is in line with Alqarni (2017). It seems that most of the students get on well with the teachers as they provide acceptance responses. It is noticed that the Jordanian participants are influenced by other cultures which is in line with Alqarni (2017), Shaari and Marcos (2017). They included some borrowed words from other cultures such as nice, wow and oh. The females used expressions to show exaggeration like '*bijannin*' (very nice), and '*raaʔiʔ*' (wonderful). This result is similar to Ghanim (2009). He has stated that the female participants used elaborate and exaggerated forms of compliments on some occasions. The types of compliment responses might be universal. Table 8 shows the types of compliments in American English.

TABLE 8  
TYPES OF COMPLIMENTS USED BY AMERICANS

| Type of compliment |                                     | Native speakers of American English |           |        |           |          |           |        |           |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|
|                    |                                     | Female                              |           |        |           | Male     |           |        |           |
|                    |                                     | Informal                            |           | Formal |           | Informal |           | Formal |           |
|                    |                                     | N                                   | %         | N      | %         | N        | %         | N      | %         |
| Accept             | Appreciation or agreement token     | 11                                  | 9         | 16     | 13        | 12       | 10        | 20     | 16        |
|                    | Agreeing utterance                  | 93                                  | 74        | 93     | 74        | 90       | 72        | 78     | 62        |
|                    | Downgrading or qualifying utterance | 3                                   | 2         | 3      | 2         | 10       | 8         | 0      | 0         |
|                    | Return compliment                   | 7                                   | 6         | 2      | 2         | 7        | 6         | 5      | 4         |
|                    | <b>Total</b>                        | 114                                 | <b>91</b> | 114    | <b>91</b> | 119      | <b>95</b> | 103    | <b>82</b> |
| Reject             | Disagreeing utterance               | 3                                   | 2         | 3      | 2         | 1        | 1         | 4      | 3         |
|                    | Question accuracy                   | 0                                   | 0         | 1      | 1         | 1        | 1         | 1      | 1         |
|                    | Challenge complimenter's sincerity  | 4                                   | 3         | 2      | 2         | 3        | 2         | 4      | 3         |
|                    | <b>Total</b>                        | 7                                   | <b>6</b>  | 6      | <b>5</b>  | 5        | <b>4</b>  | 9      | <b>7</b>  |
| Deflect/Evade      | Shift credit                        | 0                                   | 0         | 0      | 0         | 0        | 0         | 3      | 2         |
|                    | Informative comment                 | 1                                   | 1         | 2      | 2         | 0        | 0         | 1      | 1         |
|                    | Ignore                              | 3                                   | 2         | 3      | 2         | 1        | 1         | 9      | 7         |
|                    | Legitimate evasion                  | 0                                   | 0         | 0      | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0      | 0         |
|                    | Request reassurance/ repetition     | 0                                   | 0         | 0      | 0         | 0        | 0         | 0      | 0         |
|                    | <b>Total</b>                        | 4                                   | <b>3</b>  | 5      | <b>4</b>  | 1        | <b>1</b>  | 13     | <b>10</b> |

Analysis of the data showed that the most common strategy of compliment responses in American English was to accept. This result is similar to Al-rousan and Awal (2016) and Alharbi (2017). There were not any significant differences according to gender. In formal situations, 78% of the Americans showed acceptance for what the speakers complimented such as 'Good job' and 'That's amazing'. Downloading compliments were also employed. A compliment response on general appearance was 'Be careful! You don't want to lose too much weight'. Another response to the fact of buying a car was the compliment 'Why would you buy a Ford'. The next common category used by Americans was deflect or evade. It seems that the participants would not reply if they did not accept the compliments. This could be a way to show politeness. They preferred to show acceptance but not rejection. The Americans disagreed with compliments, 12%.

In informal situations, the most frequent category used by the female native speakers of American English was acceptance, 91%, and the men scored 95%. The least common strategy was to reject. For example, an American complimented on physical features 'No, it's awful' and 'Buy a Japanese car instead'. There wasn't a significant difference between female and male Americans. Compliment responses are politeness devices.

## V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

It is believed that compliment responses should be accompanied by a deferential reference to Allah to prevent the envy of others or harm. The study revealed some similarities and differences between the native speakers of Jordanian Arabic and native speakers of American English in using formulas. In formal and informal situations, formulaic expressions were frequently used by male and female native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. Native speakers of American English also produced some religious expressions. Both Americans and Jordanians produced more religious expressions when they talked about possessions. They were affected by the Islamic culture. Gender and the status of the speaker did not affect the use of formulaic expressions in compliments for Jordanians and Americans. The most common religious expression was ‘*Maafaallah*’ (May Allah protect you). The status of the speaker did not affect the category of compliment responses produced by the participants. The most frequent compliment type was acceptance. A future study should examine the use of compliment responses in online classes including students and teachers of different ages.

## APPENDIX A

TABLE 9  
LIST OF PHONETIC SYMBOLS

| Symbol | Place and Manner of Articulation   |
|--------|------------------------------------|
| ʔ      | glottal stop                       |
| ʕ      | voiced pharyngeal fricative        |
| q      | voiceless uvular stop              |
| g      | voiced velar stop                  |
| d̥     | emphatic voiced alveolar stop      |
| ð      | voiced interdental fricative,      |
| ð̥     | emphatic voiced alveolar fricative |
| θ      | voiceless interdental fricative    |
| f      | voiceless alveolar fricative       |
| h      | voiceless glottal fricative        |
| ħ      | voiceless pharyngeal fricative     |
| x      | voiceless uvular fricative         |
| ɣ      | voiced uvular fricative            |
| a      | short central low vowel            |
| i      | short front high vowel             |
| u      | short back high vowel              |
| aa     | long central low vowel             |
| ii     | long front high vowel              |
| uu     | long back high vowel               |

## APPENDIX B

**Questionnaire about the Use of Compliments against the Evil Eye in Arabic and English**

Dear Students,

The following questionnaire aims to investigate the use of compliments against the evil eye. Please fill in your personal information and then read the following situations and write the appropriate responses. Please try to be accurate and objective as much as you can when you answer the questions. Your answers will be considered confidential and used only for scientific research.

**Personal Information:**

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_

Career: \_\_\_\_\_

College: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 1:**

**Your friend has his/her hair cut. The next day, your friend said: “I had my hair cut. Is it nice?”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 2:**

**Your friend joined a gym and after one month he/she said: “I joined a gym and I lost twenty kilos.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 3:**

**Your friend prepared for exams and studied hard. At the end of the term, your friend said: “I have finished all the exams and I got high marks.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 4:**

**Your friend has worked in a company for nine years. Your Friend bought a car two days ago and he/she said: “I bought a car from Ford and I am going to bring it tomorrow.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 5:**

**Your friend participated in all students activities and social occasions for students. Your friend said: “I love people. I like to socialize with everyone.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 6:**

**Your teacher has his/her hair cut. The next day the teacher said: “I had my hair cut. Is it nice?”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 7:**

**Your teacher does exercises every day. The teacher said: “I keep fit because I do exercises every day.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 8:**

**You registered a course at university. The first day the teacher said: “I have twenty years of experience in teaching.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 9:**

**Your teacher bought a flat. The teacher said: “I bought a big apartment in Amman.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation 10:**

**You registered a course at university. The first day the teacher said: “I understand the students’ problems and I am trying to solve them. My concern is the student.”**

What would you say? \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you

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# Indirect Speech Acts in Javanese

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**Abstract**—Understanding speech ethics can help avoid conflicts. In Javanese society, a person can be considered impolite if they use direct speech in certain situations. Therefore, Javanese people tend to use indirect speech when interacting with others. This research discusses indirect speech acts and their relationship with language politeness in Javanese society. This research data consists of indirect speech acts used by the Javanese community in Magelang. To collect data, researchers employed listening techniques, as well as recording and documenting conversations. To ensure the reliability of the data, in-depth observations were conducted. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method. To analyze the problem, researchers applied theories of indirect speech acts, language politeness norms, and the indirectness scale. The results show that speech acts do not directly describe language politeness. Speakers tend to use indirect speech acts, particularly when addressing someone of higher social status or when there is social distance between the speaker and the addressee. Indirect speech acts include satire, commands, requests, and subtle refusals. Speakers use indirect speech to convey politeness, maintain harmony, or avoid conflict.

**Index Terms**—indirect speech act, Javanese, language politeness

## I. INTRODUCTION

Speakers use speech acts that are appropriate to the conversational situation. The goal is to maintain politeness, avoid offense, and prevent conflict between the speaker and the addressee. Indirect speech can convey sarcasm or serve as small talk. The meaning of indirect speech acts can only be understood in the context of the situation. Indirect speech acts indicate that the relationship between the speaker and the addressee is less intimate or serves a specific purpose. In

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contrast, direct speech acts tend to reflect a closer relationship between the speaker and the interlocutor.

The meaning of a sentence depends on the grammatical or lexical system, discourse, and context. To understand the meaning of a sentence, we must consider the relationship between sentences within the context of the situation. Factors such as speaker, addressee, social level, age, gender, education, place, and purpose of speaking also influence word choice. These factors apply universally to all languages worldwide. The use of Javanese is closely tied to extralinguistic factors. Speaker must consider these factors to communicate comfortably and avoid offending others.

Language politeness reflects a person's awareness of dignity when using language, both spoken and written. Factors that influence language politeness include age, social status, education, gender, purpose of speaking, kinship relationships, and culture. A speaker is considered polite when their speech adheres to the socio-cultural norms of the community where the conversation takes place. Language politeness can reflect the speaker's culture, including aspects such as livelihoods, belief systems, and kinship relationships. It is important for speakers to use polite language. However, some individuals still do not fully observe language and politeness norms, which can lead to conflict, particularly in multiethnic societies with differences in culture, religion, education level, and social status.

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Speech acts are actions carried out through speech. Speakers can perform speech acts such as asking, requesting, ordering, or refusing (Austin, 1962). This research examines indirect speech acts in Javanese society and their relationship to language politeness. To analyze the issue, the researchers used the theory of speech situation, speech event, speech act by Hymes (1974); Leech (1983), along with the theory of language politeness norms by Poedjosoedarmo (1968, 2017). Below, the researcher presents a theory to explore indirect speech acts in Javanese society in relation to language politeness. Hymes explains that speech events are defined by the acronym SPEAKING: setting, participant, ends, act, key, instrument, norm, genre. When speaking, individuals adjust to the speech situation by considering who is speaking, the goal, timing, how to express their opinion, the instruments used (whether oral or written), relevant norms, and the type of speech activity (Hymes, 1974). Speakers are considered polite when they are friendly, respectful, honest, and adjust their language to match the addressee's level of speech. They should also speak according to the situation, purpose, and topic, maintain relevant implicature; speak efficiently and clearly; and maintain appropriate rhythm (Poedjosoedarmo, 1968, 2017). Language politeness is characterized by a scale of indirectness. The indirectness scale means that the more directly a speaker conveys their message, the more impolite they may be perceived (Leech, 1983).

Leech (1983) established the politeness scale of speech using the following measurements: the cost-benefit scale, optionality scale, indirectness scale, authority scale, and social distance scale. The cost-benefit scale refers to the extent of loss or gain caused by a speech act. A speaker is considered polite when their speech imposes a greater cost on themselves. The optionality scale refers to the number of alternative choices offered by the speaker to the addressee. The more options the speaker or interlocutor is given to freely choose from, the more polite the speaker is perceived to be.

The indirectness scale refers to whether the speaker uses direct or indirect speech. Speech is considered polite when the speaker uses indirect language. The authority scale refers to the social status relationship between the speaker and the addressee. The greater the difference in authority, the more likely the speaker is to use polite speech. The social distance scale refers to the level of social relationship between the speaker and the addressee; the closer the social rank between them, the less polite the speech tends to be. The degree of intimacy between the speaker and the addressee also influences the level of politeness in speech.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

A study on the shift of the *krama* Javanese to Indonesian revealed that *krama* Javanese is at risk of extinction due to the dominance of the Indonesian language (Winarti, 2018). Research on cultural dimensions and language politeness emphasizes the need to maintain harmony through appropriate language choices that align with local culture. In the teaching and learning process, language teachers have the responsibility to teach politeness strategies to students to minimize misunderstandings (Fitriah & Hidayat, 2018). Further research on politeness in Indonesia, especially in news and Facebook comments, highlighted the importance of preserving the Javanese speech level to ensure that the younger Javanese generation can communicate politely with others (Nuryantiningsih & Pandanwangi, 2018).

Purwanto (2020) states that speakers tend to use indirect speech acts when they want to accept an offer. According to Sugianto and Salehuddin (2019), the younger generation struggles with using formal Javanese, often code-switching between formal Javanese to informal Javanese (*ngoko*) or Indonesian. The choice between Javanese or Indonesian as a mother tongue reflects the speaker's identity. Some young Javanese identify Indonesian as their mother tongue, indicating a weakening of intergenerational transmission within the Javanese language. This shift highlights that youth are developing a stronger sense of national identity than local identity (Andriyanti, 2019). In Javanese society, addressing family members with kinship terms is a way to show respect (Efendi & Sukamto, 2020). In this study, it is explained about language politeness among female politicians who are members of the West Sumatra DPRD on social

media. The results of the study reveal the use of directive speech acts, such as suggesting, pleading, and reminding, as well as expressive speech acts like praising, thanking, and expressing condolences (Juita & Ermanto, 2020).

The principles of language politeness include tact, agreement, politeness, sympathy, and generosity (Juita & Ermanto, 2020). Different speech acts can reflect varying levels of language politeness (Rahmawanto & Rahyono, 2019). The value of language politeness at the Javanese speech level teaches profound human values (Nuryantiningsih & Hidayat, 2022). Further research by Oliveira and Miranda (2022) explored impoliteness on Twitter. Differences in socio-cultural behavior and professional practice can lead to misunderstandings, potentially causing speech to be perceived as impolite or overly polite (Izadi, 2022). This research revealed the interconnection between self, identity, and face by examining lexemes like *shaxsiat*, *āberu*, and *ru* in Iranian culture showing that facework is intertwined with identity (Hosseini, 2022). The next research discusses politeness in teacher-student interactions at SMAN 01 Logas, Tanah Darat District, Kuantan Singingi Regency, Riau Province. The research results show both students and teachers generally spoke politely, with only 38 out of 101 utterances categorized as impolite (Ningsih et al., 2020).

The next research focuses on language politeness in the use of Javanese verbs in Magelang. The results indicate that some members of the younger generation struggle with using verbs correctly, which can lead to the perception of impoliteness (Atmawati, 2021). Research on Javanese speaking strategies in Tondano City, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province shows that positive politeness strategies are employed when speaking with individuals of lower or equal social status or those with close relationships (Mojo et al., 2021). Additionally, studies on language politeness among Javanese women reveal that they frequently use positive politeness and employ negative politeness when apologizing (Mayasari et al., 2021). Research on Javanese politeness in public places demonstrates that Javanese speakers generally incorporate politeness into their daily interactions, reflecting their social status (Sumekto et al., 2022). Ramli et al. (2023) found that in Friday sermon discourse, there is a maxim of sympathy and a tact maxim of politeness. Furthermore, Idaryani and Fidyati (2023) reported that the Acehnese language in the region has been disrupted due to the transmission of other languages between generations.

Previous research has been limited to discussing Javanese politeness in verbs, shifts in the use of Javanese in the younger generation, honorific forms in Javanese, speech acts in Javanese, the concept of politeness in Javanese, and community politeness strategies.

To address the problem, researchers used speech act theory from Leech (1983), which reveals the frequent use positive politeness and negative politeness when apologizing and language norms theory from Poedjosoedarmo (2017). The novelty of this research lies in its exploration of indirect speech acts in Javanese society and their relation to language politeness. Leech (1983) established a politeness scale for speech using measurements of indirectness.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

The research process employs a methodology for studying social phenomena (Creswell, 2009) and is categorized as a qualitative descriptive study. The aim of this study is to describe and explain Javanese language politeness and its relationship with indirect speech. The data for this research consists of speech acts from twenty conversations. Data was collected by listening to and recording conversations. Researchers used smartphones to record conversations using tapping techniques. The tapping technique involves listening to a conversation without the speaker's knowledge. To analyze Javanese speech, researchers used listening techniques. The location of this research is in the Magelang area.

To determine the reliability of the data, researchers conducted in-depth observations and collected data on indirect speech act conversations. The researcher then classified the data based on whether the speech intended to insinuate, order, request, or subtly refuse. This classification provided an overview of the relationship between research objects, research problems, situational context, and local culture. To understand the meaning of indirect speech acts, researchers analyzed the data using speech act theory, language politeness norms, and speech content. Researchers use the politeness scale by Leech (1983) concerning indirectness to address the problem.

#### V. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data, four types of indirect speech acts were identified as expressing politeness, namely satire, command, request, and refusal. Speakers use Javanese *ngoko* and Javanese *krama* depending on the social context. Javanese *ngoko* is used when speaking to addressees who are of the same age, already familiar, or have lower social status. Javanese *krama* is used when addressing those who are not yet known or respected, are older, or have a higher social status. Poedjosoedarmo (1968) refers to this as speech level. Speakers use these speech levels to convey language politeness.

The following is a list of indirect sentence data (1—12) and its discussion. The indirect speech acts are examined in interactions between pitchmen and buyers, household servant and host, husband and wife, grandmother and grandson, private teachers and students, aunt and nephew, son and mother, son and father, tailor and customer, worker A and B, mother A and B, student A and B.

##### A. Indirect Speech Act: Satire



Data (1), conversation between pitchman and buyer. Pitchmen usually sell their wares in the area to buyers who already know them.

Pitchman: *Ajeng tumbas napa, Bu?* 'What do you want to buy?'

Buyer : *Sayur apa sih ana?* 'What vegetables are still available?'

Pitchman: *Tasih lengkap, sawi, bayem, brokoli, kacang panjang, buncis. Tigan kalih lele, nggih wonten.* 'It is still complete, bok choy, spinach, broccoli, long beans, and green beans. Eggs and catfish are also available.'

Buyer : *Wortel Ana?* 'Any carrots?'

Pitchman: *Wonten, Bu.* 'Yes, there are still.'

Buyer : *Sawi, Wortel, Iki Wae, and Karo Lele.* 'Just these bok choy, carrot, and catfish.'

Pitchman: *Sedaya sekawan dasa ewu. Arep bada muga-muga rejekine lancar. Muga-muga dhuwite ngumpul.* 'Forty thousand in total'. 'Eid will come soon, hopefully income is good, savings grow.'

Buyer : *Iya, Pak. Iki nggo mbayar blanjaku. Utangku sesuk tak lunasi.* 'Yes, Sir. This is to pay for my shopping. I'll pay off my debt tomorrow.'

Pitchman: *Matur nuwun, kula mriki malih benjang.* 'Thank you. I will come again tomorrow.'

Based on conversation (1), pitchman use Javanese *krama*, while buyers use Javanese *ngoko*. Pitchman uses Javanese *krama* to respect buyer. Buyers use Javanese *ngoko* because they feel their social status is higher than the pitchmen's social status. In their dialogue, pitchmen use indirect speech acts to collect the buyer's debt. The indirect speech act is, "*Arep bada muga-muga rejekine lancar, dhuwite ngumpul.*" Pitchmen insinuated that buyers owed him money. In front of the buyers, the pitchmen said, "Eid will come soon, hopefully income is good, savings grow." The words good income and saving grow are interpreted by the buyer to collect debts. The offended buyer responded by saying, "*Utangku sesuk tak lunasi.*" 'I will pay off my debt tomorrow.' Pitchmen responded by replying, "*Matur nuwun, kula mriki malih benjang.*" 'Thank you. I will come again tomorrow.' The story confirmed that pitchmen would come again the next day to collect the debt.

Data (2), conversation between household servant (HS) and host at the host's house.

HS : *Bu, nyuwun ngapunten, kula badhe matur.* 'Madam, I'm sorry, I have something to tell you.'

Host: *Matur apa, Yu?* 'What's the matter, Yu?'

HS : *Bada niki kula badhe wangsul, setunggal wulan.* 'This year's Eid, I will go home for a month.'

Host: *Lha, kok suwe banget, biasane seminggu ta?* 'So long, usually only a week?'

HS : *Bada tahun kepengker kula mboten wangsul.* 'Last year's Eid, I didn't go home.'

Host: *Kowe lak balik rene meneh ta?* 'Will you come back here again?'

HS : *In syaa Allah. Kula mboten saget janji, Bu. Menawi wonten kampung wonten pedamelan ingkang lumayan kasilanipun, kula badhe medamel wonten kampung mawon.* 'I can't promise, madam. If there is a decent job in the village, I'll just work in the village.'

Host: *Apa ning kene kurang upahmu?* 'Is your wage insufficient here?'

HS : *Sak niki napa-napa awis, Bu.* 'Now everything is expensive, Madam.'

Host: *Pancen saiki apa-apa larang. Upahmu takundhakke, nanging kowe balik mreng ya. Ning kampung rong minggu wae, aja suwe-suwe.* 'It's all expensive. I increased your wages, but you came back here. In the village, you are only two weeks. Don't take too long.'

In conversation (2), the household servant talks to the host using the *krama* Javanese to honor him. The host uses *ngoko* Javanese. Differences in social status influence the choice of Javanese *krama* or *ngoko*. In this speech, the household servant sometimes uses indirect speech acts. For example, a household servant wants her employer to increase her wages. She said, "*Bada niki kula badhe wangsul, setunggal wulan.*" The household servant said that he wanted to go home for one month, even though it was usually only one week. The host responds with questions like, "*Kowe lak balik rene meneh ta?*" The household servant answered the question with an indirect speech act, "*Menawi wonten kampung wonten pedamelan ingkang lumayan kasilanipun, kula badhe medamel wonten kampung mawon.*" The household servant answered that she wanted to work in the village if the wages were decent. The host understood the meaning of the household servant's satire. The host can understand the satirical speech act. Next, the host said that she would increase the household servant's wages. In addition, if the household servant expresses direct speech, it can be considered impolite.

Data (3), conversation between husband and wife.

Husband: *Tulung tukokke rokok, Bu.* 'Please, let me buy cigarettes, Mam!'

Wife : *Aku mbayangke nek ora ana kebul ning omah iki mesti hawane seger. Bocah cilik-cilik mesakke nek nganti melu nyedhot kebul.* 'I imagine the air would be fresh if there was no smoke in the house. I feel sorry for the children when they inhale the smoke.'

Husband: *Aku mengko le ngrokak taknang njaba, adoh karo bocah-bocah.* 'I'll smoke outside, out of reach of the kids.'

Wife : *Turgene dhuwite isa dinggo tuku liyane.* 'That money could be used for something else.'

The conversation (3) takes place between a husband and wife. In Javanese society, women are considered to have a lower status than men. They use *ngoko* Javanese. When the husband asked his wife to buy cigarettes, his wife answered with indirect speech, "*Aku mbayangke nek ora ana kebul ning omah iki mesti hawane seger. Bocah cilik-cilik mesakke*

*nek nganti melu nyedhot kebul.*" The wife answered with a satirical speech act. Her husband understood the satire, then responded by saying, "*Aku mengko le ngrok taknang njaba, adoh karo bocah-bocah*".

#### B. Indirect Speech Act: Commands

Data (4), conversation between grandmother and grandson.

Grandmother: *Awak kok kesel banget.* 'I'm so tired.'

Grandson : *Kula damelke unjukkan panas, Mbah?* 'Shall I make you a hot drink, Grandma?'

Grandmother: *Kanca-kancaku arep teka seminggu meneh. Nek latare resik, krasa penak, ora ngisin-isini.* 'My friends are coming for recitation next week. If the home page is clean, it feels comfortable and not embarrassing.'

Grandson : *Benjang dalem papras suketipun supados lataripun ketingal resik.* 'Tomorrow, let me cut the grass so the yard looks clean.'

In conversation (4), grandmother complains that her body is tired. Grandmother uses the *ngoko* Javanese. The grandson who heard his grandmother's complaint responded by using the *krama* Javanese language as a tribute to people who are older. His grandson offered to make him a hot drink. Next, her grandmother chose indirect speech to express her meaning, "*Kanca-kancaku arep teka seminggu meneh. Nek latare resik, krasa penak, ora ngisin-isini.*" The grandmother orders his grandson by using indirect speech act. His grandson could understand his grandmother's wishes. He said he would do it. The command spoken by indirect speech can be well received by the addressee. His grandmother can use direct speech, but he prefers indirect speech.

Data (5), conversation between private teacher and student.

Private teacher: *Apa kowe wis nggarap pekerjaan rumah pelajaran matematika?* 'Have you done your math homework?'

Student : *Nyuwun ngapunten, kula kesupen, Bu.* 'Sorry, I forgot, Miss.'

Private teacher: *Gaweanmu apa ta kok nganti lali nggarap pekerjaan rumah? Iki ana soal latihan rong puluh.* 'Are you so busy that you forget to do your homework? There are twenty questions.'

Student : *Nggih, kula garapipun, Bu.* 'All right, I will do it, Miss.'

Private teacher: *Garap sing teliti!* 'Work carefully!'

The private teacher starts by asking the student's homework. Private teachers use Javanese *ngoko*. Students answer the teacher's questions using Javanese *krama*. Students use Javanese *krama* to show their politeness. Next, the teacher uses an indirect speech act, "*Iki ana soal rong puluh.*" The students responded to the private teacher's words, "*Nggih kula garapipun, Mom.*" Students understand the indirect speech act. The private teacher tells the students to do math. She can use direct speech act, but the teacher chooses indirect speech act to respect the students.

Data (6), conversation between private aunt and nephew.

Aunt : *Kowe gek apa, Tutik?* 'What are you doing, Tutik?'

Nephew: *Mboten, Bulik. Nembe maos buku cerita. Kados pundi?* 'Nohing, Auntie. I'm just reading a story book. Can I help you?'

Aunt : *Ora apa-apa. Bulik arep mbalekke payung nggone Bu Darmi, ning kok selak kesusu arep melu kumpulan.* 'It's okay. I need to return Mrs. Darmi's umbrella, but I have a meeting to get to.'

Nephew: *Kula wangsulaken mawon songsongipun, Bulik.* 'Let me return the umbrella, Auntie.'

Aunt : *Kowe ngerti daleme Bu Darmi?* 'Do you know Bu Darmi's house?'

Nephew: *Kula Ngertos, ingkang pojok piyambak ta, Bulik?* 'The one in the corner, Aunt?'

Data (6), conversation between private aunt and nephew. Aunt wants to return the umbrella to Mrs. Darmi's house. The speech is conveyed indirectly. Indirect speech can be known from sentences, "*Bulik arep mbalekke payung nggone Bu Darmi, ning kok selak kesusu arep melu kumpulan.*" Her nephew can understand her speech. The nephew responded by offering to help her aunt. In the dialogue, the aunt uses the *ngoko* Javanese, while the nephew uses the *krama* Javanese to honor his aunt.

#### C. Indirect Speech Act: Request

Data (7), conversation between son and mother.

Son : *Celenganku tak bobok, Mbok.* 'I will break my piggy bank, Mother.'

Mother: *Jare arep dibobok nek wis arep bada. Iki durung bada kok wis dibobok? Arep dinggo apa dhuwite?* 'You said for Eid. It's not Eid yet, why is it already divided? What do you want to use the money for?'

Son : *Sepatuku wis rusak. Mau ning sekolahan aku dipoyoki kanca-kancaku, aku isin. Wah, dhuwite kok ora cukup.* 'My shoes are broken. At school my friends bullied me. I'm ashamed. Ah, I don't have enough money.'

Mother: *Seminggu meneh taktambahi dhuwitmu nek arep dinggo tuku sepatu.* 'One more week, I will give you money to buy shoes.'

Son : *Ya, Mbok. Sepatuku iki takjahitke dhisik.* 'Yes, Mother. I'll have my shoes mended.'

In conversation (7), a son tells his mother that he has taken out savings. He and his mother use *ngoko* Javanese. The son from the upper middle class usually uses Javanese *krama* when he talks to his mother. Sentence, "*Celenganku tak bobok, Mbok* and *Sepatuku wis rusak. mau ning sekolahan aku dipoyoki kanca-kancaku, aku isin. Wah, dhuwite kok ora*

*cukup*” shows indirect speech act. The son did not ask his mother for money directly. The mother understands that her son asks for money. His mother said she would give him the money next week.

Data (8), conversation between the son and father.

Son : *Pak, sepatunipun kula semirke, nggih?* ‘Papa, I’ll polish your shoes, okay?’

Father: *Sing nganti mengkilap, ya?* ‘Until it’s shiny, okay?’

Son : *Nggih, mboten sah kuwatos. Pak!* ‘All right, Papa. Don’t worry!’

Father: *Arep matur apa, ngguya-ngguyu?* ‘Do you want to say something? Why are you smiling?’

Son : *Sekolah kula radi tebih. Kula kesel menawi mlampah saben dinten.* ‘My school distance is a bit far. I’m tired when I walk every day.

Father: *Wah, jebul ana pamrihe iki nyemirke sepatu. Sesuk taktukokke pit nggo kowe.* ‘Oh, there are strings attached to shoe polish. Tomorrow, I’ll buy a bicycle for you.’

Son : *Saestu, Pak. Matur nuwun, Pak.* ‘That’s right, Pap.’ Thank you, Papa.’

Conversation (8) describes speech events that occur in middle-class families. The son uses Javanese *krama*, while the father uses Javanese *ngoko*. This shows that Son is polite to his parents. When his son wants a bike, he doesn’t ask for it directly. The son chose an indirect speech act, “*Sekolah kula radi tebih. Kula kesel menawi mlampah saben dinten.*” Father understood the meaning and answered in direct speech, “*Sesuk taktukokke pit nggo kowe.*”

Data (9), conversation between tailor and customer.

Tailor : *Mangga pinarak, Mbak.* ‘Please, have a seat, Miss.’

Customer: *Kathah mboten jahitane, Bu?* ‘Is there a long sewing queue, Sis?’

Tailor : *Enten sing ajeng kula jahit. Pripun?* ‘I will sew a few. Can I help you?’

Customer: *Nggih, Bu. Sragam, niki ajeng kula ngge minggu ngajeng. Kula isin nek mboten ngangge sragam dhewe.* ‘Yes, Sister. I will wear this uniform next week. I’m ashamed if I’m the only one who doesn’t wear a uniform.’

Tailor : *O, nggih, telung dinten rampung, Mbak.* ‘Alright, three days and it’s done, Miss’

Customer: *Tigang dinten maleh kula pundhut. Matur nuwun, Bu.* ‘All right, I’ll take it in three days. Thank you, Sis.’

Conversation (9) is a tailor and customer conversation. Both use *krama* Javanese to respect each other. The customer uses indirect speech act when she asks for a tailor to sew his uniform quickly. The indirect speech act is “*Sragam, niki ajeng kula ngge minggu ngajeng. Kula isin nek mboten ngangge sragam dhewe.*” The tailor responded to this speech by saying, “*O, nggih, telung dinten rampung, Mbak.*” The choice of indirect speech in this context is considered more appropriate because there is no impression of commanding others.

#### D. Indirect Speech Act: Refusing Subtly

Data (10), conversation between worker A and worker B.

Worker A: *Ayo mangan sik wis awan.* ‘Let’s have lunch.’

Worker B: *Dhisika, aku isih wareg. Mau sarapanku akeh.* ‘I’m still full. I had a big breakfast.’

Worker A: *Ayolah, aku sing bayar.* ‘Come on, I’ll treat you.’

Worker B: *Kapan-kapan wae. Kowe wis kerep mbayarke aku. Aku isih wareg.* ‘Another time. You have often treated me. I’m still full.’

Worker A: *Mosok isih wareg, wis awan ngene.* ‘Are you still full? It’s already very late.’

Worker B: *Mengko nek aku ngelih, taksusul.* ‘When I’m hungry, I’ll come find you.’

Worker A: *Ya wis aku ndhisik, selak ngelih.* ‘Alright, I’ll head out. I’m starving.

Data (10) is a conversation between worker A and worker B. Worker A asks worker B to have lunch, but worker B is not willing. Worker B expresses indirect speech, “*Dhisika, aku isih wareg. Mau sarapanku akeh* and *Mengko nek aku ngelih, taksusul.*” It seems that worker B is reluctant to have lunch with worker A. Worker A often treats him so that worker B feels embarrassed. Both speak in *ngoko* Javanese. They use the Javanese language *ngoko*. They are close friends and the same age.

Data (11) conversation between mother A and mother B.

Mother A: *Jeng, jenengan rezekinya lancar nggih, badhe mundhut napa mawon saget?* ‘Madam, you have good luck, can buy whatever you want.’

Mother B: *Akhamdulillah, disyukuri mawon, Jeng.* ‘Thank God, just be grateful, Madam.’

Mother A: *Menawi ngersakake griya, kula gadhah.* ‘I have a house that I want to sell. You can buy it.’

Mother B: *Wah, sampun cekap nika setunggal mawon.* ‘Wow, just one is enough.’

Mother A: *Mbok bilih badhe mundhut kagem disewaaken.* ‘You can buy it for rent.’

Mother B: *Dereng mikir ngantos semanten. Mbok menawi wonten tiyang sanes ingkang badhe mundhut.* ‘I haven’t thought about that. Maybe someone else will buy it.

Two neighbors who already know each other meet at an event. Mother A offered the house to Mother B. Mother B politely refuses. Mother B answered using indirect speech so as not to offend Mother A, “*Dereng mikir ngantos semanten. Mbok menawi wonten tiyang sanes ingkang badhe mundhut.*” This indirect speech act did not offend Mother A even though the speech act contains rejection. Both use Javanese *krama* to maintain politeness.

Data (12), conversation between student A and student B.

Student A: *Mengko bengi kowe teka ning omahe Suti? Mangkat bareng aku wae.* ‘Will you come to Suti's house tonight? Just go with me.’

Student B: *Aku arep methuk sedulurku mengko bengi.* ‘I will pick up my brother tonight.’

Student A: *Bar methuk sedulurmu wae, kowe teka ning omahe Suti.* ‘After picking up your brother, you can come to Suti's house.’

Student B: *Aku bar methuk sedulurku, aku ana acara liyane.* ‘After picking up my brother, I have another event.’

Data (12) describes a conversation between two students. Both chose *ngoko* Javanese. They use Javanese *ngoko*, but people still think they are polite because they are the same age and already know each other. Student A wants to go with Student B to Suti's house. Student B did not want to come to Suti's house. Student B uses indirect speech acts to reject student A's invitation so as not to offend student A, "*Aku arep methuk sedulurku mengko bengi*" and "*Aku bar methuk sedulurku, aku ana acara liyane*".

The results of this research indicate that speakers choose indirect speech acts to respect the addressee. Speakers use indirect speech and speech level by paying attention to the addressee's social class, age, and goals.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Language politeness is closely related to the choice of language forms, such as direct speech acts or indirect speech acts. In Javanese society, speakers carefully select the level of speech when they use Javanese. Both linguistic and extralinguistic factors influence this choice. Speakers decide whether to use indirect speech or direct speech based on the situation, social status, goals, and age of the addressee. The purpose of choosing speech-level forms is to maintain politeness and avoid conflicts.

The data and discussion above revealed that indirect speech subtly conveys meaning such as satire, orders, requests, and refusals. Indirect speech acts are one way for speakers to avoid offending the addressee's feelings. Speakers use Javanese *ngoko* or *krama* depending on the addressee. When speakers expect something from the addressee, they are more likely to use indirect speech to avoid conflict or ensure politeness.

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# Tayo in *Ceremony*: The Gray Area for Preserving Native American Culture

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**Abstract**—This paper examines the themes of cultural preservation and integration in Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony*, focusing on the character Tayo and his role in bridging the gap between Native American and modern American cultures. Historically, Native Americans have faced isolation, whether by choice or by force, leading to economic, social, and cultural challenges. Government policies such as the Dawes Act and efforts to assimilate Native Americans into modern American society through education and religious conversion have disrupted traditional ways of life and led to a legacy of mistrust and marginalization. *Ceremony* portrays a path forward, advocating for a balance between maintaining cultural integrity and embracing necessary changes for survival. The novel emphasizes the importance of cultural adaptation and integration, suggesting that Native Americans can thrive without losing their identities by engaging with the broader American society. Through Tayo's journey of healing and his interactions with the medicine man Betonie, Silko illustrates the potential for cultural hybridity to foster resilience and understanding. By presenting a nuanced vision of coexistence, *Ceremony* calls for mutual respect and collaboration between Native Americans and modern Americans. The novel encourages a reimagining of cultural identity that is inclusive and adaptable, ensuring that Native American traditions remain vibrant and relevant in a changing world. This paper argues that cultural survival depends not on isolation but on the ability to adapt and integrate, creating a future where multiple cultures can coexist and enrich each other.

**Index Terms**—the Pueblos, native Americans, modern Americans, Laguna Pueblo Reservation, The Pueblo of Laguna

## I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, Native Americans either chose or were forced into isolation, separating them from the broader modern communities in the United States. Even though they shared the same lands with modern Americans and breathed the same air, Native Americans lived in reservations. In this paper, it can be argued that Leslie Marmon Silko, through the character Tayo in *Ceremony*, establishes a safe space for Native Americans to contribute to building the United States without losing their identity. Isolation is no longer a viable option for Native Americans; engaging with modern Americans and other cultures under the United States' umbrella is now the best choice. This paper will explore the historical and cultural contexts of this interaction, the economic and social pressures faced by Native American communities, and the role of Silko's *Ceremony* in portraying a path toward integration and mutual respect.

## II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT: ISOLATION AND ASSIMILATION POLICIES

Thomas J. Morgan, Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1889 to 1893, articulated the government's stance on assimilation in his first annual report:

The Indians must conform to 'the white man's ways,' peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must. They must adjust themselves to their environment, and conform their mode of living substantially to our civilization. This civilization may not be the best possible, but it is the best the Indians can get. They cannot escape it, and must either conform to it or be crushed by it. (as cited in Anderson, 2008, p. 3)

Morgan's report reflects the era's prevalent belief in the superiority of modern American civilization and the inevitability of Native American assimilation. The government's assimilation policies aimed to eradicate Native American cultures by imposing Euro-American cultural norms. These policies were enforced through various means, including boarding schools where Native children were taught to abandon their languages, religions, and traditions. The underlying goal was to 'civilize' Native Americans by making them adopt the social, economic, and cultural practices of modern Americans.

The historical context of these assimilation efforts is critical to understanding the complexities of Native American identity in the modern era. The policy of forced assimilation was part of a broader colonial agenda that sought to erase indigenous cultures and replace them with the dominant cultural norms of the settlers. This approach not only undermined the rich cultural heritage of Native American tribes but also created a legacy of mistrust and trauma that continues to affect Native American communities today.

The Dawes Act of 1887 is a notable example of such policies. It aimed to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream American society by dividing communal tribal land into individual plots. This policy led to the loss of tribal land, as



surplus land was sold to non-Native settlers, resulting in significant land loss for Native Americans. The act disregarded the communal nature of Native American land ownership and instead imposed individual ownership, which was foreign to many tribes. This forced shift not only disrupted traditional lifestyles but also led to economic disempowerment, further marginalizing Native American communities.

Furthermore, the impact of these assimilation policies can be seen in the disruption of Native American social structures. The introduction of individual land ownership contrasted sharply with the communal values held by many Native tribes, where land was considered a shared resource integral to cultural and spiritual life. The shift to individual land ownership not only alienated Native Americans from their traditional ways of life but also created economic vulnerabilities, as many were unprepared for the demands of a cash economy. This dislocation was not merely economic but also deeply psychological, leading to a loss of cultural identity and a sense of belonging.

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 attempted to reverse some of the damages done by earlier policies, by promoting self-governance and restoring some land rights to Native tribes. However, the act was met with mixed responses from Native American communities. While some saw it as a step towards reclaiming their autonomy, others viewed it as another attempt by the federal government to control their affairs. This ambivalence highlights the complex relationship between Native Americans and the U.S. government—a relationship characterized by a struggle for autonomy and self-determination in the face of continuous external pressures.

Resisting mainstream culture could cost Native Americans more than they have already lost. Thus, there is little point in resisting other cultures and remaining isolated. The need for change became evident, especially in the new millennium, where Native Americans might struggle to meet economic and social requirements. The challenge lies in finding a balance between maintaining cultural integrity and embracing necessary changes for survival and progress.

### III. THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHALLENGES OF ISOLATION

The Pueblos, the tribe to which Tayo belongs, exemplify the challenges faced by isolated Native American communities. The Pueblos mainly relied on agriculture and livestock to survive, which proved insufficient in the twentieth century, particularly as their population grew. According to Dozier (1970), "By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Pueblos were no longer able to meet their own food needs without resort to a market and a cash nexus" (p. 9). To preserve their culture, the Pueblos needed to open up to modern Americans and find common ground.

Economic opportunities emerged with the expansion of railroads and roads, offering new avenues for employment and trade. Dozier (1970) notes, "Some wage work opportunities came for Pueblo Indians as railroads and roads were opened up toward the end of the nineteenth century and during the first and second decades of the twentieth" (p. 9). Despite these opportunities, the Pueblos were hesitant to embrace modern American culture: "The Pueblos cherish their isolation; hence they do not support efforts to establish businesses which will bring incomes. They value the traditional rewards of community life and object to moving too rapidly into the frantic life of modern America" (Dozier, 1970, p. 10).

This reluctance to engage with economic changes kept the Pueblos isolated and contributed to their economic hardships. The idea of living in reservations further isolated them. Perry (2008) notes, "The economics of marginalization are facilitated by the legacy of the reservation system. For one-third of Native Americans living on the reservations, the geographical boundaries have contributed to their economic isolation" (p. 66).

The economic isolation experienced by many Native American communities is not merely a result of geographic isolation but also stems from systemic barriers to economic participation. These barriers include limited access to education, high unemployment rates, and lack of infrastructure. The legacy of these economic challenges continues to impact Native American communities today, resulting in poverty and limited economic mobility. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach that includes economic development initiatives, improved access to education, and support for cultural preservation.

Moreover, the economic hardships faced by Native American communities have broader social implications. High poverty rates often correlate with other social issues such as health disparities, substance abuse, and family instability. These issues are compounded by the historical trauma resulting from colonization and forced assimilation, which has led to a cycle of poverty and social problems that is difficult to break. The isolation of reservations, while offering some protection for cultural practices, also limits access to opportunities that could improve the quality of life for Native Americans. Thus, economic integration with modern American society, while maintaining cultural distinctiveness, is crucial for the future of Native American communities.

Social isolation also leads to psychological impacts. The sense of being cut off from the broader society can lead to feelings of alienation and disenfranchisement among Native Americans. This alienation is further exacerbated by experiences of discrimination and racism, which can negatively affect mental health and well-being. The struggle to maintain cultural identity in a predominantly modern American society can create internal conflicts, especially among younger generations who may feel caught between two worlds. These psychological challenges underscore the need for supportive environments that respect and validate Native American cultural identities while promoting engagement with the broader society.

### IV. CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS PRESSURES

The Pueblos are cautious about engaging with modern Americans or the U.S. government, even when the government attempts to help improve their living conditions. For example, government efforts to educate Pueblo children met with resistance, although the Pueblos later supported such programs: "The Pueblos initially resisted the educational programs of the government; however, in subsequent years they enthusiastically supported such efforts" (Dozier, 1970, p. 14). Some Pueblos began to see that isolation was not a viable long-term strategy, feeling torn between a modern community and their traditional one.

Government efforts to assimilate Native Americans into modern American life influenced this shift. Dozier (1970) asserts that the Bureau of Indian Affairs significantly influenced the Pueblos, aiming to transform Indian communities into variants of the dominant American culture as quickly as possible, believing the solution lay in "Americanization" (p. 15). This pressure to conform included religious assimilation, where traditional religious practices were suppressed, and Christian practices were introduced.

Attempts to convert the Pueblos to Christianity represent another form of oppression faced by Native Americans. While some might view these efforts as attempts to civilize the Pueblos, they contradict the United States' commitment to religious freedom. Dozier (1970) describes the church's role beyond maintaining missions and churches, including efforts to convert the Pueblos: "This task consisted primarily of the attempt to eradicate Pueblo indigenous religious beliefs and practices and the endeavor to substitute Catholic counterparts" (p. 50).

These efforts increased the Pueblos' isolation, making them more cautious about engaging with American culture. Bridging the gap between Pueblo and American culture seemed increasingly difficult, as suppression of native beliefs fueled resentment. "Resentment swelled among the Pueblos. They did not give up their beliefs or even their sacred rites, but became more careful in concealment and secrecy. Their own religious beliefs and organizations, fitted, as it were, to their own folk culture, continued to have more meaning to them". (Dozier, 1970, p. 50)

The imposition of religious conformity not only disrupted spiritual practices but also undermined the social fabric of Native American communities. Religious ceremonies and practices are integral to the cultural identity of many Native tribes, and the forced adoption of Christianity often led to a loss of cultural continuity and community cohesion. This cultural disruption had long-lasting effects, leading to intergenerational trauma and a struggle to reclaim and preserve traditional spiritual practices.

Cultural pressures also manifest in the everyday interactions between Native Americans and modern Americans. Stereotypes and misconceptions about Native American cultures persist, often leading to discrimination and marginalization. The lack of understanding and respect for Native American traditions by modern Americans can create tensions and conflict, furthering the divide between these communities. Efforts to bridge this cultural gap require not only education and awareness but also a willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration.

The cultural dissonance experienced by Native Americans extends to language as well. Many Native languages have faced decline due to the dominance of English and the historical suppression of indigenous languages in schools. Language is a key component of cultural identity, and the loss of language can lead to a loss of cultural knowledge and traditions. Revitalization efforts, such as language immersion programs, are crucial for preserving Native languages and, by extension, the cultural heritage they carry. These efforts not only help maintain cultural identity but also empower Native communities by reconnecting them with their linguistic roots.

#### V. SILKO'S *CEREMONY*: BRIDGING CULTURAL GAPS

These dynamics explain why Silko wrote *Ceremony*, a work seen as a neutral effort to bridge cultural gaps. Leslie Marmon Silko, who was born and raised on a Laguna Pueblo reservation, was deeply familiar with the life of Native Americans in reservations. *Ceremony* is set on the same Laguna Pueblo reservation where Silko grew up. The term "Pueblo Indians" refers to groups of Native Americans, including Laguna, from the Pueblo crescent running from central New Mexico to northeastern Arizona: "The pueblo of Laguna lies in the San Jose Valley, some fifteen miles northeast of Acoma" (Eggan, 1950, p. 253). Thus, much of Silko's work draws on her personal experience as a Native American.

In *Ceremony*, Tayo symbolizes the intersection between Native American and modern American cultures, emphasizing the necessity of fostering closer relationships. He embodies the common ground between these cultures. James Ruppert, in his 1995 *Mediation in Contemporary Native American Fiction*, views *Ceremony* as a novel of "mediation," suggesting it provides a space for both modern American and Native American readers to understand and reconcile cultural differences.

Silko's portrayal of Tayo's suffering and challenges—as a Native American soldier dealing with post-war trauma—illustrates that the barriers between Native Americans and modern Americans should dissolve. Cooperation in building and protecting their country, in both peace and war, can occur without sacrificing their identities. In *Ceremony*, Silko promotes a tone of unity, envisioning a world where Native Americans and modern Americans coexist and support each other.

The only fully realized language in *Ceremony* is that of Betonie. He provides a unified and unifying vision of the world which, far from being mediational, comes to dominate both Tayo's consciousness and the novel itself. The novel becomes, in other words, Silko's very conscious attempt to create a new mythology capable of subsuming older ones, both Laguna and mainstream Western" (Cutchins, 1999, p. 78).

Silko's work challenges the traditional dichotomies of us versus them, Native versus modern. Instead, she offers a vision of a shared space where cultural exchange can occur without domination. This approach not only humanizes the Native American experience but also provides a roadmap for healing the wounds caused by centuries of oppression and misunderstanding. Through the character of Tayo, Silko illustrates that embracing one's cultural heritage while being open to other influences can lead to a more inclusive and harmonious society.

*Ceremony* serves as a narrative bridge, connecting the past with the present and offering a vision for the future. It acknowledges the pain and trauma of historical injustices while also highlighting the resilience and adaptability of Native American cultures. Silko's narrative suggests that true healing and reconciliation can only occur when there is mutual respect and understanding between cultures. By presenting a story where characters navigate the complexities of cultural identity, *Ceremony* encourages readers to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes towards cultural diversity.

In addition to bridging cultural gaps, *Ceremony* also reclaims the power of Native American storytelling. The novel's structure, which incorporates traditional Pueblo storytelling elements, serves as a reminder of the richness and depth of Native American oral traditions. Through storytelling, Silko reaffirms the importance of preserving cultural narratives and passing them down to future generations. These stories not only preserve history but also provide a framework for understanding the world and one's place in it. By weaving traditional storytelling with contemporary issues, Silko creates a narrative that is both timeless and relevant.

## VI. THE ROLE OF TAYO AND BETONIE: SYMBOLS OF CULTURAL INTEGRATION

In *Ceremony*, Native Americans are drawn to the prospects of modern American towns and the economic opportunities they offer, yet they still resist some cultural aspects. They are hesitant to fully engage with modern American culture, displaying a reluctance to entirely embrace it. What sets Tayo apart is his ability to navigate both his Native heritage and modern American culture, demonstrating the necessity of interaction with both.

As a multicultural country, the United States provides an ideal environment for Tayo and the Laguna people to interact with various cultures while retaining their identity. "Tayo is everything the ideal Indian is not: he represents the double other, who is discriminated against by both modern Americans and Natives. Still, he is the one to survive (the war as well as the crisis thereafter) because he can cope with many worlds" (Ganser, 2008, p. 154).

Tayo's recovery from war trauma is successful because Betonie integrates Native American healing traditions with those of modern American culture. "Betonie's healing rituals have also been influenced by modern American culture. They incorporate innovation and change as a result of the healer's knowledge of the complex world he observes from his hillside" (Cutchins, 1999, p. 83). Tayo's healing reflects a broader approach: Native Americans need to integrate aspects of modern American culture to thrive.

Ku'oosh, who sticks strictly to traditional ways, fails to help Tayo, whereas Betonie, who merges both cultural traditions, succeeds: "Ku'oosh and Betonie are both medicine men, but while Ku'oosh's power is limited to the traditions of the Laguna Pueblo and therefore offers only temporary relief, the half-Mexican Navajo Betonie transcends the old ceremonies of his tribe by integrating aspects of the colonizers' culture" (Ganser, 2008, p. 150). Silko uses these two medicine men to symbolize different perspectives on modern American culture, advocating for an integrated approach to preserve Native American culture.

"In *Ceremony*, Silko uses various characters of mixed ancestry and emphasizes their outstanding qualities as agents of cultural, social, and historical transition" (Ganser, 2008, p. 153). Tayo and Betonie, as individuals of mixed heritage, act as bridges between cultures, crafting a new identity that includes all surrounding cultures: "Tayo and Betonie, due to their being crossbloods, are placed at a certain distance from their respective communities, a fact that enables them to develop a more inclusive worldview which counteracts dichotomization—just as they themselves cannot be placed into dichotomous categories of ethnicity and of cultural belonging" (Ganser, 2008, p. 153).

The significance of Betonie's character lies in his ability to embrace change while remaining rooted in traditional practices. He recognizes that the world is constantly evolving, and Native American traditions must adapt to remain relevant. Betonie's approach to healing is symbolic of a larger cultural healing that Silko advocates for—one that involves a blending of traditions to create a more resilient and dynamic identity.

This blending of traditions is not without its challenges. It requires a willingness to question and reinterpret cultural norms, which can be uncomfortable for both Native Americans and modern Americans. However, it is through this process of questioning and adaptation that new cultural forms can emerge, allowing for a richer and more diverse society. Silko's vision is one where cultural exchange is seen not as a threat but as an opportunity for growth and understanding.

Tayo's journey also symbolizes the broader journey of Native American communities seeking to reclaim and redefine their identities in a modern context. His ability to heal and find balance through the integration of different cultural practices mirrors the efforts of many Native American communities to navigate the pressures of modernity while preserving their cultural heritage. This journey of integration and healing is a collective one, requiring the participation and understanding of both Native Americans and modern Americans. It calls for a recognition of the value of cultural diversity and the need for spaces where different cultural perspectives can coexist and enrich each other.

## VII. THE NEED FOR ADAPTATION AND CHANGE

Betonie understands the need to change and adapt to modern American culture, recognizing that traditional methods, while preserving identity, are no longer sufficient:

If Ku'oosh represents the idea that Pueblo culture should be preserved, then Betonie embodies the attempt, not to preserve, but to revitalize Native American culture. Betonie explains why Ku'oosh had been unable to help Tayo. He notes that 'at one time, the ceremonies as they had been performed were enough. After the modern Americans came, though, it became necessary to create new ceremonies.' Changing ceremonies or creating new ones was deeply troubling to traditionalists like Ku'oosh. (Cutchins, 1999, p. 85)

Betonie argues that unchanging ceremonies become obsolete, serving only their time. His new adaptation for the ceremony meets the evolving needs of all Native Americans, suggesting that changes in all aspects of life are essential to fit the modern world. By embracing change, Native Americans can protect their cultural heritage while navigating the complexities of contemporary society. The process of cultural adaptation does not mean the loss of identity but rather the evolution of traditions to remain relevant and meaningful.

Silko's message is clear: cultural survival does not depend on rigid adherence to the past but on the ability to adapt and integrate new elements while maintaining a sense of self. This concept is crucial for Native Americans who face the challenges of modern life, where globalization and cultural exchange are inevitable. The ability to adapt ensures that Native American cultures do not just survive but thrive, contributing to the broader tapestry of American society.

Adapting to modern realities does not mean abandoning one's cultural roots. Instead, it involves reinterpreting and reimagining cultural practices to fit the contemporary context. This adaptation can take many forms, from incorporating modern elements into traditional ceremonies to finding new ways to express cultural identity through art, music, and storytelling. By embracing change, Native Americans can ensure that their cultures remain vibrant and relevant, even as the world around them evolves.

Moreover, adaptation involves a proactive approach to preserving cultural heritage. This includes documenting and teaching cultural practices, languages, and stories to younger generations. Cultural preservation is an active process that requires engagement and commitment from community members. By taking ownership of their cultural narratives, Native Americans can ensure that their heritage is not only preserved but also celebrated and shared with the wider world.

Adaptation also means engaging with contemporary issues that affect Native American communities, such as environmental conservation, social justice, and political advocacy. By bringing traditional knowledge and perspectives to these modern challenges, Native Americans can contribute valuable insights and solutions that benefit not only their communities but also the broader society. This engagement fosters a sense of agency and empowerment, enabling Native Americans to shape their futures while honoring their pasts.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION: A VISION FOR COEXISTENCE AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

*Ceremony* lays the groundwork for a new understanding between Native Americans and modern Americans, fostering a gray area where both can coexist while allowing Native culture to endure. "Ruppert comes closer to *Ceremony*'s complex vision when he writes that the novel alters both Native and Western epistemologies toward the creation of a 'new reality'" (Arnold, 1999, p. 53). This vision aligns with the values of the United States, a nation that upholds minority rights and cultural freedoms.

As Morgan stated, the United States is the best option available to Native Americans, even if it is not ideal (as cited in Anderson, 2008, p. 3). Interaction with modern Americans is unavoidable, and a new understanding of this relationship is critical, particularly in the twentieth century.

Silko recognizes that Native Americans can no longer resist or be oppressed by other cultures. She understands their suffering and the necessity for change. Through Tayo in *Ceremony*, Silko illustrates that isolation is no longer beneficial and that embracing relations with modern Americans can help preserve Native American culture.

Silko rejects the simplistic ideal that a return to traditional beliefs is the only way Native American characters can survive. Denying both traditionalism and assimilationism, she proposes that the only way Native American characters, particularly those of mixed racial and cultural heritage, will be able to survive in the modern world is to adopt a nativistic paradigm and learn to adapt and alter ancient traditions to fit modern situations. This is the only realistic way, Silko might argue, and that the Nations may become genuine Indian. (Cutchins, 1999, p. 86)

In conclusion, *Ceremony* offers a way to preserve Native American culture in a world of change. Tayo exemplifies the merging of Native American and modern American cultures, leveraging his mixed heritage to navigate both worlds. This approach allows Native Americans to seize opportunities while maintaining their cultural identity. By fostering a space where multiple cultures can coexist, *Ceremony* provides a blueprint for a future in which Native Americans can thrive without sacrificing their traditions.

Silko's work calls for a reimagining of identity, one that is inclusive and adaptable. This vision not only honors the past but also looks forward to a future where Native American cultures contribute to the diversity and richness of modern American society. By embracing change and finding strength in cultural hybridity, Native Americans can create a future that respects their heritage while engaging fully with the modern world.

The novel serves as a reminder that cultural survival is a dynamic process, one that requires continuous negotiation and adaptation. By portraying characters who navigate the complexities of cultural identity with resilience and creativity,

Silko offers a hopeful vision for the future. In this vision, Native American cultures are not relics of the past but living, evolving traditions that contribute to the ongoing story of humanity.

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# Exploring *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams Through the Lens of Feminism

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**Abstract**—The characters, scenes, and events in Tennessee Williams's *The Glass Menagerie* are used to expand on the idea of women's liberation. Utilizing a feminist lens, the article aims to reread *The Glass Menagerie* from a feminist approach. It also highlights the distinctions between the characters in the play and the reasons behind them. The degree of liberalness in each of the drama's scenes helps to clarify them. Additionally, one of the ideas that will be covered in the study is the patriarchal influence of male characters over female characters. However, *The Glass Menagerie*'s portrayal of a mother figure's challenging relationship with her rebellious son and helpless daughter takes the idea of liberal women in a different direction. Importantly, now that literary study often overlooks the significance of female characters' development and change, this article contributes to discussing these elements within the research.

**Index Terms**—feminism, liberalness, narration, patriarchal, women

## I. INTRODUCTION

The celebrated American writer Tennessee Williams is known for his vulnerability which comes through in his stories that often mirror the events in his own life. His career as a writer started after he had a short story published in the summer of 1939. He was not well-known until five years later, when, at the age of 33, his play *The Glass Menagerie* became a smash sensation in New York City. *The Glass Menagerie* is one of his serious works that deal with serious issues on multiple levels (Abu Keshk & Farman, 2022; Al-Ghalith & Al-Sayyid, 2023). In fact, Goyal (2001) states that *The Glass Menagerie* was a marvelous success and put Williams in the top ranks of American writers. Nevertheless, despite his success, his works remain controversial today.

This research will focus on the notion of one of Williams' more controversial subjects, that of women's liberation, and how it is expounded within the selected literary work, *The Glass Menagerie*. Two female characters are analyzed depending on how liberal they are. Throughout the play, both women struggle with the reality that they will never be independent. Moreover, the impact of the male character is illustrated within the play's scenes, too (Al-Ghammaz et al., 2022).

*The Glass Menagerie* has three main characters: Amanda, the controlling mother who lives in the past; Laura, Amanda's daughter, a very shy girl who walks with a limp after recovering from childhood polio; and Tom, Amanda's son, an adventurous man who wants to discover the world. Still another character, however, is Jim O'Connor, a popular high school student who gets stuck in the warehouse where he and Tom work together.

Scenes in *The Glass Menagerie* are arranged in a way that leads the readers to the disappointing end of the play (Al-Ghammaz, 2023). At the beginning of the play, the main characters are shown to have very strong emotions. The mother is a tense person who blames any life situation on her children and keeps reminding herself of her past. The daughter, Laura, is a timid person who is afraid of any new experience in her life.

Later, Laura does not appear that much. However, Tom speaks his mind about his shy sister. Amanda also appears in her usual angry mood and returns Tom's books to stop him from reading about his interests. In addition, she worries about their finances, but it is of no use since they are living during the Great Depression, which hit their city hard (Al-Ghammaz, 2023). People could not find jobs or any other opportunities to help them through their daily lives. The scenes are a continuation of Tom's rebellious acts and Amanda's fights with him. Laura is empathetic towards her brother, while she also struggles with her crippled leg; this represents her abandonment after overcoming her struggles. It ends up with Tom and Amanda controlling Laura's future with no intention of asking her about it, which limits her mind and thoughts.

The fourth character, Jim, appears in their house soon after. He appears as an escape for Laura, who has fallen sick again with no strength to sit at the dinner table with them. These scenes show more about the characters' complicated relationships. Amanda is shifting between her present moment and her nostalgic thoughts about the past. Tom is still dreaming of a different life. Laura, on the other hand, is still shrinking into herself and does not try to explore the world around her.

The final scene has the characters running around in the same circles. Amanda increases her control over Tom, and that makes him leave, as his father did before. Laura faces rejection again, this time from the one male she expects to be

good with her. It is also another shock from her surroundings, which do not give her courage enough to face the world by herself.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Indeed, women's liberation is still a widely discussed subject today by people who are interested in the studies of women, history, and sociology. One of the first and more well-known gynocritics is Elaine Showalter. In fact, she coined the term "gynocriticism", which she proposed as a new literary project to create "a female framework for the analysis of women's literature." Today, Showalter is an activist and has made contributions to feminism and the feminist movement. Her writings express how women are seeking the equal chance as men in their lives (Al-Ghammaz et al., 2024). Showalter (1998) states that she writes to deliver her message to the audience.

*The Glass Menagerie* has previously been addressed from a variety of different aspects. In their book, *Women's Voices, Feminist Visions*, for instance, Shaw and Lee (2001) talked about classic works under the lens of feminism and how women were dealt with in the past. They detailed the certain adjectives used to describe typical females such as soft, passive, domestic, emotional, sensitive, delicate, and needy. Moreover, female characters were also obligated to adhere to societal stereotypes. Of course, this was all before feminists started making their female characters the protagonists of their works.

In the article *Females: The Survivors of Corrupt Societies in Tennessee Williams's The Glass Menagerie*, Afshan (2017) explained how Tennessee Williams focuses on the way his characters are affected by the stereotypes around them. Afshan (2017) posited that the author controls the theater at that moment to resemble the reality of the play's events and its characters.

Conversely, Akbar (2020) employed literature reviews involving the perusal of relevant books and online research to substantiate the subject matter. By adopting a structuralism approach, the writer concentrated on the innate components to assess the influence of the conflict experienced by the protagonist and outlined it in a descriptive manner. From the findings of this investigation, the writers identified the repercussions of the conflicts on the characters Amanda, Laura, and Tom to be profound, leading to increased feelings of depression, attempts to flee, and social isolation.

In the same context, Bhawar (2020) explored the concept of an illusion that arises when life is overshadowed by harsh realities, thus creating a misleading perception of happiness. It presents false hopes and a fictional world as a coping mechanism to escape the truth. *The Glass Menagerie* portrays the Wingfield family's aspirations, disappointments, challenges, and letdowns. The Wingfields strive to flee from real life into a realm of fantasies and dreams to temporarily disregard the pain stemming from the bitter truth.

Likewise, Tabatabaei and Sarab (2020) illustrated the psychological perceptions that happen within exploring the concept of educators of specific literary work. Their study also personalizes the elements of the characters of *The Glass Menagerie* and its author, Tennessee Williams. It also provides the learners with a way to analyze the play.

Romero (2021) focused on the 20th-century drama, aiming to track significant changes in the portrayal of characters and offering context for Williams's efforts to redefine important elements of a playwright's skill, such as the definition of a "character". The paper examines the longstanding critical perspectives on Amanda Wingfield and explores the prevalent opinions about this character. The analysis reveals a consistent tendency to overlook her role as a tool for the "memory work" that Tom undertakes. Consequently, the character is presented as a flexible entity that assists both the male protagonist and his author in comprehending the past and delving into how their families influenced their identities.

However, in "Analyzing Symbolism in Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*", Siswantara (2023) claimed to interpret the significance of each symbol in the play. The research employed an objective approach to analyze the data, focusing on the play's intrinsic elements. The conclusion drawn from the discussion is that the play's symbols are embedded within three elements, namely symbolism in the characters, where various objects are used to symbolize and accentuate the traits and specific ideas of the characters in the play. Also, Sharma (2023) presented how effectively Tennessee Williams utilizes "memory" to introduce new dramatic elements by recalling historical events, "media" to accurately portray people's situations and an authentic representation of society, and "modernity" through his characters that impacted their lives in the play. This study employs a descriptive research design with a qualitative analysis component to address three research questions centered on "memory, media, and modernity".

Additionally, Dugošija (2023) stated that Williams' characters are portrayed as individuals lacking the necessary attributes for success, making them outcasts of society who are trapped by their circumstances and ill-equipped to navigate the modern world. This forms the basis for another prominent theme in his plays – the struggle between the real world and the realm of illusion that his characters turn to in a futile effort to evade the harsh realities of life. The objective of this paper is to examine the conflict between reality and illusion in Williams' renowned work, *The Glass Menagerie*. Williams presents characters who, after failing to adapt, endeavor to escape the harsh reality and suffering by seeking refuge and comfort in their imaginary worlds.

In addition, Mogeja (2023) found that, prior to the Civil War, the southern region of America upheld a custom known as "Southern gentility", encompassing aristocratic values such as speech, attire, and etiquette towards visitors, with a particular emphasis on welcoming and praising wealthy and attractive gentleman callers. This concept of Southern gentility symbolized the traditional pride and honor of the old South, which is evident in Amanda's demeanor as a representative of Southern heritage. However, as time progressed, the shift in times brought about a change in values,

rendering the aristocratic values less applicable to the evolving way of life in the new South, ultimately fading away at the conclusion of the Civil War in 1865.

Krishna (2024) focused on the author Tennessee Williams and how he intentionally set his play *The Glass Menagerie* during the Great Depression following the financial collapse of 1929. This post-Gatsby era was filled with doubt about the myth of the American dream and the idea of never-ending economic prosperity.

Finally, the subject of women's liberation is further explored through this present article. Many criticisms and studies are applied to strengthen the perspective of the research. Furthermore, along with this detailed literature review, the present article aims to re-examine *The Glass Menagerie* through a feminist approach.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The researchers employed the theory of Feminism to study and analyze *The Glass Menagerie*, a play by the American playwright Tennessee Williams. The play is analyzed, compared, and explained through the common features of the play, and the theme is utilized to perform the analysis that links the female characters in the selected work. This paper will also illustrate the significant role of its prominent female characters.

In brief, the study will carry out a deep reading of the literary theory and its association with the selected play, along with an analysis of the relevant elements of the research. Such efforts will present the most important results based on the research arguments. The selected play reflects unique perspectives on the theme of women's liberation. The study explores how female characters deal with the controlling patriarchal society. The play, along with its characters, will also be analyzed and explained through the theme of the research. Moreover, this paper makes a considerable effort to study the resolution of each female character.

Additionally, this paper will also form a better understanding of women's liberation among the female characters of *The Glass Menagerie*. The method of this study lies in its being an extended effort to show obstacles who confronted female characters that struggle for independence and how they deal with these situations. Furthermore, the role of being for or against the actions of the play's female characters and their circumstances will also be evenly examined.

Finally, this study can be of benefit to the students of literature as well as to critics and writers regarding gender roles and social limitations.

### IV. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

This part of the paper discusses the roles of both female heroines, who are quite different from one another in the dramatic play *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. The two reflect how females struggled through the multiple challenges of society at the time in which the play takes place.

*The Glass Menagerie's* female characters are Amanda and her daughter Laura. Firstly, the central character, Amanda Wingfield, is a former southern belle who finds herself trapped in a life of poverty and domesticity. She longs for the freedom and excitement of her youth, but she cannot break free from the societal expectations that dictate her role as a mother. Laura, Amanda's daughter, is the victim of societal expectations. She is struggling with shyness and a physical disability that makes it difficult for her to find a husband and establish a traditional role for herself. "The characters Williams creates are genuine, and he does not destroy the realness of them by saving them. The success of the play stems from these portraits of lifelike characters" (Goyal, 2001, p.149). William's portrayal of Amanda and Laura highlights the limited options available to women in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the stifling effects of societal expectations on their lives.

#### A. Amanda

Amanda is an overprotective mother. Goyal (2001) introduces Amanda's character as a controlling figure over her son and daughter. She fights against the despair that engulfs her family as the Great Depression brings out their darker sides. Moreover, she is still holding on to her illusions of her youthful past. She has lived quite a stable life in the South, where Southern gentlemen come calling on her and her daughter. These gentlemen reflect the Victorian culture of how they are introduced to their life partners. She keeps mentioning the seventeen gentleman callers who proposed to her in the past. One of them is her absent husband, who chose to leave his family 16 years ago. His abandonment is Amanda's first shock that causes her to seek stability.

Amanda is attached to her children. During the events of the play, it is obvious that she is a strict mother to Tom and Laura. Most of the scene shows her rigid, angry personality, but few of them show her concerns about their circumstances. When the audience thinks about a mother's relationship with her family, they usually relate it to the natural, genuine interactions between a mother and her children. McNeil (2024) claims that the mother figure is precious; nevertheless, patriarchal societies devour mothers, creating a person who only needs her children's attention and one who does not care for herself at all. This is what might confuse the audience about how Amanda should act towards her familial responsibilities. The harsh actions she shows toward her son and daughter are only a small part of what she truly thinks about them and their future. After all, only an uneducated woman uses nagging and other strategies that only serve to bring her children to the boiling point.

Furthermore, McNeil (2024) sees Amanda Wingfield as an old woman who struggles to control her family and has difficulty providing and maintaining their daily needs. The fact that she cannot afford the basic health care for her daughter



also frustrates her and leads her to shout and scream over any event they face. Her relationship with Tom is described as toxic because she never listens to him, and she keeps fighting over his ambitions and his adventurous soul. Amanda's constant blame and harshness towards him make him unable to live or please his mother. "Amanda: You don't know things anywhere! You live in a dream; you manufacture illusions!" (Williams, 1945, p. 41). Due to her aggressive behavior towards him, like his father before him, he chooses to leave his mother and sister. Though Amanda is a dominant mother, she is also highly dependent on Tom; as a result, she does not let him leave her, though eventually, he succeeds in leaving both his angry mother and weak sister behind for good.

Her second child is the fragile Laura, who suffered from polio as a child and still suffers from its effects. Amanda treats her daughter's disability as if it does not exist when, in fact, she desperately needs medical attention. Instead, she focuses on how she looks in front of the planned visit of a supposed gentleman caller. Amanda also pushes her old-fashioned way of courting. She is not liberal in her mind or even educated enough to make her children independent. At the beginning of the drama, Amanda exercises control and harshness over her daughter. She acts angrily when she knows that her timid daughter skips typing classes. "Amanda: What are we going to do? What is going to become of us? What is the future?" (Williams, 1945, p. 6).

Amanda wants a better future for Laura. On the other hand, she also does not want her to be a liability to anyone, including her brother. Even though Laura acts kindly towards everyone throughout the play, her mother does not care and continues spewing her awful vitriol against her fragile daughter. "An unmarried sister who's crippled and has no job!" (Williams, 1945, p. 47). Her mean-spirited attitude towards her vulnerable daughter is not her being the responsible and good mother as much as it is her being the strict ruler over her kind daughter.

Moreover, throughout the play's scenes, the nearly always present mother who cannot break free from her past keeps on pushing and pushing her son and daughter to the point where they start making mistakes. Al-Ghoreibi (2020) posited that the only way Amanda can get through her present is to think and speak about the past. In addition, she intentionally compares her delusional past life with her current life. On the other hand, it is impossible to compare her bucolic life in the South with her current hard life in the city.

The use of language is essential for various literary works like prose, poetry, and plays, as it serves as a form of communication. To be successful, a play necessitates certain components, including characters. The researcher's objective is to analyze the politeness techniques employed by the main character Amanda Wingfield in the play *The Glass Menagerie*. Politeness strategies refer to the methods utilized to preserve the recipient's dignity and avoid potentially offensive actions. Sembiring et al. (2020) claimed that the use of hyperbole in conversation can have a significant impact. Amanda employs a strategy to appease her daughter by talking about the potential arrival of numerous gentleman callers. She sought to understand Laura's desire to have gentleman callers and exaggerated the likelihood of their arrival to comfort her.

As the second strategy, Amanda's use of exaggeration only serves to increase Laura's fear of being let down because she knows deep down that none of the gentleman callers will come. This leads to a strained atmosphere, with Laura feeling uneasy towards her mother and an increase in her fear of being let down. It also shows their awkward relationship.

Iamkrasin and Maneewattana (2024) postulate that Amanda is tough on her children and highly judgmental of them. This is a weapon that eventually does great harm to them. Her continued harsh treatment of Tom and Laura makes her lose her son and keep Laura in her unfortunate condition. Amanda insists on a perfect life for both of them; however, the hard times of the Great Depression do not help them change to a better situation.

Moreover, those hard times are forced upon Amanda. The family income is very little, only enough to sustain their daily needs, with nothing left over to enjoy the day. Kamalaveni and Venkataraman (2021) understand the struggle of Amanda. She is lonely because of her broken marriage, and that makes her expect a lot from her son and daughter. Moreover, she continues telling them about her imaginary romances in the past. They begin to feel stifled by her and cannot endure hearing her anymore, which makes Tom leave her.

To sum up, the distracted mother lives between past and present as she tries her hardest to maintain her life with her children after their father left them. She wants her joyful past to continue. Nonetheless, her present is dark and gloomy, with no stable finances. Although she is a weak-hearted woman, Amanda is a strong and controlling woman who confronts life alone. Finally, she can only feel liberated when she takes care of her children.

## B. Laura

The other main female character, the insecure Laura, lives in her little world, showing no courage to face her reality. Her inner world consists of glass-shaped animals that are as delicate as her. Goyal (2001) confirms Laura's is as fragile as her glass menagerie. She likes to keep her family members company and does not seek any type of independence during the play. In fact, the moment she goes out for a new experience, she immediately feels sick and weak. When Laura was a child, she contracted polio, and though she recovered, she still walked with a limp as a result. She also has been suffering from "pleurosis" since her school days, which makes her breathing difficult. These health issues dim her inner light, nurturing anxiety over her immediate environment. "She's terribly shy. She lives in a world of her own, and those things make her seem a little peculiar" (Williams, 1945, p. 24).

Amanda, her mother, always makes her feel uncomfortable with her constant needs. She sends her to the typing classes, but her fragile manner stops her from completing them. Laura has no power to defend herself from her mother's wrath, so she usually gives her mother a timid, short answer when asked questions. "LAURA: I've just been going out walking."

On the other hand, Amanda is tense as usual, and she does not believe her. "AMANDA: You did all that to deceive me, just for deception! Why? Why? Why? Why?" (Williams, 1945, p. 7). After a long negotiation, Amanda remains angry, and Laura is ashamed of her decision to drop out of the typing classes. Laura remains dependent upon her mother because she is not courageous enough to be independent.

Still, Laura has her old one-sided relationship with Jim O'Connor; she confronts him after a while in her family house. She looked up to him since school. She first mentioned him to her mother with no idea from her that he would be her brother's co-worker. When he arrives at their house, she acts nervously and faints. "LAURA: (Retreating stiff and trembling. Shakes hands.): How – how do you do?" (Williams, 1945, p. 29) The dashes are frequently repeated as long as Laura is speaking in the play's scenes. They illustrate how shy and hesitant she is when she talks, even with her mother. Goyal (2001) criticizes Laura's behavior, saying that she is too timid to speak up to Jim. She keeps reminding herself of her crippled leg which stops her from saying or experiencing anything else. Jim is highly confident in himself and a tad arrogant; he tries to encourage her to have a stronger personality. "I judge to be your principal trouble, as you gave up on an education all because of a little clump" (Williams, 1945, p. 41). He is always judging Laura's decisions with no intentions of helping or advising her about her issues. He also exploits her with dancing and cajolery. Nevertheless, he does share some happy moments with her that make her feel better. Goyal (2001) showed that Laura's one moment of happiness is when she dances with Jim. Unfortunately, Laura's best scene in the play is too short for her long, difficult journey in life.

This fragile soul confuses the reader in many aspects. The confusion she causes allows the judgment upon her to make her personality softer than her aggressive mother. Bakhsh (2024) indicated that there are numerous questions regarding Laura's condition. The examination of the consequences of instability and how it shapes a fresh sense of self is also closely examined. Over the past few years, the analysis of feminist and gender studies, along with their various subgroups, has been a major focus in literary criticism and social and cultural studies. These studies depict the changes in one's personality. However, Laura remains the same flat character in the play. Kamalaveni and Venkataraman (2021) also state Laura is a lonely character. She is incapable of coping with her surroundings. Her whole life is planned for her by her controlling mother. It makes her totally rely on her mother. Unfortunately, it does not lead her anywhere but to her small glass animals. Her loneliness does not let her be free; she is trapped in her ideas with no chance to change.

Furthermore, Laura's development is zero; she does not challenge herself throughout the whole play. Yamada (2020) elaborates more on the impediments that confront Laura. Each human being must face and interact with others. These interactions can be with family, friends, and colleagues and can somehow change one's personality or way of behaving. Nevertheless, they are necessary for building character. Although these stages are normal for everybody else, Laura does not change. She returns to the first point each time she interacts with anyone or anything around her.

In the end, the defenseless, pure-hearted Laura is an easy target for exploitation by her surroundings. Amanda acts as her shield from the social norms, although Laura herself does not try to expose herself to any new experiences. While her mother refuses the facts, Tom consistently reminds her of the reality of Laura's condition. Moreover, the person closest to Laura is her brother, Tom, though Jim begins to act kindly to her but then escapes their real moments together through his lies. Still, Laura remains dependent on her family with no way of escaping her situation and feeling truly liberated.

## V. CONCLUSION

In brief, this literary work is a 20<sup>th</sup>-century masterpiece. The female characters reflect the theme of women's liberation in a contrastive way. Amanda is alive in the present but living in the past, and thus, she fails in her marriage or at parenting. She is always stressed, never letting her children breathe or even speak their minds. The moment they express themselves, she suppresses their thoughts, feelings, and ambitions.

The second main female character is Amanda's daughter, Laura. She is a delusional person who lives in a closed world where her glass menagerie has become like her fragile life. Laura is struggling with multiple aspects. The first one is her medical condition which captures her with no power to articulate any effort to face the real world. The second condition is her mental one. Her shyness and introverted personality make her different from any other regular person. She seeks nothing in life. Since the concept of being free can also be considered within one's mental capacity, both female characters struggle with the life of the past with no intention of getting better in the present life (Al-Ghammaz, 2024).

In the play, Amanda and her daughter are prisoners of their own chosen reality, struggling their way through life. The great impact of Amanda's husband abandoning them has made the two female characters weak and out of control in their daily lives. Also, Niraula (2020) agrees with the fact that they are unfortunately being marginalized by their external force. It is extended more by the departure of Tom. He naively leaves them dependent upon each other, leaving them without a strong and rational source of safety from the unclear future.

Moreover, the two female characters have become dependent during the Great Depression, a time when all people led difficult lives. However, their Amanda's and Laura's circumstances are harsher. Amanda tries her best to enhance her daughter's life, but it is of no use with Laura's narrow-minded personality. It makes Laura a burden upon her family, and her shining moment is stolen from her, too. Laura and her mother could not escape in the end. They remain in the same place without care from either father or brother.

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# Preserving Meaning or Form: The Dilemma of Translating Blank Verse in *Hamlet* Into Indonesian

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**Abstract**—The research aims to analyze the structure of the lines of verse in "*Hamlet*", examines the translation techniques employed, and understands their impact. This study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach with case studies on translation products. It used purposive sampling to select documents, specifically the original verses from "*Hamlet*" and their Indonesian translations. It gathered insights from informants, including a literary expert, a translation expert, and raters. The research involved two types of data: linguistic data, which consists of the lines of verse in "*Hamlet*," and translation data, which included the translation techniques and the shifts observed in the translated text. Data collection methods included document analysis and focus group discussions, analyzed through an ethnographic model using domain, taxonomy, and component analysis to identify cultural themes. The findings show that "*Hamlet*'s" verse contains both regular lines with five metrical foot and irregular lines that deviate from this pattern. Seventeen translation techniques are identified: paraphrase, established equivalent, transposition, modulation, reduction, variation, explicitation, compensation, implication, pure borrowing, particularization, addition, generalization, discursive creation, adaptation, literal translation, and linguistic amplification. These techniques result in translation shifts at both micro and macro levels. The study underscores the complexities of translating literary works, especially in preserving the original poetic form and meaning. Future research could compare the translation of the same literary work into various target languages, offering insights into how different translators handle similar challenges across diverse linguistic and cultural contexts and the techniques they use to achieve equivalence.

**Index Terms**—translation, blank verse, irregular, shifting, *Hamlet*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literary works are inseparable from human life because they reflect social, cultural, political, emotional, and thought realities. Humans can express all thoughts and feelings about reality or life experiences through literary works. The outcomes of these thoughts and feelings can be poured into various works using beautiful language, such as short stories, novels, drama scripts, verses, prose, and poetry. As a result, reading literary works can be enjoyable.

One of the timeless literary works is William Shakespeare's classics. The main genres represented in the maestro's works are history, comedy, and tragedy. *Hamlet* is one of the tragic dramas, and it is a phenomenal work by William Shakespeare. This drama was written around 1599-1601. It tells the story of a Danish king who died mysteriously.

Shakespeare's drama scripts, especially *Hamlet*, are unique. Shakespeare delves deep into the emotional lives of his characters, exploring manipulation, doubt, sadness, feelings of revenge, and inner conflict. This emotional depth is expressed through the selection of beautiful language rich in symbols and displayed through monologues. The monologues vividly describe the turbulent human emotion, inviting the audience to empathize with the characters.

In addition, the most prominent uniqueness is the style of conversation between different characters. Dialogue between characters uses verse and prose. The verse is part of poetry. It is composed of meter and rhythmic language. Meanwhile, prose is ordinary speech that does not have rhythm or rhyme (Noor, 2009). In terms of writing conventions, verse and prose have different writing forms. The verse is written in lines (Fabb, 2009), and then the lines are grouped into stanzas. *Hamlet* has an iambic pentameter pattern (Barber, 2017). The number of lines in each stanza can vary. The

line does not follow a left-to-right writing direction on the page. Meanwhile, prose does not consist of stanzas and is written from the left edge of the paper to the right edge of the paper (Nurgiyantoro, 2012).

Verse and prose are used to describe the character's personality and their position in society. Characters with lower social status, such as servants, gravediggers, comedians, and guards, use prose when speaking. They use prose in everyday conversation. In addition, the use of prose also shows changes in emotion. On the other hand, Shakespeare uses verse to describe characters with high social status and essential positions, such as educated people and noble families. Besides showing high social status, the verse also shows a person's intelligence.

Numerous translations exist for Shakespeare's renowned drama *Hamlet*, including an Indonesian translation. Through translation, everyone can enjoy Shakespeare's works. However, translating *Hamlet* is challenging. Translators need to consider many aspects, such as literary and linguistic aspects and the culture of the target language, to properly achieve the literary and linguistic features.

Regarding translating literary works, *Hamlet* is fascinating to study. Shakespeare's works have a particular language style, which is the main attraction of translation. Translating texts for performances must pay attention to the fact that the text must have the same emotional content as the source language to be dialogued well. Therefore, the translator must pay attention to nonverbal, cultural, and technical issues during the performance. Examples are sung dialogues, intonation, pitch, and the loudness of the actors' voices. All of these are not immediately visible when reading the source text. Translators must be sensitive to the rhythm of speech patterns. Another thing that must be considered in translating drama is many hissing sounds, such as /s/, /sh/, or consonant sounds that are lined up so that sentences will be complex to pronounce (Bassnett, 1991; Zuber-Skerritt, 1988; Wellwarth, 1981).

Research has been conducted on translations of Shakespeare's plays that focus on the script, such as research on the translation of *Hamlet* in China, Hungary, and Saudi Arabia (Che, 2005; Khakipour & Amjad, 2019; Wong, 2016; Zuber-Skerritt, 2002). Those research studies focus on the differences in language and cultural characteristics of the target language (T.L.). When translating *Hamlet* into Mandarin, Arabic, and Hungarian, the translator considers cultural differences between the source and target languages. *Hamlet* in Mandarin is translated into 'huaju' or a form of modern Chinese drama almost the same as a theatre in general, containing a dialogue between characters. Conversely, China has a traditional drama, 'xiqu', dominated by singing, poetry, acting, and martial arts. The verses in the source language script are translated by borrowing classical Chinese poetry. The translation of the *Hamlet* text into Arabic is added with singing. It adapts to the culture of theatre performances in Arab society, inseparable from singing (Hanna, 2005).

In contrast to the above research, the researcher found a research gap. This research focuses on translating verses in the drama *Hamlet* by Shakespeare and its translation into Indonesian. In the text of *Hamlet*, many types of Verses are used by the characters. Shakespeare uses much blank verse in his works (Cheney, 2007; Stagg, 2021; Stagg, 2022). Therefore, the researcher only digs deeper into the line of blank verse. Why? There are several reasons why researchers investigate blank verse. First, researchers rarely study literary works in the form of verses. Second, verses have unique meter-related characteristics, making them difficult to translate. Third, verses show social identity. Finally, not all countries' cultures use verses because they are more familiar with poetry. In Indonesian culture, there is no equivalent form of blank verse. Indonesia only recognizes the form of poetry in general. Poetry and blank verse have different structures.

Each line of blank verse has a rhythm formed from the stress on each syllable. These lines have a pattern of syllable changes called 'meter,' and the unit of measurement is called 'foot.' In *Hamlet*, Blank verse has two types of lines. Barber and Rylance (2015) and Bayfield (2009) divide the variations in the types of lines in Shakespeare's blank verse into a) regular and b) irregular. The classification is based on the number of 'metrical foot'. *Regular lines* are lines that refer to iambic pentameter. Iambic pentameter means that each line has five 'foot', and each foot contains an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable. At the same time, irregular lines have less than or more than five 'metrical foot'. Therefore, irregular lines deviate from the rules of writing blank verse. In Indonesian culture, there is no such concept.

Blank Verse translation presents challenges, primarily due to cultural differences and poetic structures. Although translation is a bridge to transfer messages, shifts in meaning and style in translating verses may occur. Shifts or inconsistencies in meaning and style are standard in verse translation due to shifts in the translated verse's form and content. Translating blank verses from Indonesian presents challenges for translators. Translators must have difficulty because of the unusual use of the metrical foot in Indonesian culture as an essential element of blank verses.

On the other hand, translators must also maintain the rhythm and poetic nuances of the source text. Translators must be creative in maintaining a complete message while maintaining the language's beauty without sacrificing the original work's artistic essence. In line with Bassnett (1991), it is necessary to consider aspects of meaning and sentence structure from the source language text to be translated into the target language text. Based on the definition above, translation is no longer seen as replacing the source text with an equivalent text in the target text. However, it is also necessary to consider the source text's meaning and sentence structure as much as possible.

Translators need help with maintaining the form and meaning of blank verse. How do translators translate blank verse? Should they adhere to the form, potentially sacrificing the meaning, or alter it while conveying it? Can they successfully balance both? What theory should guide them? Literary theory or translation theory? According to literary theory, a change in form is acceptable if it preserves the meaning and emotion in the lines.

Meanwhile, the translator's task in translation theory is to transfer the content and form from S.T. to T.T. intact. Structural adjustments will result in a shift in language form, while semantic adjustments will cause a shift in meaning. Al-Hasnawi and Al-Zoubi (2001) added that a stylistic shift may occur because the rules of rhetorical devices and language rules are different between the two languages. Therefore, this study is of utmost importance as it can provide more precise guidance for translators in making decisions on maintaining a balance between the accuracy of form and the delivery of meaning in translated literary works, especially lines in blank verse. It delves into the cultural and literary gaps between English and Indonesian, offering a detailed analysis of how these differences impact the translation result. This includes studying how blank verse's rhythm and meter can be creatively managed in Indonesian, a language with different poetic structures.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

With the objectives to be achieved paradigmatically, this study used a qualitative research design. Qualitative research aims to understand and explain cultural phenomena that are unknown to people. Blaxter et al. (2006), Moelong (1989), and Strauss and Corbin (2003) said that qualitative research uses humans as research instruments to collect data. Using humans as instruments is based on the idea that humans can adapt to the environment and think abstractly to explore plural, holistic realities and form together with their environment (Santoso, 2021). The interconnectedness of all parts studied is crucial, as each part influences and is influenced by other parts. This complexity underscores the need to view the context as a whole. To understand this reality, researchers must see it holistically. Therefore, tables are applied in interpreting data to systematically and holistically represent the phenomenon (Santosa, 2021).

This research is descriptive because it describes the nature of the object being studied. The researcher described and interpreted the data to find the big concept of the phenomena found in this study. The descriptive qualitative research used in this study was intended to obtain and understand information about the types of lines in the verses in *Hamlet*, translation techniques, and their impact on the translation. This research focused on translation products, so the case study of the translated text became the main focus. This research was limited to studying the translation of verse in the drama text *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare. The research method proposed by Creswell (2007) used a case study method. Case studies allowed research to focus on some instances and provided individual linguistic generalizations and transferability to other research fields. In this study, the results of the case study in the research on the translation of lines in the verses of the drama text *Hamlet* could be used to illustrate how the use of techniques affects the translation of classical drama literature.

Therefore, the researcher chose William Shakespeare's classic drama *Hamlet* and its translation into Indonesian as the location for this research. The selection of this location was reviewed based on the frequency of the many versions of William Shakespeare's works, especially in the drama *Hamlet*. The different translation results interested the researcher in studying the classic text more deeply. In addition, the selection of this location was also due to the many debates that have not ended regarding the translation of literary works.

### B. Data and Data Sources

The data of this study include all lines in the verses in the text of *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare and its translation. This study has two types of data: linguistic data and translation data. Linguistic data is in the form of types of lines in the verse of the *Hamlet*. Meanwhile, translation data is in the form of translation techniques and translation shifts. This study has two data sources: documents and informants, which were selected based on specific criteria and the results of other related studies. The documents selected in this study were lines in the verse of the *Hamlet* drama text by William Shakespeare and its translation into Indonesian by Ifa and Nabila.

Other data sources were informants with expertise in translation and critics of translated literary works. Informants in this study were called experts and raters. Raters are experts who understand the theme being discussed. In addition, they are the right people to be involved in discussions in a forum group discussion (F.G.D.). The involvement of informants makes the data more valid and reliable. Translation informants have adequate competencies such as 1) mastering English and Indonesian well, 2) understanding the theory of translation and having expertise in the field of translation, 3) understanding English and Indonesian grammar well, 4) having a background in translation education, 5) having broad insight into language, literature, and culture, and 6) being willing to be involved in this study. Meanwhile, literary informants have adequate competencies in English and literature. In this case, informants discuss the types of line of verses in both the source and target languages. As the main instrument, the researcher also knows translation and literature. The data used as samples in this study were lines in the verses in *Hamlet*. To achieve research objectives, researchers must create specific criteria for determining samples to meet research objectives. This technique is also known as purposive sampling.

### C. Obtaining Data

This study used only two data collection methods to obtain data: content analysis or document analysis and focus group discussion. The document analysis steps in this study were as follows: a). Reading the *Hamlet* drama text. b). Finding and recording verses found in the *Hamlet* drama text. The second data collection method was focus group





This verse is categorized as blank and has an iambic pentameter rhythm. It is called a blank verse because the number of lines is free and does not rhyme. While the rhythm pattern is iambic, meaning the foot consists of unstressed and stressed syllables (˘ ' ). Not all foot must have an iambic rhythm, there is a possibility of other types of rhythm such as trochee or anapest. A line is said to have an iambic rhythm if most (3 out of 5 'foot') have an iambic rhythm. Pentameter means that there are five 'foot' with the most iambic patterns. Based on data analysis, six lines are categorized as regular lines because each line has five 'foot'. There are variations in rhythm, such as anapest and spondee. According to Barber (2017), anapest is a rhythm often used as a variation in iambic pentameter verses because its stress is almost similar to the iambic rhythm. The interesting thing is the number of syllables in a regular line; there are regular lines with ten syllables, and there are 11. Lines with ten syllables occur because all of their foot are iambic (examples no. 3,4,5,6) Meanwhile, for the explanation of examples 1 and 2, even though they have 5 foot, the number of syllables is 11, this is because there is an anapest rhythm in the line. The anapest rhythm consists of 3 beats or three syllables (˘ ˘ ' ), affecting the number of syllables in the line. In example 6, even though there is one spondee rhythm ( ' ' ), the line is still considered an iambic line because the iamb foot is more dominant than others.

On the other hand, an irregular line is a line that has several metrical foot of less than or more than 5. The number of syllables in an irregular line can be less than ten and more than 10. In this study, to make it easier to pronounce, if the number of foot is more than 5, it is called hypermetrical, while if the number of foot is less than 5, it is called lessmetrical. The following is an example of an irregular line in the verse in *Hamlet*.

### B. Translation Techniques

In translating verses in the *Hamlet* script, 17 translation techniques were found to be used by the translator. These techniques include established equivalent, paraphrase, variation, modulation, explicitation, implicitation, transposition, pure borrowing, compensation, discursive creation, reduction, generalization, addition, adaptation, and literal linguistic amplification. The author classified translation techniques using taxonomic analysis. There is often more than one translation technique in one line of verse. This happens because the research object, the *Hamlet* drama text, is of significant importance and relevance, as most of its texts are lines consisting of several words or phrases.

To translate irregular lines, translators are indicated to use 14 translation techniques: paraphrase, established equivalent, transposition, reduction, pure borrowing, explicitation, variation, modulation, compensation, discursive creation, implicitation, generalization, particularization, and addition. Based on the findings, translators often use paraphrasing and established equivalent techniques when translating regular and hypermetrical lines. Meanwhile, in regular lines, translators apply 17 translation techniques, including paraphrase, established equivalent, transposition, modulation, reduction, variation, explicitation, compensation, implicitation, pure borrowing, particularization, addition, generalization, discursive creation, adaptation, literal, linguistic amplification.

### C. The Impact of Translation Techniques

This section explains the impact of translation techniques in line of verses in the *Hamlet* drama text on translation shifts in the target language. The techniques that affect shifting are paraphrase, modulation, compensation, reduction, and transposition. In this study, two types of shifting were found, namely micro shifts and macro shifts. The results of data analysis show that all data experienced micro and macro shifts. Based on the findings, 206 data experienced a pattern of shifting verse forms. The form of verse that shifted was blank verse into prose. Micro, the lines in the verse in the source language also experienced shifts. The shift is in the form of a shift in lingual units. In the source language, the lines in the verse change into sentences in the target language.

Micro-shifting is a shift that occurs in small units. In this case, micro-shifting occurs when the lingual units of data in the source language and target language are different. In the source language, the lingual units are in the form of lines. However, some translation techniques cause these lines to change into sentences. These changes are divided into three types: up, down, and none. Micro=shifting-up occurs if the number of translated lines changes into sentences that exceed the number of lines.

Meanwhile, micro-shifting is categorized as down if the number of translated lines changes into sentences that are less than the number of lines. The translation results are classified as micro-shifting with the category none if the number of translated lines is the same as the number of translated sentences. Each type of line experiences a shift. This shift is caused by paraphrase, transposition, and compensation techniques.

| Source Text                                 | Types of Lines | Target Text                                                           | Shifting |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Thanks, dear my lord.                       | L              | <i>Terimakasih, saudaraku.</i>                                        | None     |
| O, my offense is rank, it smells to heaven; | H              | <i>Oh, dosaku begitu telah membusuk. Dan tercium sampai ke surga.</i> | Up       |
| A brother's murder.<br>Pray can I not,      | L              | <i>Aku tak bisa berdoa, meskipun aku sangat ingin.</i>                | Down     |

The example data above is a blank verse composed of several lines. The second line is a hypermetrical line that experiences micro-shifting. In the source language, the second line consists of only one line. The translator translated it using the paraphrase technique, causing the one line to change into two sentences. The number of sentences in the target language is greater than the number of lines, so the data is classified as upshifted.

The macro shift is a shift that occurs in macro units. In this study, the macro shift found was in the form of a text type in the source language that is different from the target language. In translation, the type of text is at the macro level. All data in the source language is verse. However, the translation results show a different type of text. The type of text is prose. If the verse consists of lines, contains rhythm, and is not written from left to right, then in the target language, the text is translated into prose, which consists of sentences and is written from left to right. Therefore, this shift is categorized as a macro shift. Of the 206 verse data, all experienced a macro shift. Two hundred six verses changed to prose. Here is an example.

#### Source Text

**Player Queen.** *O, confound the rest!  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.  
In second husband let me be accurst!  
None wed the second but who killed the first.*

#### Target Text

##### PEMERAN RATU

*Oh, aku tidak mungkin bersama orang lain! Menikah lagi adalah suatu bentuk pengkhianatan hatiku. Kutuklah aku jika sampai aku menikah lagi! Tak ada orang yang bisa melakukan pernikahan kedua kecuali telah membunuh cinta pertamanya.*

The example shows a significant difference between the source language and the target language in terms of form. In the source language, the text is composed of lines. Each line has a different type of line because the number of syllables in each line is also different. The first line is hypermetrical, but the second, third, and fourth lines are regular. Regular lines and irregular lines are translated using the paraphrase technique to transform the lines into sentences. The overall change causes the lines in the source language to be lost. The writing style in the source language is also different from the target language. This decision causes a shift in the form of verse in the source language to prose in the target language.

## IV. DISCUSSION

Variations in the types of line of verses appear when characters experience emotional changes. Emotions, whether happy, sad, or angry, cause differences in the number of lines and syllables. This irregularity reflects the writer's extraordinary creativity in expressing different feelings. It aims to arouse curiosity, puzzlement, and criticism. In this case, William Shakespeare is suspected of taking advantage of the writer's freedom by deviating from the rules. This deviation is used to produce a more meaningful verse. In addition, he also wants to convey his poetic experience by utilizing the power of emotion. This is used to awaken the subconscious world of his readers. The frequency of different metrical foot in each line indicates that are no longer identical to the rigidity of rhyme and meter but rather prioritize expression or outpouring of feelings.

The study's findings can be linked to the concept of translation techniques. Translation techniques are one category that allows for studying how translation works, affecting micro units (Molina & Albir, 2002). The translation techniques determine the equivalence between the source language and the translation of line of verses. Regular and irregular lines are translated using several diverse or even the same techniques. The techniques contribute both positively and negatively to translation.

The paraphrase technique can change the form of the original text. Therefore, the text in the source language does not look the same as the target language, but the meaning is maintained. Based on the analysis of this study, there are many functions of paraphrase techniques to translate this line of verse. First, it helps readers understand what they read, especially when a writer's Syntax and diction seem complicated. Second, it can direct the reader's attention to the text's tone and significant details, thereby clarifying the meaning of the text.

The highly established equivalent technique indicates that the translator can choose the proper equivalent in the target language. In this case, the translator can transfer certain expressions or feelings into the target language. Sometimes, the emotions between the source text (S.T.) and target text (T.T.) cannot be expressed simultaneously. The use of established equivalents indicates that the translator wants the message in Verse to be conveyed in the target language as closely as possible without changing the message of the source language, even though it sacrifices the form of the Verse. In line with the research of Hafisha (2018), Waluyo (2019), Sakulpimolrat (2019), and Rifanda (2019), this technique is the most frequently used and has a good impact on the translation results. The high use of established equivalents is possible if the term in the source text has equivalents in the target language.

Translation techniques affect the shift. The shift of blank line of verses in the target language can be seen through translation techniques. This study revealed that micro-shifting in the translation of line of verses can cause changes in

the type of text in the target language. This study's results align with the shift in the Rubiyat poem's dimensions, as Meisinur (2009) determined. Maisinur said that in the translation of poetry, there was a shift in the metrical foot from iambic pentameter in the BSu to without a metrical foot in the BSa. He called it transformation.

The shifting is caused by the differences in cultural systems in the source and target languages. In the target language, verses are never used in everyday life. Indonesian poetry does not have a metrical foot. The language system in Indonesian also does not recognize stress on certain syllables, so applying iambic metrical foot in Indonesian will be challenging. This opinion is strengthened by Siswanto (2008), who states that literary works in Indonesia run almost without recognizing prosody, such as the metrical foot. In addition, according to Pradopo (1990) and Damono (2008), the metrical foot is found in old literary poetry, an oral tradition such as *pantun* and *mantra*. Blank Verse is different from *pantun* and *mantra* in this case.

The shift on a micro-scale could cause a shift on a larger scale. The findings of this study prove this indication. The Verse changes into prose. As a result, the characteristics of the Verse in the source language shift into prose characteristics not found in the original text. This translator's decision supports the statements of Catford, 1965 Brislin, 1976 Bell, 1991 and Baker, 1992, who said that translation is a transfer of messages where the focus is the message from the source language and target language. Nida and Taber (1969) also stated that the form of poetry was sacrificed in translation. The translation of line of verses changes into sentences. This shift causes the loss of aesthetic values in the Verse, such as the number of lines, the number of metrical foot, and the form of the text. In addition, Verse becomes a poetic device that marks social class at that time. This causes the social class of the character to disappear. According to James (2002), a translator must consider presenting the social, economic, political, and cultural contexts and the connotative aspects in translating literary texts. A poetry translator, according to Hatim (2001, pp. 57-59), must carefully capture the linguistic elements (in the text) and the external linguistic elements (metatext) because, as Lila Ray added (Brislin, 1976), in essence, a translator of literary works must pay attention to language problems and all kinds of human experiences.

Hermans also considers literary translation to be a different type of translation. He believes "literary translation represents a distinctive type of translation because it deals with a distinctive type of text" (Hermans; cited in Kuhiwczak & Littau, 2007). France (2006) states that literary translation is "designed to be read as literature." Andre Lefevere downplays the importance of the linguistic aspect of translation and instead highlights the role of poetry's ideological factors and institutional control (Bassnet & Lefevere, 1998). William Frost (1969) stated that the main characteristic distinguishing poetic discourse from general discourse is that the form and content of poetry cannot be separated. The form and content of poetry are interrelated; therefore, the translator must be able to maintain both. The same thing was also expressed by Venuti (2004), who stated that poetry translators often cannot reproduce both form and content in their translations because, in general, form is usually sacrificed for content. However, the results of this study contradict Vahid's (2004) statement, which is that poetry can be translated by maintaining its elements because poetry translators can rebuild these elements. Meanwhile, this study is different from the opinion of Boase Beier and de Beaugrand in Connally (1991), who believe that poetry translation can be successful if both style and content are maintained.

The findings can be referenced when translating lines in blank Verse. Translating verses makes the translator face three choices: imitating the original style, adhering to the stylistic norms of the T.T., or compromising both the S.T. and T.T. norms by practising the translator's stylistic tendencies. In this case, the last two choices allow stylistic shifts. The relationship between form and content aligns with the view that form has its function. The translator must find the form and transfer it into the T.T. Therefore, in translating blank line of verses, the translator is faced with two dilemmatic demands, namely having to maintain the original work's message while maintaining the original form's beauty. Wiratno (2019) said that in the context of translation, the meaning of the source text and the target text can be transferred equally if both have the same text structure and grammatical features.

Furthermore, it is also stated that in translating a text, the type of target language text must be the same as the source text. Hatim (2001) stated that even though there is a shift in literary translation, the final result of the translation must meet two criteria, namely: 1) the source language text must be by the target language text to the appropriate degree to be called a "translation," and 2) the target language text must have a final result that is also worthy of being called a "poem" (poetic criterion). In this study, the translator could not achieve both criteria.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study successfully showed that prose is the form of translation from English to Indonesian for verse. The unit 'line' in verse is translated into the unit 'sentence' in prose in Indonesian. From the discussion results, it can be concluded that the translator needs to care about the form of the verse in the source language. The determination of the metrical foot pattern cannot be applied in the target language. In a verse in the source language, there are many lexical gaps, making it easier to transfer the meaning without changing the structure of the S.T. Therefore, the translator paraphrases. The translator chooses to rewrite the contents of the verse message in prose.

The shift from verse to prose has several weaknesses, such as loss of meaning, the destruction of communicative value se creation techniques causes micro shifts and changes in the form of lingual units from lines to sentences. The use of inappropriate translation techniques causes macro shifts. Therefore, the translator should comprehensively understand the text genre and its features when translating lines of verse. Translators must consider the goal when

determining the most appropriate translation technique. For example, if the primary goal is maintaining the original structure and fidelity to the source text, techniques such as literal translation and pure borrowing may be appropriate. However, if the goal is to produce a translation that is more accessible and understandable to readers in the target language, techniques such as paraphrase, modulation, and explicitation will be more effective.

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# Analyzing ChatGPT's Sustainability as a Language Learning Tool: Saudi EFL Learners' Perspectives, Problems and Pedagogical Prospects

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**Abstract**—The study assessed Saudi EFL students' perspectives on ChatGPT's incorporation into EFL classrooms for language acquisition and instruction, challenges and barriers, and pedagogical prospects. 212 respondents were randomly selected from different stages of the undergraduate programs at the College of Business Administration and College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, KSA. A questionnaire with self-designed and partially incorporated items from existing studies was utilised to collect the data from the respondents. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics. It was found that Saudi EFL learners held an immensely favorable perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT incorporation into EFL classrooms. It was also found that ChatGPT-powered classrooms posed certain challenges such as erroneous results, plagiarism and reproduction, professional integrity, listening and speaking, failure to think critically, and incapability to understand cultural and psychological contexts embedded in idioms and language expressions. However, it was also found that ChatGPT, despite its limitations, offers significant educational implications as it can satisfy learners' specific needs better than conventional language learning and teaching methods.

**Index Terms**—conventional language learning, cultural and psychological contexts, learners' specific needs, professional and academic integrity

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's technology-driven digital age, technology advances and automates every aspect of our lives. Given technological advancement, innovative tools are increasingly being used in different areas of education. In education, new technologies are being utilized to reinforce and improve our intellectual and academic skills (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018; Stošić, 2015). We can see how AI-powered language learning tools have significantly altered the English language learning and teaching landscape. Effective instructors use technology to help students succeed professionally while maximizing their potential. In multiple ways, artificial intelligence-enabled technology can promote innovation and advancement in educational institutions (Zhai, 2022). Technology enables access to instructional resources, customized instruction, and collaboration and interaction among teachers, students, and parents (Limna et al., 2023). As a result, effective teaching, student growth, and innovation constitute essentials for a successful education as today's tech-savvy learners weary of traditional modes of learning and teaching respond more enthusiastically to technology-enabled instructions. Technology advancements, including artificial intelligence, have led to significant developments in methods of instruction in the 21st century. Innovations in machine learning have resulted in advanced digital content-generating technologies, including generative artificial intelligence.

Innovative ways of learning and using the English language have been made possible by the integration of technology-enhanced language instruction (TELL) and artificial intelligence (AI) into the instruction of the language (Bin-Hady et al., 2023). In recent years, there has been growing interest in employing AI and the processing of natural

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languages to enhance language learning. OpenAI's AI language model, ChatGPT, is a common application of this new technology. ChatGPT may assist learners in enhancing their English language skills by offering human-like responses in conversation contexts. For example, ChatGPT not only enables users to develop and answer an array of questions, summarize documents, and communicate with it like peers but it also aids in the creation of tests, essay generation, and translating languages.

Using artificial intelligence (AI) tools including ChatGPT in EFL classes in Saudi Arabia represents a significant departure from conventional teaching approaches. The cultural and linguistic environment of Saudi Arabia, where English is taught and learned as a foreign language, could impact how students perceive AI-driven acquisition of languages. With its advanced technology-enabled infrastructure and tech-savvy young generation, Saudi Arabia offers wonderful opportunities and prospects for ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms to enhance the English language skills of Saudi EFL learners. Many studies have been conducted examining the learners' responses and attitudes toward utilising ChatGPT for language acquisition and teaching. For example, Alnaim et al. (2024) examined ChatGPT's remote learning efficacy for medical students. The cross-sectional study found that, despite multiple issues and gendered and education-based perception differences, ChatGPT is widely recognized as an efficient medical instruction tool. Faisal (2024) analyzed ChatGPT's potential advantages in higher education. It was found that ChatGPT integration promoted students' engagement, and language acquisition, besides empowering students and instructors, enhancing Saudi education and employment generation.

#### *A. Research Problem*

The level of awareness of information and social perceptions defines one's attitudes and motivation for learning and mastering a language. A certain understanding of Saudi EFL learners' perceptions of ChatGPT's positive and negative aspects, including its advantages (such as immediate feedback and limitless practice chances) and the potential drawbacks (such as the likelihood of biased or incorrect answers), challenges, and the pedagogical prospects is required. Therefore, this study seeks to understand their perspectives to create technologically sophisticated and pedagogically successful educational ChatGPT interventions in Saudi EFL classrooms.

#### *B. Research Purpose*

This study investigates Saudi EFL learners' perspectives, the problems the use of ChatGPT poses, and the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms for enhancing the English language skills of the language learners.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

ChatGPT, an indispensable teaching tool, corresponds to the theory of constructivism, social structuralism, cognitive burden, and data assessment theories. Bruner (1996) argued that active engagement with new material and building on knowledge helped learners construct their learning. As social constructivist learning requires collaboration and engagement (Vygotsky, 1980), ChatGPT's conversational interface encourages student collaboration, socialization, and participatory learning. ChatGPT promotes interaction with others by offering a conversational interface that enables learners to work together in a natural setting (Punar Özçelik & Yangın Ekşi, 2024). As ChatGPT offers students guidance and feedback based on their skills, deficiencies, and educational style, multiple studies have been conducted to investigate the pedagogical implications and opportunities of using ESL/EFL classrooms. For example, Limna et al. (2023) explored how the students and teachers viewed ChatGPT usage for instructional purposes. Purposive sampling was employed to interview 15 students and 10 instructors comprehensively. The data was analyzed qualitatively. It was found that both students and teachers held positive attitudes towards ChatGPT for instant feedback and answering questions with some concerns regarding accuracy and secrecy. The study could help teachers and administrators make use of ChatGPT in education. Mabuan (2024) analyzed the English language instructors' perspectives on ChatGPT's utilization in ELT. A blended approach study used focus group talks and a web-based survey to collect responses from 115 instructors of English in Metro Manila, Philippines. The result revealed that instructors' opinions on ChatGPT's potential usage in ELT (e.g., improving vocabulary, writing practice, language fluency, and communication) were highly positive. The study holds significance as it enhances AI in ELT and provides practical guidance for ChatGPT instructors. Fontenelle-Tereshchuk (2024) examined educators' perspectives on the difficult transition that takes place when recent high school graduates enter university education without learning academic writing requirements in 2024. It also investigates ways students adapt their writing skills to academic requirements across courses. The study contributes to educational discussions on AI in the classroom and how to help beginning writers. Phuong (2024) investigated English language learners' ChatGPT use, perspectives, and opinions. The data, using a questionnaire and interviews, was collected from 120 non-specialized English learners studying at the Korea University of Information and Communication Technology and the University of Da Nang. The students had a positive perception of ChatGPT as it helped students acquire ESP vocabulary, translate, check grammar, and paraphrase. The study suggests additional plagiarism-detecting technology research.

Yuan et al. (2024) investigated the impact of ChatGPT on academic writing, revealing both challenges and potential benefits. The present qualitative research utilized partially structured and unstructured interviews. Research revealed



that EFL students utilize ChatGPT for academic English writing simply because of its practicality along with its capacity to meet their requirements. The study also suggested that English learners should consider implementing this AI-powered tool, particularly for written assignments. Alsaedi (2024) examined ChatGPT's beneficial effects and constraints in EFL/ESL language. The data was collected from Science Direct, Web of Science, and ERIC databases from November 2022 to January 2024. The PRISMA flowchart was used to identify the 15 most relevant articles from 182 publications using exact keywords. It was found that ChatGPT despite potential advantages posed serious challenges such as decreased motivation, learning loss, academic integrity, and issues of originality. The study holds implications for addressing the challenges and effective integration of ChatGPT into ESL/EFL classrooms. Teng (2024) examined the effect of ChatGPT on English writing through an in-depth examination of the 20 pertinent articles. PRISMA standards were employed to determine the inclusion and exclusion of references. It was found that the integration of AI into EFL classrooms dramatically impacted EFL students' writing skills. It was also found that ChatGPT offered both advantages and negatives for EFL writing. The study advocates a community of practice and an integrated strategy to incorporating AI tools including ChatGPT into instructional resources. Meniado (2023) examined how ChatGPT affected English language instruction and assessment. PRISMA-guided rapid literature review found that ChatGPT provided meaning-focused inputs, scaffoldings, feedback on language output accuracy, and extensive language practice to support and improve English language learning. However, the study revealed issues with intellectual dishonesty, copied information, incorrect responses, competency decline, and general responses.

Rasul et al. (2023) explored both the positive and negative aspects of ChatGPT, a framework for innovative AI in higher learning, using the constructivist theory of learning. It was found that ChatGPT offered adaptive learning, automated services, creative assessment, and personalized feedback while also highlighting certain challenges such as bias, misbehavior, erroneous information, and inadequate assessment. The study suggests a fine balance for using it as a supplement tool for enhancing English skills. Orrù et al. (2023) tested ChatGPT's skills in problem-solving making use of two sets of linguistic understanding questions and human respondents' performance levels. ChatGPT addressed 30 practice and transfer problems scoring. ChatGPT scores were assigned as "0" for incorrect answers and "1" for correct answers. The findings demonstrated that ChatGPT did fairly well on each set of problems, approximating the mean success rate of human subjects. The study suggested that further research to fully understand AI's benefits and drawbacks particularly when it involves addressing verbal problems. Kayali et al. (2023) examined university students' ChatGPT experiences in online classes. The sample comprised 84 Turkish state university students pursuing an associate degree. A multi-method approach was chosen. While the semi-structured interview form obtained qualitative data, the Chatbot Usability Scale collected quantitative data which were analyzed utilizing qualitative and content analysis. The findings revealed that ChatGPT provided a simple UI and timely, meaningful responses. Grassini (2023) examined the positive and negative implications of using sophisticated models of artificial intelligence for application in educational settings. It builds on earlier studies and helps explain how these advanced technologies change the standards of education in today's revolutionized educational settings. The study asserts how some educators welcomed its advantageous effect on education, while others cautioned that it might undermine analytical abilities and promote dishonesty. Baidoo-Anu and Ansah (2023) synthesized current research to investigate ChatGPT's practical advantages and disadvantages for teaching and learning. ChatGPT's educational advantages were investigated utilizing an exploratory method. It was found that ChatGPT offered personalized, informal assessment notifications, interactive learning, and feedback for teaching and learning. The study implies that policymakers, scholars, instructors, and technology professionals could improve education and student learning via generative AI. Adiguzel (2023) discussed how AI can be successfully incorporated into education to benefit both educators and learners while promoting ethical use. The study, by carrying out an in-depth overview, examined AI technology, its educational applications, and its problems. The findings revealed that chatbots and algorithms simulated human conversation and produced human language-based writing. It was also found that ChatGPT offered benefits with many ethical and practical challenges. Islam and Islam (2023) analyzed ChatGPT's academic promise and disadvantages. Data were gathered from internet sources and analyzed using the noticing-collecting-thinking approach. The findings revealed that ChatGPT provided both challenges and opportunities for social, education, research, and personal development skills.

#### Research Questions

1. How do Saudi EFL students perceive ChatGPT in EFL classrooms?
2. What are the problems with ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms?
3. What are the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integrations?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative approach to understand the perspectives of Saudi learners, obstacles, and educational opportunities of ChatGPT incorporation in EFL classrooms. Creswell and Creswell (2017) recommend utilizing a quantitative approach when evaluating data comprising statistics and numbers.

#### B. Participants' Description



The study encompasses undergraduate learners from the College of Science & Humanities and College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, KSA. They are in various stages of their undergraduate program. They have been studying English as one of the compulsory subjects in their school education. The study participants study English as a foreign language as they are native learners of the Arabic language. A simple random selection process was used to choose 212 students for the study.

TABLE 1  
DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

| Variables                    | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>Gender</b>                |           |            |
| Male                         | 120       | 56.6%      |
| Female                       | 89        | 42%        |
| Others                       | 3         | 1.4 %      |
| <b>Level/Year of Study</b>   |           |            |
| 6th to 8 <sup>th</sup> Level | 19        | 19.9%      |
| 4th to 5th Level             | 24        | 11.3%      |
| 1st to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Level | 169       | 79.7%      |
| <b>Parents' education</b>    |           |            |
| Postgraduate+                | 63        | 29.7%      |
| Intermediate +               | 128       | 60.4%      |
| Middle school+               | 14        | 6.6%       |
| No education                 | 7         | 3.3%       |

### C. Data Collection Tools

Before developing the questionnaire, earlier studies were thoroughly examined. As a result, a questionnaire was prepared. While certain elements/items were self-developed, others were taken from the existing studies (Ajilouni et al., 2023; Al-khresheh, 2024). The first section of the questionnaire comprising six questions deals with respondents' demographic profile. In the second section of the questionnaire, the first nine items examine Saudi EFL learners' perspectives on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The next 5 items assess the problems and challenges, and the last 5 items deal with the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT in Saudi EFL classrooms. The respondents were requested to rate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree).

### D. Validity

Considering the low English competency of the study participants, the questionnaire items were provided both in Arabic and English. The translation has been verified by two experts fluent in Arabic and English. Confirming the questionnaire and its elements was done through a pilot study. The questionnaire finally included ideas and professional opinions.

### E. Method for Data Collection

The data was collected from the study participants using a questionnaire. The link to the questionnaire was sent to both the course instructors and the learners. The respondents were supplied with the Arabic translation along with the English content to facilitate a better expression of their opinions. They were asked to carefully study the instructions for each section. The respondents felt confident in communicating their choices as they had the assurance that their responses were to remain strictly private and used for research and education.

### F. Data Interpretation and Analysis

After we received adequate responses, we moved the data from a Google Form into an Excel spreadsheet. After assigning numeric codes to the responses (5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral, 2= disagree, and 1= strongly disagree), the data was transferred to SPSS. Given that the questionnaire solely contained closed-ended questions, the collected data was carefully organized and examined using qualitative techniques. The most recent version of SPSS was used to conduct statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the means of the data, frequency, and standard deviation. The researchers employed one-way ANOVA to identify differences among the participants based on differences in their demographic profiles. The following criteria were established for understanding and categorizing the degree/level of perceptions/perspectives.

TABLE 2  
THE SCALE/CRITERIA ASSUMED FOR MEASURING THE DEGREE/LEVEL OF PERSPECTIVE

| Mean Square | Level    |
|-------------|----------|
| 3.1 – 4.50  | High     |
| 1.51 – 3.00 | Moderate |
| 1.00 – 1.50 | Low      |

## IV. RESULT AND FINDINGS

TABLE 3  
SAUDI LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES ON CHATGPT'S EFFICACY, PROBLEMS, AND PEDAGOGICAL PROSPECTS

| Questions/items                                                                  | Overall means |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Representing learners' perspective on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms | 3.83          |
| 2. Representing the problems with ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms          | 3.62          |
| 3. Representing pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms | 3.75          |

Table 3 revealed that Saudi students held favorable perspectives on the efficacy of ChatGPT integration in EFL classrooms. It was also found that ChatGPT incorporation posed certain challenges and problems such as failure to comprehend the social context of idioms, human emotions, articulation and listening, and hindering problem-solving and critical thought skills. The result also found that Saudi Arabia's advanced technological and digital infrastructure coupled with tech-savvy young generations offered high pedagogical prospects for ChatGPT incorporation into Saudi EFL classrooms. Thus, a powered classroom can assist students meet their individual needs, help them overcome their problems and obstacles, can transform them into independent learners, and assist them achieve their learning goals more efficiently and effectively.

TABLE 4  
REPRESENTING SAUDI LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVE ON CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA         | A         | N         | D         | SD      | Mean | Level    |
|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|------|----------|
| 7         | 83(39.12%) | 82(38.7%) | 38(17.9%) | 6(2.8%)   | 3(1.4%) | 4.11 | High     |
| 8         | 28(13.2%)  | 77(36.3%) | 75(35.4%) | 25(11.8%) | 7(3.3%) | 3.44 | Moderate |
| 9         | 51(24.1%)  | 65(30.7%) | 69(32.5%) | 22(10.4%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.63 | High     |
| 10        | 71(33.5%)  | 97(45.8%) | 34(16%)   | 7(3.3%)   | 3(1.4%) | 4.06 | High     |
| 11        | 51(24.1%)  | 80(37.7%) | 55(25.9%) | 23(10.8%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.72 | High     |
| 12        | 54(25.5%)  | 94(44.3%) | 50(23.6%) | 9(4.2%)   | 5(2.4%) | 3.86 | High     |
| 13        | 46(21.7%)  | 92(43.4%) | 59(27.8%) | 12(5.7%)  | 3(1.4%) | 3.78 | High     |
| 14        | 56(26.4%)  | 88(41.5%) | 52(24.5%) | 11(5.2%)  | 5(2.4%) | 3.84 | High     |
| 15        | 62(29.2%)  | 91(38.2%) | 60(28.3%) | 6(2.8%)   | 3(1.4%) | 4.09 | High     |

Table 4 shows the results of Saudi EFL students' perspectives on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important tool for language acquisition and instruction. The average mean for the items/questions included in the table is 3.83. Even the individual items except item no 8 are classed as high. In item no 7, 77.82% (SA 39.12% & A 38.7) said that they felt comfortable utilizing ChatGPT for learning purposes. While 17.9 stayed neutral, 2.8% disliked it and 1.4%) strongly opposed the message. The mean score is 4.11, which is thought of as high. In item no. 8, 49.5 (SA 13.2% & A 36.3%) stated that ChatGPT worried them due to potential erroneous outcomes. 35.4% were neutral, 11.8% differed, and 3.3% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean score is 3.44, which is thought of as high. This statement shows that there are many students who have certain reservations regarding ChatGPT efficacy as an important tool of learning. Concerning item no. 9, 54.8% (SA 24.1% & A 30.7%) of respondents claimed that they enjoyed employing ChatGPT throughout the learning process. While 32.5 % remained neutral, 10.4% differed, and 2.4% strongly rejected the opinion. The mean score is 3.63, which is thought of as high. In the next item, 10, 79.3% (SA 33.5% & A 45.8%) respondents said that ChatGPT simplified the learning process. 16% maintained neutrality, 3.3% disagreed, and 1.4% strongly disregarded the opinion. The mean score is 4.06, which is thought of as high. Concerning item 11, 61.8 % (SA 24.1% & A 37.7%) of respondents stated that ChatGPT strengthened a person's academic confidence. While 25.9% were neutral, 10.8% differed, and 1.4% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean score is 3.72, which is thought of as high. Concerning item no 12, 69.8% (SA 25.5% & A 44.3%) of the participants said that ChatGPT addressed students' specific requirements for learning. 23.6% chose neutrality, 4.2% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed a strong rejection. The mean score is 3.86 which is classified as high. Concerning item no. 13, 65.1% (SA 21.7% & A 43.4%) of the learners agreed that they would prefer using ChatGPT to achieve their learning objectives. While 27.8% were neutral, 5.7% differed, and 1.4% completely rejected the opinion. The mean score is 3.78, which is thought of as high. In item no. 14, 67.9% (SA 26.4% & 41.5%) of the respondents said that they would utilize ChatGPT to summarize and analyze educational material. 24.5% expressed neutrality, 5.2% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.84 which is classed as high. In item no. 15, 67.4 % (SA 29.2% & A 38.2%) of the respondents said that they would inform others about ChatGPT's learning benefits. While 28.3% stayed neutral, 2.8% differed, and 1.4% completely disregarded the opinion. The mean score is 4.09, which is thought of as high. The overall mean for all items under this category is 3.83 which shows that students rated it highly suggesting that they held highly positive perspectives on ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. This analysis addressed the first research question of the study.

TABLE 5  
REPRESENTING PROBLEMS OF CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA        | A         | N         | D         | SD      | Mean | Level    |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|------|----------|
| 16        | 29(13.7%) | 64(30.2%) | 94(44.3%) | 23(10.8%) | 2(0.9%) | 3.44 | Moderate |
| 17        | 41(19.3%) | 77(36.3%) | 83(39.2%) | 8(3.8%)   | 3(1.4%) | 3.28 | Moderate |
| 18        | 36(17%)   | 94(45.3%) | 70(33%)   | 8(3.8%)   | 2(0.9%) | 3.69 | High     |
| 19        | 58(27.4%) | 84(39.6%) | 52(24.5%) | 17(8%)    | 1(0.5%) | 3.85 | High     |
| 20        | 76(35.8%) | 60(28.3%) | 54(25.5%) | 15(7.1%)  | 7(3.3%) | 3.86 | High     |

Table 5 shows the problems and difficulties of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. In item 16 which is the first item of this category, 43.9% (SA 13.7% & A 30.2%) of the respondents said that ChatGPT could capture the cultural context behind certain idioms or phrases. 44.3% stayed neutral, 10.8 disagreed, and 0.9% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.44 which is moderately rated. There are many students who have certain reservations regarding ChatGPT's inability to comprehend the cultural contexts embedded in words/ phrases. Similarly, a large number of the participants also expressed neutrality which revealed that a large number of students are not familiar with this aspect of ChatGPT. In the next item no. 17, 55.6 % (SA 19.3% & 36%) of the respondents agreed that articulation and listening were major challenges to ChatGPT's integration into EFL classrooms. While 39.2% stayed neutral, 3.8% disagreed, and 1.4% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.28 which is again moderately rated. Regarding item no. 18, 62.3% (SA 17% & A 45.3%) of the respondents agreed that aligning ChatGPT interactions with curricular benchmarks posed a serious challenge. 33% did not express their opinion, 3.8% differed, and 0.9% expressed rejection of the statement. The mean is 3.69 which is classed high. In the next item no. 19, 67% (SA 27.4% & 39.6%) of the candidates agreed that ChatGPT could not imitate human emotion, culture, or compassion. While 24.5% stayed neutral, 8% differed, and 0.5% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.85 which is categorized as high. In item no. 20, which is the last item of this category, 64.1 % (SA 35.8% & A 28.3%) of the statements concurred that over-reliance on ChatGPT for answers could hinder students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. 25.5 chose neutrality, 7.1 disagreed, and 3.3% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.86 which is categorized as high. The highly rated statements in the last three statements indicate that students are familiar with ChatGPT's limitations as a tool of learning and instruction. The average score for all items in this group is 3.62, indicating that students strongly appreciated it and perceived ChatGPT integration in EFL instruction positively. This analysis addressed the study's second research question.

TABLE 6  
REPRESENTING PEDAGOGICAL PROSPECTS OF CHATGPT INTEGRATION INTO EFL CLASSROOMS

| Questions | SA        | A         | N         | D        | SD      | Mean | Level |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|------|-------|
| 21        | 55(29.9%) | 71(33.5%) | 75(35.4%) | 9(4.2%)  | 2(0.9%) | 3.79 | High  |
| 22        | 39(18.4%) | 74(34.9%) | 85(40.1%) | 10(4.7%) | 4(1.9%) | 3.63 | High  |
| 23        | 44(20.8%) | 83(39.2%) | 72(34%)   | 10(4.7%) | 3(1.4%) | 3.73 | High  |
| 24        | 49(23.1%) | 91(42.9%) | 62(29.2%) | 4(1.9%)  | 6(2.8%) | 3.81 | High  |
| 25        | 59(27.8%) | 83(39.2%) | 51(24.1%) | 14(6.6%) | 5(2.4%) | 3.83 | High  |

Table 6 represents the pedagogical prospects of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The highly rated items in this category demonstrate that ChatGPT offered great pedagogical implications. In item no. 21 which is the first item of this category, 63.4 % (SA 29.9% & A 33.5%) of the respondents accepted that ChatGPT had the potential to revolutionize the digital transformation of English language teaching. 35.4% stayed neutral, 4.2 differed, and 0.9 strongly rejected the statement. The statement is highly rated. In the next item no. 22, 52.9% (SA 18.4% & A 34.9%) of the participants stated ChatGPT students studied at their level and with culturally relevant material. While 40.1% were neutral, 4.7% differed, and 1.9% strongly opposed the opinion. The mean is 3.63 which is classed as high. The high level of students staying neutral shows that students had a low level of familiarity with this aspect/usage of ChatGPT. Regarding item no 23, 60% (SA 20.8% & A 39.8%) of the respondents said that the adaptable nature of ChatGPT engaged students and improved language retention and application. 34% stayed neutral, 4.7% disagreed, and 1.4% expressed strong disapproval of the statement. The mean is 3.73 which suggests that learners highly rated it. In the next item no. 24, 66 % (SA 23.1% & A 42.9%) of the respondents concurred that ChatGPT could create personalized learning resources and offered immediate feedback. While 29.2% were neutral, 1.9% differed, and 2.8% strongly opposed the statement. The mean is 3.81 which is categorized as high. In the last item of this category, 67% (SA 27.8% & A 39.2%) of the respondents agreed that ChatGPT increased classroom confidence and engagement, increasing individual and group interactions. While 24.1% stayed neutral, 6.6% differed, and 2.4% strongly rejected the opinion. The category mean is 3.83, indicating that students highly rated it and had favorable opinions regarding ChatGPT's pedagogical prospects. This analysis answered the study's third research question.

## V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The study was conducted to understand the perspectives of Saudi EFL students on the efficacy of ChatGPT in EFL classrooms, the challenges and difficulties, and the pedagogical prospects for both language acquisition and instruction. The highly rated responses revealed that Saudi EFL respondents had a highly positive perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important AI-powered tool for language learning and teaching. This finding is consistent with multiple studies (Kiryakova & Angelova, 2023; Limna et al., 2023; Mabuan, 2024; Phuong, 2024; Rasul et al., 2023; Yilmaz et al., 2023; Yuan et al., 2024) as all of them found positive perspectives among the language learners regarding ChatGPT as a tool of learning. However, these studies also raised certain concerns regarding the ChatGPT's efficacy and advised to use it as an augmented tool not as a substitute for a human language instructor. The study also investigated the difficulties and challenges of ChatGPT as a tool of both language acquisition and instruction. It was found that ChatGPT integration posed certain serious challenges and difficulties such as erroneous outcomes, dishonesty and plagiarism, academic integrity, articulation and listening, impairing critical ability, and its failure to imbibe cultural and emotional connotations embedded in words. This finding aligns with multiple studies (Alsaedi, 2024; Harunasari, 2023; Irzawati et al., 2024; Kayali et al., 2023; Limna et al., 2023; Meniado, 2023; Sok & Heng, 2023; Teng, 2024). All these studies underscored multiple challenges of ChatGPT integration into EFL classrooms. The study also revealed that ChatGPT-powered acquisition and instructions offered great prospects for technology and AI-powered classrooms and today's tech-savvy young generation. This finding is consistent with multiple previous studies (Adiguzel et al., 2023; Ali et al., 2023; Teng, 2024). These studies emphasized that ChatGPT offered great scope for both language acquisition and instruction. However, all suggest that it can be used as an additional tool that frees the learners from many restrictions in conventional learning. This is no substitute for human teachers as its uncontrolled and unsupervised usage entails many unpredictable challenges, particularly for new language learners.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The study examined the perspectives of Saudi EFL students on the efficacy of ChatGPT incorporation for both language acquisition and instruction, the problems and challenges its integration poses, and the pedagogical prospects it offers. The findings revealed that Saudi learners held a highly positive perspective on the efficacy of ChatGPT as an important tool of learning and teaching. It also found that ChatGPT incorporation posed serious challenges such as erroneous results intellectual dishonesty, poor listening and speaking skills, inability to think critically, and failure to understand the cultural and psychological implications of words. The study also found that ChatGPT, despite the limitation involved, offered great pedagogical implications as it is more capable of fulfilling the individual and specific requirements of learners which are missing in conventional methods of language learning and teaching.

### Implications and Suggestions

This study on ChatGPT's efficiency as a language learning and teaching tool, Saudi EFL students' challenges, and ChatGPT's instructional role in EFL classrooms offers instructors and students multiple pedagogical and educational opportunities. More individuals and Arab regions could be examined to establish reliability and legitimacy of the study.

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# Exploring the Strategies of Domestication and Foreignization in the Translation of Socio-Cultural Aspects in Mosteghanemi's Novel *Chaos of the Senses*

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**Abstract**—Translating literary text under any genre often presents unique challenges for translators, as literature is rich with socio-cultural aspects. This difficulty arises from the need to communicate not only the literal meaning of words but also the cultural significance inherent in the original text. Culture significantly influences the formation of both the original and translated texts, as language is considered a reflection of society and derived from culture. When dealing with the socio-cultural aspects in *Chaos of the Senses*, written by the Algerian writer Ahlam Mosteghanemi, with its two translations, the socio-cultural aspects require a careful balancing act between the fidelity to the original text and the accessibility for the new readers. In this context, following L. Venuti's (2008) strategies of domestication and foreignization, the present study aims to explore these strategies in the translation of the socio-cultural aspects in the novel by comparing the original text with its translations. The study also examines whether the translators' background influences their decisions. It aims to create a clear vision of the Arabic and English versions. The findings indicate that, with some variation, both translators employ domestication and foreignization strategies, with a greater focus on foreignization. The translators attempt as much as they can to preserve the cultural nuances in the translation versions.

**Index Terms**—domestication and foreignization strategies, socio-cultural aspects, *Chaos of the Senses*

## I. INTRODUCTION

A crucial aspect of human communication is the interplay between language, culture, and translation, as language is intricately connected to culture and serves as both a component of culture and a means of communication. Scholars often regard culture as a complex and contentious notion. Culture refers to the set of conventions, beliefs, values, and practices that establish the distinctive way of life within a society. Additionally, language, physical objects, customs, and shared emotional and mental frameworks are all components of culture (McQuilkin, 1980). Translation, on the other hand, is an intricate and astonishing process that requires making several decisions to reduce the risk of committing errors. Among the main challenges faced by the translator is the difficulty of translating socio-cultural aspects. Nida (1964) contends that cultural disparities cause more complications for the translator than linguistic structural variations.

In recent decades, scholars and theorists have observed the rise of culture as an influential area in translation studies, showing interest in studying culture and its effect on translation. Munday (2022) asserts that theorists and their proponents have shifted their orientations from the linguistic-oriented approach, which regards translation as a process of transferring textual features at different linguistic levels, towards a cultural-oriented approach that considers translation a product and focuses on how culture influences and shapes translation. Pioneering figures in this domain, Bassnett and Lefevere (1990), in their contribution to *Translation, History, and Culture*, extend their focus beyond language to examine the interplay between language and culture. They introduce the notion of 'cultural turn' in translation studies, viewing translation as a cultural act rather than just a textual one; in other words, translation involves transmitting both the linguistic and sociocultural settings of the text from one language to another (Wendland, 2012). Regardless of the orientation, whether source-oriented or target-oriented, translators should be mindful of cultural nuances during translation. However, such a process may inhibit the translator in their task due to ideological, cultural, and social factors that may, to a certain degree, come into play (Yousef, 2012). The translator's task is made more challenging by all of these considerations, as they must do it faithfully without altering the meaning of the original text. Overall, a cultural-oriented approach in translation studies perceives translation as an organized process of transformation. According to this approach, translation is both an intercultural and an inter-linguistic endeavour.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *The Translation of Chaos of The Senses*

Ahlam Mosteghanemi, a creative poet and writer from Algeria, authored her Arabic novel *Chaos of the Senses* in (1997). Among her Arab prizes was the "Najib Mahfouz" medal for literature, which she received in (1998). *Chaos of The Senses* "Fawda Al-Hawas" is the title of the second narrative of her trilogy. It is a powerful story of love, identity, and independence. It was first translated by Baria Ahmer (2004), published by the American University in Cairo, and later by Nancy Roberts (2015), published by Bloomsbury Publishing (Cherif, 2016).

### B. *Domestication and Foreignization Strategies*

In his book *Invisibility of The Translator*, the American translation scholar Lawrence Venuti (2008) outlines two fundamental translation strategies: domestication and foreignization. These traditions originated with Schleiermacher, a German translation theorist, who first presented two approaches to translation—bringing the reader closer to the text or bringing the author closer to the reader—without using those exact terms. These strategies describe the ability of the translator to reconstruct the text within the textual environment of the target culture and assist translators with culture and language considerations. Domestication aims to make the original text more approachable to target language readers by reducing its foreignness. It seeks to familiarize the target culture with the unusual expressions used in the original text to make the translated text more readable and accessible to the target readers by adapting the text to their cultural and linguistic norms. Foreignization strategy, on the other hand, preserves the exoticism of the source language and culture. Its goal is to maintain all foreign components of the original text, prioritizing them above the cultural values of the target language, therefore reflecting the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text. Accordingly, domestication is a target culture-oriented strategy, while foreignization is a source culture-oriented strategy. Moreover, Venuti emphasizes the role of the translator as an agent who should be aware of translating the source text and its culture without distortion or violence. To preserve the essence of the source language text, he advocates for a foreignization strategy, highlighting that the translator ought to value the source content and avoid domesticating its otherness. He illustrates the translator's role using the concepts of visibility and invisibility. An invisible translator is one who, by emphasizing naturalness and fluency in the target language, makes their work so smooth and transparent that it reads as if the original author wrote it in the target language. Domestication is commonly associated with this approach. In contrast, a translator is visible when their presence is noticeable, typically by retaining the foreign elements and unique cultural markers of the source text. This is often linked to foreignization, where the translator aims to maintain the foreignness of the text intact by conveying cultural differences rather than smoothing them out.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The data in the present research consists of selected texts from Mosteghanemi's novel *Chaos of the Senses* in Arabic, which are compared with two translations. The first translation was carried out by B. Ahmer, a Lebanese journalist, translator, and author. The second translation was done by N. Roberts, an American translator of Arabic literature. The study is qualitative and comparative in nature, aiming to compare the original texts with their two translations to examine the translation of socio-cultural aspects of the selected texts according to the strategies of domestication and foreignization and to test the visibility of the translators in their translations. Moreover, the study aims to assess whether the translators' backgrounds—Arabic and English—affect their decisions and to what extent, given that one translator is originally Arab, while the other is English. This will provide a detailed analysis of the socio-cultural aspects of the novel based on Venuti's translation strategies

## IV. DATA ANALYSIS

### *Example (1): Original Text*

"و هو ما جعل بعض الساعرين يقترب أن يضاف الى العلم الجزائري شعار (الله غالب) أي لا نستطيع شيئا من أجلكم...." ص 133

### *Translation (1)*

"Causing some skeptics to suggest a slogan be added to the Algerian flag: 'God is the victor', meaning we certainly couldn't do anything for you". (p. 76)

### *Translation (2)*

"This had prompted certain sceptics to suggest that we add the phrase *Allahu ghalib*, 'God is victor', to the Algerian flag, meaning, in effect, 'We can't do a thing for you!'. (p. 71)

The Arabic cultural expression "الله غالب" is a religiously loaded phrase that conveys the idea that 'Allah is the ultimate victor'. It is an expression often used in Arabic-speaking and Islamic societies to recognize the supremacy of Allah over everything in existence. In translation (1), the translator effectively conveys the intended meaning of the expression to be translated into English as "God is the victor". Although the translation communicates the core idea, it omits the original Arabic term, which means that the reader might miss the unique socio-cultural and spiritual significance of this expression. In this case, the translator uses domestication strategy by presenting an English equivalent without retaining the Arabic language or context; even though the English expression is accurate, it lacks the cultural and religious nuance that the Arabic expression brings in its original form. This approach makes the text more accessible for English readers and the



translator visible. In translation (2), the original Arabic phrase "الله غالب" is preserved, and an English equivalent, "God is victor" is used for clarification. The translator employs the couplet procedure in translation by keeping both the original term and its translation to preserve the socio-cultural significance of the Arabic expression and make the meaning clear for English readers. In this case, the translator, who is visible, leans toward the foreignization strategy by preserving the cultural value of the term and introducing it to English readers, ensuring that they experience the original resonance of the phrase while still understanding its meaning. Therefore, including Arabic and English terms assist in creating a balance between maintaining cultural authenticity and providing clarity.

*Example (2): Original Text*

"أما مشواري الثاني، فسيكون لزيارة امي وتوديعها، قبل الذهاب الى الحج" ص123

*Translation (1)*

"My second visit would be to my mother to bid her farewell before she went off hajj pilgrimage". (p. 70)

*Translation (2)*

"My only other outing of the week would be to visit my mother to see her off pilgrimage to Mecca". (p. 66)

The Arabic term "الحج" Hajj refers to the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islam. In Islamic culture, the term "الحج" holds significant religious meaning and context for Muslims. In translation (1), the term is translated as "hajj pilgrimage," explicitly including the word "Hajj." This translation specifies its significance, providing more context than mentioning 'pilgrimage'. This procedure enhances clarity and helps the reader understand the socio-cultural term, which can be seen as an attempt to bridge the cultural gap between Arabic and English. The translation leans towards foreignization, as it retains the name "Hajj" and the translator aims to be visible to her readers by maintaining the foreignness of the original text when translating such a socio-cultural term. Similarly, translation (2) maintains the same spiritual effect by specifying that the pilgrimage is to Mecca. The translator accurately preserves the socio-cultural context and uses the foreignization strategy. In this case, the translator is visible to the English reader by transferring the culturally specific aspects from the original text to the translated version.

*Example (3): Original Text*

"أجاني بمنطق البسطاء "حتى واحد ما يكره بلادو.... واش تكون قسنطينة بلا قناطرها... إيه لو تنطق هاذ القنطرة يا بنتي..."، وصمت فتركته لصمته" ص108.

*Translation (1)*

"How could anyone hate his own country? What would Constantine be without its arches? If only these arches could talk, my child". He fell silent, and I left him to his silence". (p. 60)

*Translation (2)*

"He replied "Nobody would ever hate his own town. And what would Constantine be without its bridges? Just imagine if this bridge could speak, he fell silent, and I left him to his thoughts". (p. 58)

The Algerian city of Constantine is characterized by its significant and distinctive bridges, which are key features of its landscape and cultural identity. Translator (1) inadequately translates the term "arches" in her translation as an equivalent to "قناطر". This term does not fully capture or convey the architectural and cultural importance of the bridges of Constantine. By using the term "arches", the translator employs a domestication strategy, opting for a more general term that might be familiar to English readers. This choice makes the translator invisible and the translation more accessible to the target readers. In contrast, translator (2) uses the precise term "bridges" to describe the culturally significant constructions in Constantine. This approach employs the foreignization strategy, preserving the cultural and contextual integrity of the original term. In the present example, the translator's decision makes her more visible, requiring the reader to understand or explore the significance of the bridges in Constantine.

*Example (4): Original Text*

"راني جبت لك معاي شوية (بسيصة) حمصتها لك البارح... دُرْك ندير لك بيها صحن (طمينة)... غير تاكلها تُولِي زِي الحِصان..." ص100

*Translation (1)*

"I've brought you some basisa I roasted for you yesterday. We can make a plate of tamina, and as soon as you eat it, you will be as healthy as a horse". (p. 55)

*Translation (2)*

"I brought you some basisa<sup>1</sup> that I made for yesterday. We can get you a bowl of tamina<sup>2</sup> to go with it. The minute you eat it, you will be strong as a horse!". (p. 53)

In both translations, the translators choose to transliterate "بسيصة" and "طمينة" into English, maintaining the original Arabic terms. Despite the English readers' potential unfamiliarity with Algerian cuisine, this translation preserves the cultural value of the dishes without providing clarifications or modifications. Therefore, the translators employ the foreignization strategy in their translations, prioritizing the socio-cultural essence of the dishes over providing potentially

<sup>1</sup> *Basisa*: a dish made from roasted wheat, chickpeas, fenugreek and lentils with turmeric and cumin, served variously with butter, honey, ground almonds or peanuts, figs or dates.

<sup>2</sup> *Tamina*: a dish made from a mixture of honey, clarified butter and chickpea flour. The name of the dish is derived from the same root as the Arabic verb *tam'ana*, which means to check on someone or reassure oneself that someone is healthy and safe.

recognizable equivalents. This choice preserves the socio-cultural identity of the dishes, making the translators visible to their readers.

Translator (1) renders the Arabic phrase "تولي زي الحصان" as "you will be as healthy as a horse" replacing it with an English idiom. This translation uses a familiar English idiom to enhance comprehensibility and readability for the readers, employing the domestication strategy in her translation and trying to be invisible. In contrast, translator (2) translates the Arabic phrase as "you will be strong as a horse". By omitting the idiomatic expression, this translation maintains a closer connection to the original text, leaning towards foreignization. This approach minimizes cultural and idiomatic adjustments, making the translator visible to her readers.

*Example (5): Original Text*

"واصطف على الجانبين نساء في كل زينتهن التقليدية، يضربن على البندير والدفوف" ص 85

*Translation (1)*

"The women were lined up on both sides in all their traditional clothing, beating the bindirs and tambourines". (p. 46)

*Translation (2)*

"Women lined up on either side, decked out in their finest traditional garb and beating on ben-idirs and tambourines". (p. 46)

The Arabic term "البندير" refers to a traditional musical instrument from North Africa, commonly used in cultural and ceremonial settings. "الدفوف", are percussion instruments used in various cultural and musical settings. The first translation, the term "البندير" is rendered as 'bindirs', which accurately represents the Arabic meaning of the word. It can be rendered into 'bindir or bendir'<sup>3</sup>. The Arabic term "الدفوف" is translated appropriately into 'tambourines' a suitable equivalent common in both English and Arabic language cultures. The translator preserves the foreignness of the original terms, making the translator visible and employing the foreignization strategy to retain the Arabic flavor and cultural peculiarity of the instruments. In the second translation, the term "البندير" is rendered as 'ben-idirs', attempting to transliterate the term and bringing it closer to its original form. However, this procedure may cause a potential lack of clarity and decreased efficacy. The Arabic term "الدفوف" is also translated as "tambourines" accurately reflecting the Arabic term. The translator remains visible by maintaining the foreignness of the Arabic term in the translation.

*Example (6): Original Text*

"وقبل ان أوصل، قالت وهي تقاطعني بلهجة لا تخلو من لؤم نسائي: "انت الجارة الجديدة.... " كل يوم عند العازبة عرس"! ص 163

*Translation (1)*

"Before I could continue, she interrupted me with a vindictive tone. You're the new neighbor. As they say, every day is a wedding day for the single". (p. 95)

*Translation (2)*

"Before I could finish, she interrupted me cattily, So, you're the new neighbour. Well, every day's a party around here!" (p. 86)

The Arabic statement "كل يوم عند العازبة عرس" is a cultural proverb in Algerian society. It carries distinct cultural significance within the Arabic context, particularly concerning weddings, which are profoundly important occasions characterized by music, food, and social gatherings. In translation (1), the translator preserves the cultural metaphor of the wedding by maintaining the original language, which might seem unfamiliar to non-Arab readers, the translator keeps the cultural nuances of the wedding as a special celebratory event. This approach leans towards foreignization, as the translator retains the foreignness of the original text in introducing Arabic culture to English readers, making the translator visible. In contrast, translation (2) renders the sentence as "every day is a party," simplifying the cultural reference and making it more accessible to English. In Arabic culture, the term 'party' has a somewhat different connotation than a 'wedding' since it does not have the same profound cultural value. The translation shifts towards domestication by substituting "wedding day" with "party," It smooths over the original cultural reference to make the text more accessible, readable, and fluent; as a result, it loses some of the original cultural richness, which makes the translator invisible to her readers.

*Example (7): The Original Text*

"أجتازُ ساحة الأمير عبد القادر راجلة. بخطى رصينة وداخل ثياب محتشمة. اتعلم المشي داخل هذه العباءة... وهذا الشال الذي يغطي شعري، وكأنني لم اخلعهما يوماً". ص 169

*Translation (1)*

"I crossed the square on foot, with firm steps beneath my modest clothing. I learned how to walk inside that abaya<sup>4</sup>, with a scarf covering my hair, as if I had never taken them off in my life". (p. 98)

*Translation (2)*

"I crossed Emir Abdelkader Square with a steady gait, walking along in my cloak and long headscarf as though I'd been wearing them all my life". (p. 88)

<sup>3</sup> Bendir: a kind of hand-held drum, often made of wood and goatskin, which is traditional to Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

<sup>4</sup> Abaya: a traditional modest clothing worn by women in the Arab and Islamic cultures to cover the whole body. Often, it could be in black color or any other colors.

In the Arabic text, the term "عباءة" refers to traditional clothing associated with modesty in Arab and Islamic cultures. In the translation (1), the term "عباءة" is transliterated as "abaya", aiming to preserve its cultural distinctiveness for the intended readers. This approach foreignizes the text by presenting a specific cultural garment to English readers. By keeping the term "abaya" untranslated, the translator becomes visible to the readers. In translation (2), the term is translated as "cloak", a more generalized term. A cloak can refer to any elongated, loose outer garment and is not specific to Islamic or Arab culture. This decision generalizes the cultural reference, making the term more accessible to English readers. Consequently, the translator is invisible as the "cloak" aligns with a domestication strategy, aiming to make the text more accessible and understandable.

*Example (8): The Original Text*

"امي تعيش دائما بين عرسين، او حجّتين، او نذرین. وحيثما حلّت، تعرّ على من يوشك ان يزوج قريباً، او من له قريب عائداً توءاً من العمرة او الحجّ. او شيخ' يدعوها لـ "وعدة" او لـ "زردة"! ص 275

*Translation (1)*

"She had always lived between two weddings, or two vows. Wherever she went, she always stumbled upon somebody preparing for a wedding or someone with a relative who was just returning from the pilgrimage". (p. 161)

*Translation (2)*

"My mother's whole life was spent between one wedding and the next, one pilgrimage and the next. Wherever she went, she ran into someone who was about to marry off a son or a daughter, someone who had a relative who had just come back from a pilgrimage to Mecca, or some sheikh who would invite her to a celebration of a local saint". (p. 139)

Concerning the terms "وعدة" and "زردة", they are both socio-culturally specific terms rooted in North African traditions, particularly in Algeria. These terms are associated with social and religious gatherings often connected to Sufi rituals and local saints. In translation (1), both cultural terms are omitted from the translated version, resulting in the loss of the cultural significance of these socio-cultural terms. By simplifying the text, the translator employs a domestication strategy that makes her presence invisible to the reader. In Translation (2), the two Arabic terms are generalized into "a celebration of a local saint". This approach makes the content accessible to English readers who are unfamiliar with the Algerian or North African culture. However, it eliminates the distinct religious and community implications of "wa'ada"<sup>5</sup> and "zarda"<sup>6</sup>. The depth of these terms, alongside their associations with local customs, celebrations, and particular religious activities, is reduced. The translator opts to convey the cultural ritual as a "celebration," a term broadly understood across many cultures; however, it fails to convey the cultural importance of the Arabic terms adequately. This decision also results in a domestication of the translation, making the translator invisible to the English reader. The omission of these cultural terms from both translations leads to a loss of the cultural value inherent in them. The researchers suggest translating the two terms in English into "wa'da" and "zarda" by transliterating them into English, attempting to convey the foreignness of the cultural terms to the English reader. This will maintain their cultural specificity and significance in the Algerian and North African societies.

## V. CONCLUSION

After thoroughly analyzing the selected texts and their translations, it is evident that the translators adopt a combination of both domestication and foreignization strategies in their work. The degree to which these strategies are employed varies, reflecting their attempts to balance between maintaining the cultural integrity of the source text and/or making it accessible to the target readers. For instance, in translating specific cultural terms, "wa'da" and "zarda", the two translators favored domestication by generalizing the terms to make them more accessible to the readers. On the other hand, in translations that retained terms like "Hajj" or provided explanations alongside cultural terms, there was a clear effort to foreignize and preserve the unique cultural elements of the original text. Moreover, the translators' cultural backgrounds do not significantly influence their decisions when translating sociocultural aspects. Additionally, the study concludes that both translators use the strategies of domestication and foreignization with a more frequent emphasis on foreignization over domestication to preserve the cultural nuances of the terms during the translation process.

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<sup>5</sup> *Wa'da*: refers to a local religious feast held in honour of a local Saint or during a religious celebration. It is typically a large gathering where people come together to fulfil a vow and share food and festivities.

<sup>6</sup> *Zarda*: a communal and religious meal, similar to wa'da, but often more focused on pilgrimage-like events. It is also a religious gathering, a celebration, particularly with Sufi traditions.

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# From Nervous to Fluent: The Impact of AI Chatbot-Assisted Assessment on English Reading Anxiety and Performance in Indonesia

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**Abstract**—This study examines the influence of AI Chatbot-assisted assessment on English reading anxiety and performance in Indonesian secondary school pupils. The growing integration of artificial intelligence in educational settings, namely through reading bots, has the potential to improve language acquisition and reduce student anxiety. The study utilizes a quantitative research approach, which compares the performance of an experimental group that interacts with AI chatbot-assisted assessment to a control group that receives traditional teaching led by a teacher. The data were gathered by administering pre- and post-tests of the adopted EFLRAI to assess reading anxiety, and the KET to measure reading performance. The results indicate that engagement with AI chatbots significantly alleviates reading anxiety and improves reading performance. This fosters a conducive learning atmosphere that enhances confidence and engagement in acquiring the English language. This study improves the understanding of the role of AI Chatbot-assisted assessment in language education and its effectiveness in addressing the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Indonesia.

**Index Terms**—AI Chatbot, reading anxiety, reading performance, assessment, English learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement and proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies have precipitated a paradigm shift across various domains, with the field of education experiencing particularly transformative effects (Holmes et al., 2019). Within this broader context, the application of AI in language pedagogy has emerged as a subject of considerable scholarly interest and practical exploration. Integrating AI-driven tools in language learning environments can revolutionize traditional instructional methodologies, offering personalized, adaptive, and interactive learning experiences that were hitherto unfeasible (Chapelle & Sauro, 2017).

Among the myriad AI applications in educational technology, conversational agents, colloquially known as chatbots, have garnered significant attention from researchers and practitioners alike. These sophisticated software programs present a promising avenue for enhancing language acquisition processes and mitigating learner anxiety (Fryer & Carpenter, 2006). The capacity of chatbots to provide immediate, contextually relevant feedback, engage in goal-oriented dialogues, and offer unlimited opportunities for language practice renders them particularly well-suited to addressing the multifaceted challenges inherent in second language acquisition (Bibauw et al., 2019).

In English learning, AI chatbots are essential as they offer tailored, interactive, and accessible language practice for learners. These chatbots can replicate authentic discussions, allowing students to hone their language abilities in a low-stress setting, so alleviating anxiety and fostering confidence. AI chatbots provide immediate feedback and personalized learning trajectories, addressing specific learning challenges while enabling students to advance at their own speed. Incorporating AI in English teaching improves the learning experience, rendering it more dynamic, responsive, and conducive to students' linguistic advancement.

In the assessment field, the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology has become increasingly significant in recent years. As the demand for efficient and precise language evaluation grows, traditional assessment methods often need help to keep pace with the evolving needs of students and teachers. AI-powered language

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assessment tools offer several advantages over conventional approaches. Leveraging natural language processing, machine learning, and automated scoring algorithms, AI can provide personalized, real-time feedback to students, enabling more targeted and immediate support. By utilizing AI's ability to identify specific areas of difficulty, teachers can tailor their instructional strategies and provide personalized interventions. This allows for a more efficient and practical approach to language learning, ensuring that students receive the support they need to progress and achieve their language goals. As the field of English language education continues to evolve, the incorporation of AI-driven assessment tools and diagnostic capabilities will become increasingly crucial in providing accurate, data-driven insights and optimizing student learning outcomes.

Meanwhile, Indonesia has two critical aspects of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education: reading anxiety and reading performance, which are due to their significant impact on students' overall language acquisition and academic success (Suryanto, 2014). Reading anxiety is a significant issue because it directly affects students' confidence and motivation when engaging with English texts. In the context of EFL in Indonesia, where English is not commonly used in daily life, students often feel intimidated by unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and cultural references that differ from their own (Muhlis & Fazilah, 2020). This anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviour, where students shy away from reading tasks, thus limiting their exposure to the language and hindering their progress. Additionally, reading anxiety can negatively influence students' comprehension skills, as they might struggle to focus or misunderstand the content due to stress. Ratnasari and Nurdiana (2021) found that Indonesian EFL learners reported high levels of anxiety when encountering unknown words, complex sentence structures, and culturally unfamiliar contexts in English texts. This anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviours, reduced motivation, and, ultimately, poorer reading performance.

Concurrently, reading performance among Indonesian EFL learners has concerned for educators and policymakers. The 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results revealed that Indonesian students' reading literacy scores were below the OECD average, ranking 72nd out of 77 participating countries/economies (OECD, 2019). In the Indonesian EFL context, strong reading performance is essential for students to excel in academic setting, where English textbooks and resources are often used. Moreover, practical reading skills enable students to access a wider range of information, thereby broadening their knowledge and improving their language competence. On the other hand, poor reading performance can limit students' academic and professional opportunities, making it a crucial area of focus in EFL education. Addressing reading anxiety and performance is essential for fostering a more effective and supportive learning environment in Indonesia. This underscores the urgent need for innovative approaches to improve English reading skills among Indonesian students (Hamra & Syatriana, 2015).

AI chatbots present a novel solution to these challenges. These digital tools can provide personalized, interactive reading experiences that may help alleviate anxiety and improve comprehension. Chatbots can offer instant vocabulary explanations, contextual examples, and comprehension checks, potentially creating a more supportive and less intimidating reading environment (Smutny & Schreiberova, 2020). Moreover, the 24/7 availability of chatbots allows for extended practice opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting, addressing the issue of limited exposure to English in many Indonesian EFL contexts.

An increasing corpus of research has developed regarding AI chatbot-assisted language acquisition, investigating the influence of chatbots on multiple facets of language learning (Ahn, 2022; Hsu et al., 2023; Jeon, 2024; Xu et al., 2021; Ayedoun et al., 2019; Coniam, 2014). The findings of this literature indicate the advantages of AI chatbots for the advancement of foreign language acquisition (Huang et al., 2023; Lee & Hwang, 2022; Qiao & Zhao, 2023; Fryer et al., 2019). Nonetheless, further systematic investigation on AI chatbots is necessary, particularly in comparing the learning outcomes derived from interactions with chatbots against those from engaging with a teacher (Han, 2021). Moreover, the prospect of chatbots for foreign language reading remains largely unexamined; it was also found that learners utilizing AI-powered chatbots for vocabulary practice exhibited markedly superior retention rates compared to those employing conventional flashcard techniques.

Nonetheless, research particularly examining the impact of chatbots on reading anxiety and reading performance in the Indonesian EFL environment is scarce. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of AI chatbots on Indonesian students' reading both anxiety and performance. This study utilized a rigorous quantitative design to evaluate an experimental group engaging in English reading through interaction with an AI-powered chatbot compared to a control group employing conventional teacher-directed approaches. This study thoroughly evaluates the efficacy of AI-based chatbot interventions compared to traditional teaching approaches.

Furthermore, this current study is driven by several compelling factors. Primarily, while chatbots have demonstrated promise in English language acquisition, their efficacy in enhancing reading skills remains insufficiently explored, with extant research yielding inconclusive outcomes. Furthermore, there is a notable paucity of studies examining AI chatbot applications among secondary school students, highlighting the imperative for additional research to corroborate and extend the generalizability of current findings. Moreover, preceding investigations into chatbot affordances have provided a theoretical foundation for exploring their potential to mitigate English reading anxiety and augment reading performance. Consequently, this study endeavours to address these identified gaps in the literature by investigating the impact of AI chatbot utilization on reading anxiety and performance among Indonesian secondary school students. To this end, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. How significantly does AI chatbot-assisted assessment affect the English reading anxiety of Indonesian secondary school students?
2. How significantly does AI chatbot-assisted assessment affect the English reading performance of Indonesian secondary school students?

## II. METHOD

### A. Research Design

A quantitative design was adopted to thoroughly examine the influence of AI chatbot technology on students' English reading anxiety and performance. This approach synthesized a quasi-experimental design, allowing for the concurrent collection and analysis of quantitative to provide a holistic perspective on the phenomena under investigation.

### B. Participants

The present investigation was conducted at a junior secondary institution situated in Semarang, the capital city of Central Java, Indonesia. Before the commencement of the study, ethical clearance was obtained from Universitas PGRI Semarang, as well as from the administrative body of the selected state Junior High School in Semarang. Informed consent was procured from both the student participants and their legal guardians.

TABLE 1  
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

| Participants' information | n  | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|----|----------------|
| Age                       |    |                |
| 13                        | 7  | 10.45          |
| 14                        | 57 | 85.07          |
| 15                        | 3  | 4.5            |
| Gender                    |    |                |
| Male                      | 24 | 35.82          |
| Female                    | 43 | 64.18          |

The study sample comprised 67 Grade 8 students, with ages ranging from 13 to 15 years, drawn from two intact classes. The participant distribution was as follows: Class A (Experiment Group) consisted of 34 students, while Class B (Control Group) was composed of 33 students. These participants were enrolled in the study under the approved ethical guidelines and with full voluntary participation. While the study participants had not previously engaged with AI chatbots for English language acquisition purposes, the majority demonstrated proficiency in desktop computer utilization. These students possessed a minimum of six years of experience in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. An analysis of the participants' recent mid-term English examination results indicated that participants' English competencies were commensurate with the prediction delineated in the aforementioned curriculum.

### C. Instruments

The adapted English as a Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Inventory (EFLRAI) by Zoghi (2012) was employed to assess the reading anxiety levels of the participants. The survey instrument utilized a 4-point Likert scale, with response options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The evaluation of the improved inventory's reliability demonstrated a significant level of internal consistency, as shown by a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.921, which reflects a robust internal reliability.

To evaluate the reading abilities of the participants consistently and reliably, the study utilized the reading section of the Key English Test (KET), which is a well-regarded assessment tool for measuring the students' English proficiency. The KET reading component is designed to evaluate the proficiency of participants in comprehending fundamental written content that is frequently encountered in everyday situations. The four sections of this section, which collectively consist of 24 questions, evaluate a variety of reading abilities, such as the ability to read for gist, detail, contextual vocabulary comprehension, comprehending text structure and purpose, and drawing inferences from the provided information. This reading test was confirmed to be reliable, as evidenced by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.841, which indicates considerable internal consistency. The KET reading section was chosen for its result of validity and reliability.

### D. Research Procedures

This research developed an AI chatbot called Reading Bot for student interaction via text. Accessible through a desktop webpage, Reading Bot features five pre-programmed prompts. These prompts were crafted based on Zoghi's (2012) work and the results of a pre-test English reading anxiety survey administered to participants. The prompts cover a range of topics such as grammar, cultural context, reading comprehension, and vocabularies. (see Table 2).

In conducting the study, the researchers utilized an experimental design comprising three distinct phases: pre-experimental, experimental process, and post-experimental. The pre-experimental phase involved several preparatory steps. Initially, two intact classes, presumed to possess comparable levels of reading anxiety and English reading

proficiency, were identified as potential study participants. Demographic data, including self-assessed EFL competency, reading proficiency, and reading expectations, were collected from the entire sample population.

TABLE 2  
EXAMPLE OF PROMPTS

| Element             | Example prompt                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reading performance | <p>As an English reading assistant, your primary function is to support an Indonesian middle school student with a foundational English vocabulary of approximately 1000 words in comprehending English texts. When presented with a text in the chat interface, your responsibilities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concise Overview: Provide a brief, few-sentence summary capturing the text's central theme or main idea.</li> <li>Essential Elements: Identify and list the text's fundamental concepts or arguments using your own phrasing.</li> <li>Contemplative Inquiries: Formulate three original questions designed to encourage deeper reflection on the text and assess the student's understanding</li> </ol> |

To ensure group equivalence, particular attention was paid to establishing homogeneity between the two classes in terms of English reading anxiety and performance. The former was evaluated using a modified English reading anxiety inventory, while the latter was assessed through a Key English Test (KET) reading examination. Upon confirming the homogeneity of the two classes in both these aspects, they were randomly assigned as the experimental group ( $n = 34$ ) and the control group ( $n = 33$ ).

Before employing the experiment, both cohorts of study participants engaged in an introductory meeting followed by two training sessions. The experimental group members received instruction on accessing, authenticating, and engaging with the Reading Bot application via their desktop computers. This included guidance on utilizing pre-designed prompts and formulating their own inquiries. These students then spent two additional 30-minute periods practicing their interaction using reading bot, using a set of some sample texts as a basis for their exercises. Concurrently, the control group underwent a similar orientation process and participated in an equal number of reading practice sessions. These sessions utilized the identical set of four sample texts that were employed by their counterparts in the experimental group.

In conducting the experiment session, both the experiment group and control group followed a similar initial procedure. They were given 12 minutes to read two passages, each around 300 words long, and then 5 minutes to answer comprehension questions. The reading materials and questions were the same for both groups, and they were supervised by the same English teacher. The key difference was in the type of support provided after the reading task. The experiment group engaged in a 30-minute one-on-one dialogue with a chatbot to resolve any reading-related confusion. In contrast, the control group received explanations from their English teacher, who conduct reading session in a classroom setting. While the control group students could seek further clarification by interacting with the teacher and classmates, they did not have access to the Reading Bot.

The experiment was conducted over five sessions for each group. Following the experiment, all participants from both the experimental and control groups underwent the revised EFLRAI and subsequently retaken a reading test from the KET. The purpose of these post-tests was to evaluate the participants' level of English reading anxiety and their reading performance after the intervention.

#### E. Data Analysis

This study utilized independent samples t-tests to examine the differential impact of the AI chatbot-assisted diagnostic assessment on English Reading Anxiety (between the experimental group and control group participants. A paired-samples t-test was employed to assess the pre- and post-test scores of the experimental group (EXP-G) and control group (CON-G) participants, with a particular focus on overall English reading levels. The study also employed a paired-sample t-test to investigate the effect of AI chatbot-assisted assessment usage on English reading performance. The paired-samples t-tests examined the changes in reading scores within each group.

### III. FINDING

#### A. The Effect of AI Chatbot-Assisted Assessment on the English Reading Anxiety

To measure whether AI chatbot-assisted assessment affects the secondary students' English reading anxiety and performance, the initial investigation of their English reading anxiety was carried out. Table 2 presents the students' prior overall English readings anxiety. Point to Table 3, the Con-G exhibited a mean pre-test score of 28.5 on the English reading anxiety scale, indicating a moderate level of anxiety among its members. The scores ranged from a minimum of 20 to a maximum of 38, suggesting that while some students experienced relatively low anxiety, others faced significantly higher levels of apprehension. The standard deviation for this group was 4.25, reflecting a moderate variability in anxiety levels. This variability suggests that the Con-G comprises students with differing levels of comfort and confidence in their English reading abilities, which could influence their overall performance. In contrast, the EXP-



G recorded a mean pre-test score of 32.1, which is notably higher than that of the CON-G. This indicates a higher level of anxiety regarding English reading tasks among the EXP-G participants. The scores for this group ranged from a minimum of 25 to a maximum of 40, with a standard deviation of 5.5. The increased mean score and standard deviation suggest a wider distribution of anxiety levels, indicating that some students in the EXP-G are experiencing significant anxiety that may hinder their reading performance.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ENGLISH READING ANXIETY IN PRE-TEST OF THE TWO GROUPS

|                      | pre-Total English reading anxiety |       | pre-Average English reading anxiety |       | pre-General reading ability anxiety |       |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|
|                      | CON-G                             | EXP-G | CON-G                               | EXP-G | CON-G                               | EXP-G |
| Valid                | 33                                | 34    | 33                                  | 34    | 33                                  | 34    |
| Missing              | 0                                 | 0     | 0                                   | 0     | 0                                   | 0     |
| Mean                 | 48.05                             | 52.20 | 2.48                                | 2.56  | 2.30                                | 2.57  |
| SD                   | 13.61                             | 12.87 | 0.60                                | 0.61  | 0.74                                | 0.52  |
| Skewness             | -0.52                             | -0.47 | -0.55                               | -0.46 | -0.36                               | -0.76 |
| Std. Err of Skewness | 0.38                              | 0.38  | 0.38                                | 0.38  | 0.38                                | 0.38  |
| Kurtosis             | -0.61                             | -0.56 | -0.62                               | -0.42 | -0.93                               | -0.18 |
| Std. Err of Kurtosis | 0.72                              | 0.72  | 0.72                                | 0.72  | 0.72                                | 0.72  |
| Mini                 | 21.00                             | 22.00 | 1.00                                | 1.00  | 1.00                                | 1.00  |
| Max                  | 68.00                             | 78.00 | 3.32                                | 4.73  | 3.50                                | 3.35  |

Meanwhile the result of post-test scores of overall English reading anxiety between the CON-G and EXP-G was presented in Table 4. Moreover, the descriptive analysis of post-test scores of overall English reading anxiety between the CON-G and the EXP-G reveal some important insights. In terms of the total English reading anxiety, the mean score for the CON-G is 48.36, with a standard deviation of 18.18, while the EXP-G has a slightly lower mean of 47.90 and a lower standard deviation of 14.62. This suggests that both groups have relatively similar levels of overall anxiety, though the EXP-G displays less variation in their anxiety levels. The skewness values for both groups are close to zero (-0.14 for CON-G and -0.034 for EXP-G), indicating that the data is fairly symmetrically distributed around the mean. Additionally, the kurtosis values of -1.08 for CON-G and -0.12 for EXP-G suggest that the distribution for the CON-G is more platykurtic, or flatter, compared to the EXP-G.

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ENGLISH READINGS ANXIETY IN POST-TEST OF THE TWO GROUPS

|                       | post-total English reading anxiety |        | post-average English reading anxiety |        | post- overall reading ability anxiety |        |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------|--------|
|                       | CON-G                              | EXP-G  | CON-G                                | EXP-G  | CON-G                                 | EXP-G  |
| Valid                 | 33                                 | 34     | 33                                   | 34     | 33                                    | 34     |
| Missing               | 0                                  | 0      | 0                                    | 0      | 0                                     | 0      |
| Mean                  | 48.36                              | 47.90  | 2.31                                 | 2.27   | 2.30                                  | 2.28   |
| SD                    | 18.18                              | 14.62  | 0.88                                 | 0.72   | 0.87                                  | 0.75   |
| Skewness              | -0.14                              | -0.034 | -0.150                               | -0.034 | -0.036                                | -0.168 |
| Std. Err. of Skewness | 0.37                               | 0.37   | 0.37                                 | 0.37   | 0.37                                  | 0.37   |
| Kurtosis              | -1.08                              | -0.12  | -1.07                                | 0.12   | -0.96                                 | -0.47  |
| Std. Err. of Kurtosis | 0.74                               | 0.74   | 0.74                                 | 0.74   | 0.74                                  | 0.74   |
| Min                   | 21.00                              | 22.000 | 1.00                                 | 1.00   | 1.00                                  | 1.00   |
| Max                   | 84.000                             | 86.00  | 4.00                                 | 4.00   | 4.00                                  | 4.00   |

Table 4 also reveals the average English reading anxiety scores. The CON-G has a mean of 2.31 with a standard deviation of 0.88, while the EXP-G has a mean of 2.27 with a lower standard deviation of 0.72. Both groups show a fairly similar average level of anxiety, though, again, the EXP-G shows less variation. The skewness and kurtosis values indicate a symmetrical distribution for both groups, with the CON-G slightly more skewed and flattened. When looking at the general reading performance anxiety, the mean for the CON-G is 2.30 with a standard deviation of 0.87, while the EXP-G shows a similar mean of 2.28 and a standard deviation of 0.75. The skewness for the CON-G is -0.036 and for the EXP-G -0.168, indicating a near-normal distribution for both groups, with the CON-G being slightly more symmetrically distributed. The kurtosis values for the CON-G and EXP-G (-0.96 and -0.47, respectively) show that the CON-G has a flatter distribution than the EXP-G.

After the pre- and post- scores of overall English readings anxiety of the two groups were measured, a paired-sample t-test was employed to see if AI chatbot-assisted assessment gives effect on English reading anxiety. These results offer

a comparative analysis between the two groups, which help to determine the influence of the intervention in reducing anxiety levels related to English reading. The result of the paired samples t-test was elaborated in Table 5.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ENGLISH READINGS ANXIETY IN POST-TEST OF THE TWO GROUPS

| Control Group (CON-G)    | pre-test                               | post-test                               | <i>t</i> | <i>Degree for freedom</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Effect size</i> | Std.err.<br>Effect size |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|--------------------|-------------------------|
|                          | pre-cumulative English reading anxiety | post-cumulative English reading anxiety | 0.41     | 32                        | 0.67     | 0.06               | 0.13                    |
|                          | pre-average English reading anxiety    | post-average English reading anxiety    | 0.49     | 32                        | 0.68     | 0.07               | 0.15                    |
|                          | pre-overall reading ability anxiety    | post-overall reading ability anxiety    | 0.21     | 32                        | 0.89     | 0.04               | 0.15                    |
| Experiment Group (EXP-G) | pre-cumulative English reading anxiety | post-cumulative English reading anxiety | 2.36     | 33                        | 0.03     | 0.42               | 0.16                    |
|                          | pre-average English reading anxiety    | post-average English reading anxiety    | 2.52     | 33                        | 0.03     | 0.43               | 0.17                    |
|                          | pre-overall reading ability anxiety    | post-overall reading ability anxiety    | 2.31     | 33                        | 0.03     | 0.36               | 0.15                    |

Based on Table 5, the results for the CON-G indicate no significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores for any of the three measures of English reading anxiety. For total English reading anxiety, the *t*-value is 0.41 with a *p*-value of 0.67, indicating that the difference between pre-test (*M* = 48.36) and post-test scores is statistically insignificant. The effect size, represented by Cohen's *d* (0.06), is very small, suggesting minimal practical significance in the observed change. Similarly, for average English reading anxiety, the *t*-value is 0.49 with a *p*-value of 0.68, showing that there is no meaningful reduction in anxiety after the control period. The effect size is again very small (Cohen's *d* = 0.07), reinforcing the conclusion that no substantial change occurred. In terms of general reading ability anxiety, the CON-G also shows no significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores (*t* = 0.21, *p* = 0.89). With Cohen's *d* calculated at 0.04, the effect size is negligible, indicating virtually no impact on reading ability anxiety in the CON-G.

In contrast, the results for the EXP-G demonstrate statistically significant improvements in reducing English reading anxiety. For total English reading anxiety, the *t*-value is 2.36 with a *p*-value of 0.03, suggesting a significant reduction in anxiety levels following the intervention (AI Chatbot-Assisted Assessment). The effect size (Cohen's *d* = 0.42) indicates a moderate practical impact, highlighting that AI chatbot-assisted assessment had a meaningful effect on reducing overall English reading anxiety. For average English reading anxiety, the paired samples *t*-test also reveals a significant decrease from pre-test to post-test scores (*t* = 2.52, *p* = 0.03). Cohen's *d* is 0.43, which again suggests a moderate effect size, indicating that the intervention was effective in reducing average levels of English reading anxiety. Finally, the analysis of general reading ability anxiety in the EXP-G shows a significant reduction, with a *t*-value of 2.31 and a *p*-value of 0.03. The effect size (Cohen's *d* = 0.36) is slightly smaller compared to the other anxiety measures but still suggests a moderate impact of AI chatbot-assisted assessment.

The results of the paired samples *t*-tests highlight a clear distinction between the CON-G and the EXP-G. While the CON-G showed no significant changes in any of the anxiety measures, the EXP-G exhibited statistically significant reductions in total, average, and general reading ability anxiety. These findings suggest that the intervention applied to the EXP-G was effective in lowering English reading anxiety, with moderate effect sizes across all measures. The lack of significant change in the CON-G underscores the importance of AI chatbot-assisted assessment in mitigating anxiety levels related to English reading.

#### B. The Effect of AI Chatbot-Assisted Assessment on the English Reading Performance

This second section explores the role of artificial intelligence in enhancing students' reading abilities through interactive assessments. As educational technologies evolve, AI chatbots have gained attention for their potential to offer personalized feedback, engage learners in real-time, and support teachers in monitoring progress. This section examines the impact of implementing AI chatbot-assisted assessments on English reading performance, focusing on how these tools influence students' reading comprehension and foster a more engaging learning environment in secondary schools.

TABLE 6  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR ENGLISH READING PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS

|                       | pre-Reading<br>CON-G | post-Reading<br>CON-G | pre-Reading<br>EXP-G | post-Reading<br>EXP-G |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid                 | 33                   | 33                    | 34                   | 34                    |
| Missing               | 0                    | 0                     | 0                    | 0                     |
| Mean                  | 15.72                | 16.78                 | 15.92                | 17.86                 |
| SD                    | 4.61                 | 4.95                  | 4.68                 | 5.20                  |
| Skewness              | -0.78                | -0.78                 | -0.46                | -0.35                 |
| Std. Err. of Skewness | 0.37                 | 0.37                  | 0.37                 | 0.37                  |
| Kurtosis              | -0.57                | 0.24                  | -0.99                | -1.02                 |
| Std. Err. of Kurtosis | 0.76                 | 0.76                  | 0.76                 | 0.76                  |
| Min                   | 5.00                 | 4.00                  | 6.00                 | 6.00                  |
| Max                   | 23.000               | 25.000                | 24.000               | 26.000                |

The analysis of the effect of AI chatbot-assisted assessment on the students' English reading performance was first elaborated in Table 6 showing the result of pre- and post-test of students' reading performance through KET. The descriptive statistics in Table 4 reveal notable differences between the CON-G and the EXP-G. Before the intervention, the mean reading score for the CON-G was 15.72 (SD = 4.61), while the EXP-G had a slightly higher mean score of 15.92 (SD = 4.68). After the intervention, both groups demonstrated improvement in their reading performance, but the EXP-G showed a more significant increase. The CON-G's mean post-test score rose to 16.78 (SD = 4.95), while the EXP-G's post-test score reached 17.86 (SD = 5.20), indicating a greater improvement in the EXP-G compared to the CON-G. The skewness and kurtosis values for both groups suggest a generally normal distribution of reading scores, with slight variations in the shape of the distributions. Overall, these results suggest that AI chatbot-assisted assessments had a more substantial impact on enhancing reading performance in the EXP-G than in the CON-G.

TABLE 7  
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TESTS OF ENGLISH READING PERFORMANCE WITHIN THE TWO GROUPS

|       | Pre-test    | Post-test    | <i>t</i> | <i>Degree for freedom</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>Effect size</i> | Std.err.<br>Effect size |
|-------|-------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| CON-G | Pre-reading | Post-reading | -1.03    | 32                        | 0.33     | -0.16              | 0.13                    |
| EXP-G | Pre-reading | Post-reading | -2.83    | 33                        | 0.04     | -0.82              | 0.12                    |

The paired samples t-tests in Table 7 evaluates changes in English reading performance between pre- and post-test scores for both the control group (CON-G) and experimental group (EXP-G). Results indicate a significant improvement in the experimental group, while the control group showed minimal change. The control group demonstrated a slight enhancement in reading performance ( $t(32) = -1.03$ ,  $p = 0.33$ ,  $d = -0.16$ ), but this change was not statistically significant. The small effect size (Cohen's  $d = -0.16$ ) suggests minimal practical impact, with a standard error of 0.13 indicating reasonable precision in this estimate. In contrast, the experimental group exhibited a substantial and statistically significant improvement ( $t(33) = -2.83$ ,  $p = 0.04$ ,  $d = -0.82$ ). The p-value of 0.04 falls below the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating statistical significance. The large effect size (Cohen's  $d = -0.82$ ) suggests a strong practical significance of the intervention, with the low standard error (SE = 0.12) providing high confidence in this estimate. The stark difference between the CON-G and EXP-G results strongly suggests that the intervention had a powerful and meaningful impact on improving English reading performance in the experimental group. These findings provide robust evidence for the efficacy of the intervention, demonstrating both statistical significance and substantial practical importance in enhancing students' English reading performance.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The implementation of AI chatbot-supported assessment in educational environments has attracted interest due to its capacity to decrease anxiety and improve reading proficiency in students. This discussion is on the impact of AI chatbot-supported assessment on English reading anxiety and reading performance among secondary school students in Indonesia. It compares an experimental group that deployed AI chatbot-assisted assessment with a control group that did not receive this intervention.

AI chatbots facilitated by sophisticated natural language processing technologies can encourage students with them. For instance, this AI technology for English reading practice could enable students to participate in the chatbot's interactive reading activity and receive explanations and reading strategies for unknown words. Thus, the anxiety scores dropped significantly among the experimental group monitored with AI chatbot-assisted assessments. The reading endeavour in the group also became a less stressful experience because, unlike in physical classroom snapped due to teachers, learners could easily navigate in task discussion, and allay teacher wrath that rang the bell of anxiety (El Shazly, 2021).

In contrast, the control group, who did not get AI chatbot-assisted assessment, exhibited no any notable alterations in their reading anxiety or performance. The absence of assistance resulted in students being subjected to the customary

pressures linked to reading assessments, such as the anxiety caused by timed tests and the possibility of receiving negative comments from both peers and instructors (Sumakul et al., 2022; Alshumaimeri & Alshememry, 2023). The lack of individualized assistance undoubtedly played a role in an ongoing rise of anxiety levels among these students (Moybeka et al., 2023).

In addition, the experimental group not only had a decrease in anxiety but also showed enhanced proficiency in reading. The AI chatbot offered customized reading materials that corresponded to the students' aptitude levels, allowing them to interact with texts that were yet demanding and approachable (Jiang, 2022). The implementation of this adaptive learning technique enabled students to develop self-assurance in their reading skills, resulting in enhanced performance on examinations. The chatbot's role in providing a low-pressure setting for practicing reading skills was essential for improving their overall reading proficiency (Tang & Foley, 2022). Conversely, the control group's reading performance did not improve. The absence of instant feedback and adaptive learning possibilities hindered students' engagement with reading materials. The conventional evaluation techniques utilized in the control group failed to address the specific learning requirements of each individual, a crucial factor in promoting advancements in language proficiency (Alhalangy & AbdAlgane, 2023). The lack of progress in this area emphasizes the significance of incorporating technology into education in order to address learners' varying demands.

Furthermore, the AI chatbot's ability to offer round-the-clock assistance was a notable benefit for the experimental group. Students can engage with the chatbot beyond regular school hours, enabling them to further practice and strengthen their abilities at their own preferred speed. This adaptability is especially advantageous for students who may struggle to manage their time or have additional obligations beyond their academic pursuits. The control group, however, did not have the chance to engage in extended learning, which could have influenced their performance levels to remain the same.

The results of this study are consistent with prior research that underscores the significance of technology in alleviating language learning anxiety. Research has demonstrated that utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) in language teaching can establish a more nurturing learning atmosphere, which is crucial for students who encounter anxiety associated with language acquisition (Zheng, 2024; Rukiati et al., 2023). The favourable effects observed in the experimental group provide further evidence that technology can effectively be used as a beneficial tool to alleviate emotional obstacles to learning.

Furthermore, the societal dimension of acquiring knowledge via AI chatbots should not be disregarded. The students in the experimental group expressed a stronger sense of connection to their learning experience, since the chatbot enabled a conversation that simulated exchanges with a helpful peer or instructor. The feeling of connection is crucial for fostering motivation and engagement, both of which are key elements in achieving success in language acquisition (Lee & Hwang, 2022). Conversely, the control group did not have this participatory component, which could have perhaps led to their sense of seclusion and unease.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the implementation of AI chatbot-assisted assessments has profound implications for reducing English reading anxiety and improving reading performance among Indonesian secondary school students. The experimental group benefited significantly from the personalized, adaptive learning environment created by the chatbot, while the control group remained unchanged due to the absence of such interventions. AI chatbots integration provides a customized and dynamic learning experience that specifically tackles the distinct difficulties encountered by EFL learners, such as new terminology and cultural situations. Chatbots promote increased participation and self-assurance in language usage by offering prompt feedback and creating an atmosphere. This research emphasizes the necessity of additional investigation into the use of AI technology in language learning inside educational institutions. It advocates the integration of novel tools to enhance student achievement in English literacy.

These findings suggest that educational institutions should consider integrating AI technologies into their curricula to enhance student learning experiences and outcomes. The results of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on the effectiveness of AI in education, particularly in language learning contexts. Future research should explore the long-term effects of AI chatbot-assisted learning on various aspects of language acquisition and consider the implications for broader educational practices.

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# The Use of Google Translate in the Arabic-English Classroom

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**Abstract**—This study examines the uses, perceived quality, and ethical and policy considerations of the use of Google Translate (GT) among Saudi college students majoring in English language and translation, as well as on the part of their instructors. Using separate surveys for students and instructors, the findings indicate widespread use of GT by both students and instructors, who acknowledge its effectiveness for translation tasks. However, a misalignment exists between the actual use of GT and formal academic policies. Course specifications do not mention GT, and traditional dictionary use continues to be the primary focus of translation training. Most instructors have not integrated GT into their teaching activities nor provided guidelines or policies regarding its effective use, despite recognizing its benefits. The study concludes by discussing the pedagogical implications of these findings and suggests solutions for better integration of modern translation tools such as GT into the curriculum. The study highlights the gap between current academic practices and the real-world workplace, which has already integrated Machine Translation (MT) extensively. The study advocates for clear policies and for the structured teaching of MT to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of translation training in the evolving professional landscape.

**Index Terms**—Google translate perception, machine translation quality perception, policy and ethics of Google Translate

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, the landscape of translation has undergone a remarkable evolution, transitioning from the use of traditional paper-based methods to the use of sophisticated machine translation (MT) technologies. Traditional paper-based translations rely heavily on human translators, involving time-consuming manual processes. However, with the advent of MT, especially with recent advancements in artificial intelligence and neural networks, the capabilities and efficiency of translation have been revolutionized (Wang et al., 2022). Modern MT systems can swiftly process vast amounts of text, offering translations that are increasingly accurate and nuanced, thus bridging language barriers and facilitating global communication in ways previously unimagined. This shift marks a turning point in the history of translation, ushering in a new era of accessibility, speed, and accuracy in cross-linguistic communication.

Reflecting the transformative shift in translation methodologies, as stated by Ata and Debreli (2021) and Lee and Briggs (2021), Google Translate (GT) has notably become the most popular MT tool among students. It is also the most researched translation tool (Almusgarraf & Bailey, 2023). This trend is further evidenced by Shankland's (2013) report, which highlighted that—even a decade ago—GT was providing a billion translations daily for over 200 million users, a figure that has undoubtedly grown. The preference for GT over traditional dictionaries, which Ata and Debreli (2021) note are losing their primacy as the main linguistic resource, underscores the tool's widespread adoption. GT's accessibility, user-friendly interface, and continual improvements in accuracy through advancements in artificial intelligence make it an indispensable resource.

Despite the extensive literature examining GT from a pedagogical perspective, focusing on its impact on students' writing, vocabulary enhancement, and overall language proficiency development (e.g., Lee, 2020; Tsai, 2019; Rowe, 2022), few studies have focused on students' and instructors' perceptions of GT use (Mulyani & Afina, 2021), especially in the context of translation training (Man et al., 2020). In addition, since the quality of GT can vary significantly across different language pairs, largely depending on the quality of available parallel corpora (Wang et al., 2022), it is expected that some language pairs might elicit different perceptions with regard to GT use on the part of users. The current study seeks to understand the perceptions of Arabic-English translation majors regarding GT. Indeed, it is essential to sample linguistically-diverse language groups to fully understand any particular linguistic phenomena.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. History of Google Translate

Prior to discussing GT, it is essential to establish a clear understanding of MT. MT refers to the automated process of translating text or speech from one language to another using computer software. This technology has evolved significantly over time, transitioning from basic word-to-word matching techniques to sophisticated artificial intelligence (AI) engines that produce increasingly-accurate translations.

Historically, MT has undergone three major developmental phases (Wang et al., 2022). The initial phase, known as rule-based MT, relied on sets of linguistic rules and dictionaries to convert text from the source language to the target language. This approach was followed by statistical MT (during the 2000s), which utilized statistical models to infer ways to translate texts based on large amounts of bilingual corpora, as opposed to human experts writing rules. The most recent phase is neural MT (started in 2014), which represents the current state of the art, and one which is evolving. NMT employs deep neural networks, a type of artificial intelligence, to learn linguistic patterns based on available corpora and predict translations. NMT operates as a fully-integrated system that autonomously learns semantic meanings and obtains translation knowledge directly from its training corpora, without requiring manually-crafted rules. In 2016, GT departed from SMT and adopted NMT, making it more natural and accurate (Zhang & Zong, 2020).

### *B. Learners' Use and Perception of MT*

Research with regard to students' use of MT tools, particularly GT, reveals that learners frequently rely on these technologies in their language learning and translation tasks. Across different contexts, students report using GT primarily for word- and sentence-level translations. For instance, Wei (2021) found that 94.6% of Malaysian students used GT as a key part of their English learning process, acknowledging its utility for quick translations. Similarly, Mulyani and Afina (2021) reported that 89% of Indonesian students used GT to check unknown words, and 100% relied on it to verify collocations, with 84% using it to translate full sentences. Pham et al. (2022) also supported these findings, showing that Vietnamese students used GT primarily to save time and improve pronunciation. A study by Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) maintains that Saudi and South Korean students exhibited a high level of acceptance and use of MT tools, primarily for individual words and sentence translations. The study further emphasized that Saudi students used MT tools for a broader array of reasons than their Korean counterparts. In fact, Dahmash and Nada (2020) reported that Saudi English learners consider GT as an essential application on their smartphones. Overall, students consistently perceive GT as a convenient tool for translating sentences, and some even use it for longer texts such as paragraphs or essays.

Despite the widespread use of GT, students recognize its limitations when translating more complex texts. Yanti and Meka (2019) noted that students regularly used GT in translation classes but understood that the tool's output often required rechecking for accuracy, particularly in terms of grammar and meaning. Pham et al. (2022) similarly found that students saw GT as helpful for vocabulary, but frequently encountered grammatical and semantic errors, leading to misunderstandings. Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) also highlighted accuracy issues and the need for corrections, with students continuing to use MT tools despite these concerns. Nonetheless, students maintain a generally positive attitude toward GT. Wei (2021) found that most students considered GT useful, though less effective for longer sentences or paragraphs. The study by Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) revealed that students' positive perceptions of MT tools strongly correlated with actual usage.

Ethical considerations and policy issues are central to students' perceptions of GT use. Mulyani and Afina (2021) reported that 72% of students believed the ethicality of GT depended on how it was used, with many finding it acceptable for word-level translations but more problematic for graded assignments or when used without proper post-editing. These findings echo the results of Jolley and Maimone (2015), who noted that while students frequently used GT, they were cautious about plagiarism and academic dishonesty, especially when translating entire paragraphs. Almusharraf and Bailey (2023) further addressed concerns about English avoidance where students might use MT tools to avoid engaging with the language. Some educators view this as a limitation. These studies highlight the importance of clear guidelines and training on the ethical use of MT tools, emphasizing that while students appreciate the convenience of GT, they need to be taught how to use it responsibly to avoid over-dependence and potential ethical violations.

### *C. MT as a Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) Tool in Language Education*

GT is the most widely-used CALL tool among students (Ducar & Schocket, 2018). Furthermore, a systematic review of the effectiveness of MT in language education conducted by Lee (2023) identified two main trends. First, GT's accuracy has been rapidly improving, significantly reducing the number of lexicogrammatical errors, particularly since GT transitioned from SMT to NMT in 2016, making it acceptably usable across most language pairs. Second, the use of MT has had a positive impact on foreign language learning in various linguistic areas. Regarding specific areas where GT is beneficial, GT is most frequently-implemented as a CALL tool in writing classes.

For example, a study by Lee (2020) involved Korean-English college students using GT as a reference for their L2 writing. In this study, students initially translated their L1 writing into L2 without GT's aid, and subsequently produced another L2 translation using GT. The students then compared and corrected their own writing against the GT output. The findings indicated that MT reduced lexicogrammatical errors and enhanced student revision. Moreover, utilizing MT for revision purposes positively impacted students' writing strategies and encouraged them to see writing as a process. Students also reported positive attitudes toward the use of GT in writing classes. The researchers concluded that MT can be an effective aid in language learning.

Another study by Stapleton and Kin (2019) explored the use of GT with a younger demographic. This study involved Chinese primary school EFL learners who were divided into two groups: one group wrote directly in their L2 (English), while the other wrote—on the same topic—in their L1 (Chinese) and then used GT to translate their text into L2. When the resulting texts were evaluated by teachers, there were no significant differences in the scores between the manually-written and the GT-translated versions. Interestingly, in instances where there were differences, the GT-translated versions



consistently received higher scores than the manually-written texts, with teachers unaware that they were evaluating machine-translated content. The researchers noted that the mechanics, vocabulary, and grammar in the GT-generated English writings appeared to match the quality of human-generated English writings.

In addition to aiding with writing, MT tools have further contributed to enhancing students' vocabulary choices and grammar, as evidenced by Tsai (2019) and Rowe (2022), respectively. Moreover, such tools have proven effective in increasing learners' metalinguistic awareness of the target language, particularly when they critically evaluate MT outputs (Ryu et al., 2022). These tools also promote learners' independence (Niño, 2020). Furthermore, an earlier study by Niño (2008) demonstrated that MT particularly improved students' paraphrasing skills, showcasing the broad educational benefits of these technologies.

#### *D. GT for Translation Major Students*

Alsalem (2019) observed—with Arabic-English translation students—that while the uncontrolled use of GT can enhance translation skills, it is inadvisable for beginners due to the risk of developing an overreliance on these tools. This caution is echoed by Yamada (2019), who stressed the importance of controlled post-editing training to help Japanese-English translation students tackle the challenges posed by the fluent-sounding and human-like outputs of current NMT systems. Without such training, it would be difficult to achieve professional post-editing standards.

On the effectiveness of MT in reducing workload and enhancing output quality, Yang et al. (2023) reported that Chinese-English translation students with six months of training experienced improved translation quality and reduced mental strain when using MT compared to manual methods. The post-edited translations slightly surpassed those of manual translations, making it the preferred method.

Additionally, the role of technological proficiency in the effective use of translation tools was examined by Man et al. (2020), who found a strong, positive correlation between students' knowledge of translation technology and their usage rates. Notably, second-year Chinese-English translation students utilized these tools more frequently than their first-year peers, indicating that as students become more proficient in the use of technology, their reliance on, and benefit from, MT increases. The researchers attest that these tools form an essential element of a translator's competence (see also Rico & González Pastor, 2022).

These findings collectively suggest that incorporating MT into translator training programs could significantly aid in preparing students for the demands of the modern translation profession, underscoring the importance of integrating targeted post-editing training into curricula to fully leverage these technological advancements.

### III. METHODS

#### *A. Research Questions*

The current research examines three areas regarding perceptions of GT: GT usage, perceptions of GT quality, and perceptions of the ethicality of the use of GT. The following research questions correspond to these three areas:

1. How frequently do translation students and instructors use GT, and for what purposes?
2. How do translation students and instructors perceive the quality of GT?
3. What ethical considerations, policies, and training practices do translation students and instructors follow regarding the use of GT?

#### *B. Participants*

The study employed a convenience sampling technique which resulted in a group of 82 participants, comprising 59% females and 41% males. All participants spoke Arabic as an L1 and were Saudi university students majoring in English and Translation at the bachelor's level. By the time they completed the survey, these students were in their final two semesters of an eight-semester program. They had already completed at least two-thirds of their specialized translation courses, which are a significant component of their 141-credit-hour degree program. These courses included, but were not limited to, medical translation, technical translation, media and political translation, business and economic translation, and a translation field project.

The study also included 16 Saudi instructors, consisting of eight males and eight females. These participants were chosen because they either teach or have taught one or more of the translation courses offered within the department. All instructors held doctoral degrees in fields closely related to language studies, including linguistics, TESOL, and applied linguistics, with at least 56% of them specializing specifically in translation. Additionally, 90% of them had five or more years of teaching experience.

#### *C. Instruments*

To investigate the use of GT among students and instructors, two separate surveys were administered via Google Forms online. Both surveys were adapted, with permission, from Jolley and Maimone (2015), who examined perceptions of GT use among Spanish-speaking participants. These surveys were also employed by Ata and Debreli (2021) in a study exploring GT use among Turkish learners. For the current study, the surveys were slightly modified to address the specific context of Arabic-English translation students.

The surveys focused on various aspects of GT usage, including frequency, purpose, perceived quality, and ethical considerations. The student and instructor surveys were conducted in English and consisted of six questions assessing GT use, five questions evaluating the perceived quality of GT, six questions addressing ethical and policy issues, and an additional six questions gathering background information.

Example questions from the students' survey include:

*-Overall, how often do you use Google Translate when working on assignments for a translation course?*

*-In general, how often do you use Google Translate to translate full sentences?*

*-Overall, how often do you use dictionaries when working on assignments for a translation course?*

*-For English to Arabic translation, how effective or ineffective do you think Google Translate is for translating: [ single words, full sentences, paragraph. etc.]?*

*-Decide if using Google Translate is considered cheating or not cheating under each of the following conditions: [single word, full sentences, full paragraphs, etc.]*

All responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale, with options such as "very effective," "effective," "somewhat effective," "not effective," and "clearly not effective." All questions were closed-ended, with optional open-ended spaces provided for additional comments. The surveys were distributed electronically to students and instructors through a public Telegram group for the Department of English at Al-Imam University. Reminders were sent periodically throughout the semester until data collection was completed.

#### IV. RESULTS

The survey data collected from both students and instructors were analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were calculated separately for each group to summarize their responses.

##### A. How Frequently do Translation Students and Instructors Use Google Translate and for What Purposes?

As shown in Figure 1, GT is widely utilized by translation students, with 47% of participants indicating that they always or usually rely on it, 35% sometimes use it, and 16% rarely or never resort to it. In contrast, traditional dictionaries are less-commonly employed, with 33% of participants reporting that they always or usually use them, 14% sometimes use them, and 54% rarely or never utilize them. Interestingly, instructors expected that a significant majority of their students (87%) always or usually employ GT. Reflecting the general preference of students for GT over traditional dictionaries, one student stated: "I think we need to learn how to use those engines to know how to use them correctly. Maybe just maybe there is no one use dictionary no more ... why I need to have dictionary app to just research for one word. Before, we learned from just books and school, now from internet and web." Another student notes: "Honestly, using Google Translate or any other similar platform is a necessity in these days. It's not cheating at all. It's a partial replacement of old-fashioned dictionaries. However, it needs time to develop. Using these new tools saves people time and effort".

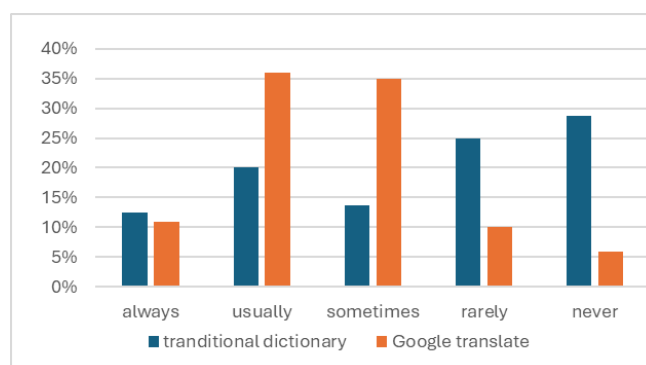


Figure 1. Students' Frequency of GT Use vs Traditional Dictionaries

With respect to instructors' use of GT, as Figure 2 shows, 40% always or usually use it, 53% sometimes do, and 6% rarely do. Furthermore, 60% of the instructors in the study always or usually use traditional dictionaries, 13% sometimes consult them, and 6% rarely use them.

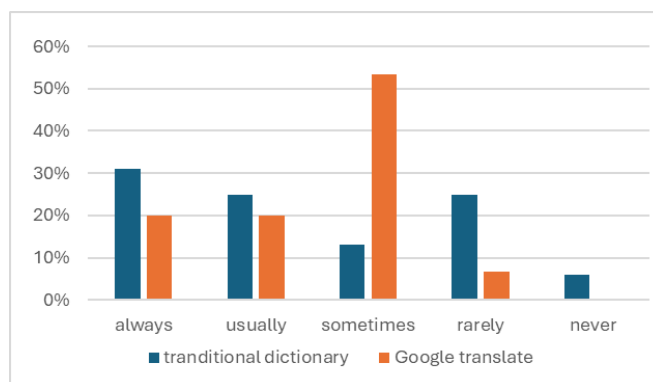


Figure 2. Instructors' Use of GT vs Traditional Dictionaries

Regarding the purposes for which students use GT compared to instructors' expectations, almost half of the students (44%) reported that they always or usually use GT for single-word translations. In contrast, instructors believed that all students (100%) use GT for this purpose. Interestingly, while only 20% of students stated that they always or usually utilize GT for full sentence translations, instructors believed that 87% of students do so. Similarly, only 15% of students reported always or usually using GT for whole paragraph translations, whereas a majority (87%) of instructors thought that students use GT for this purpose (see Figures 3 and 4).

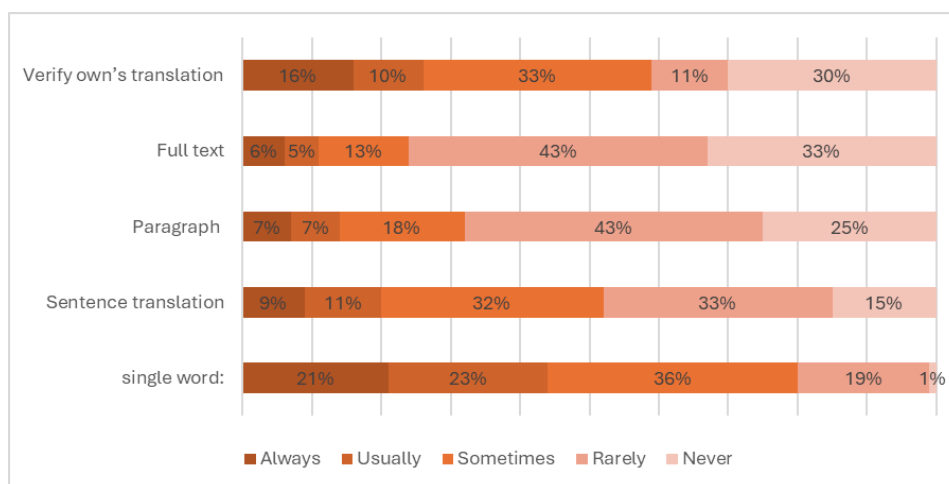


Figure 3. Students' Purpose of GT Use

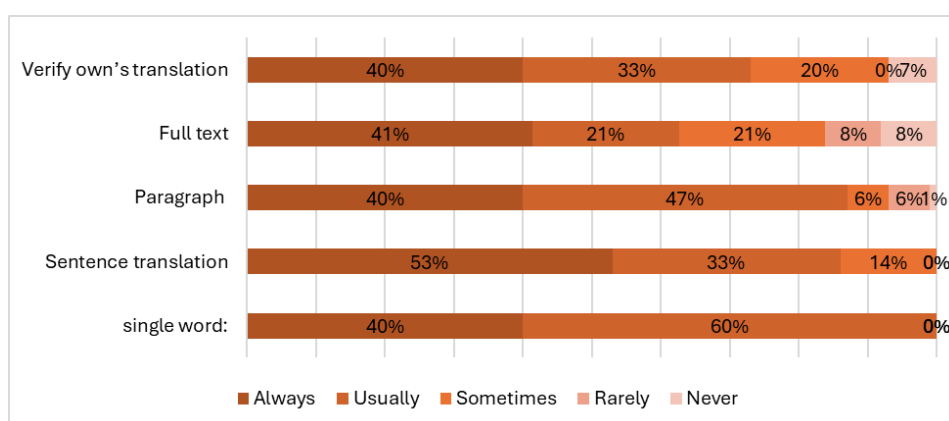


Figure 4. Instructors' Expectations of Why Students Use GT

Furthermore, a significant number of students (44%) agreed with the statement: "I first try to translate a complete sentence by myself, but if I have difficulties I copy the complete translation from Google Translate." Additionally, 49% of students indicated that they use GT to "compare my own translation to the translation by Google Translate." When presented with the statements "I first use Google Translate to translate a sentence, then I read the translation to fix any language mistakes" and "I don't use Google Translate at all to translate complete sentences or paragraphs", 35% and 21% of students agreed with these statements, respectively.

#### B. How do Translation Students and Instructors Perceive the Quality of Google Translate?

The evaluation of GT quality by students and instructors revealed notable differences, particularly in translation directionality. While students seemed to value English-to-Arabic translations similarly to the opposite direction, instructors gave higher evaluations to English-to-Arabic translations compared to the other direction. Specifically, as shown in Figure 5, approximately 68% of student respondents deemed GT to be effective, very effective, or somewhat effective, 4% were unsure, and the remaining 28% rated it as either not effective or very ineffective. For Arabic-to-English translation, a similar pattern emerged: 68% of participants regarded GT as effective, very effective, or somewhat effective, 26% perceived it as not effective or very ineffective, and 6% were unsure.

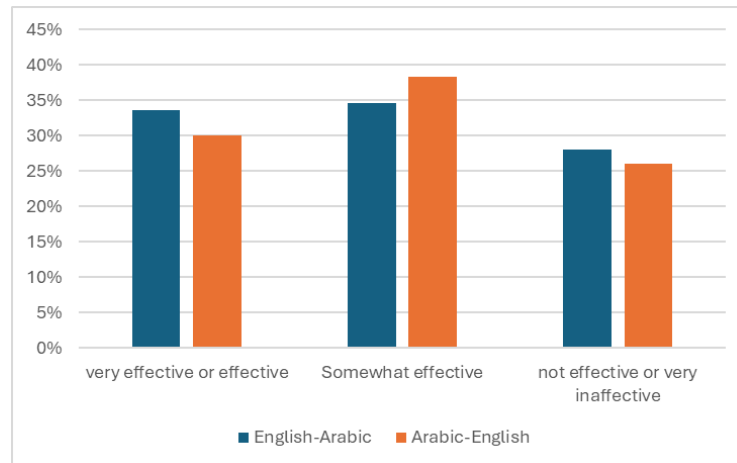


Figure 5. Summarized Effectiveness Ratings of GT by Students

Instructors, on the other hand, had more favorable ratings for English-to-Arabic translations (see Figure 6). A majority (82%) regarded GT as somewhat effective or very effective/effective, while the remaining 18% viewed it as either not effective or very ineffective. In contrast, for Arabic-to-English translation, 56% of the instructors viewed it as somewhat effective or very effective/effective, and the remaining 43% questioned its effectiveness.

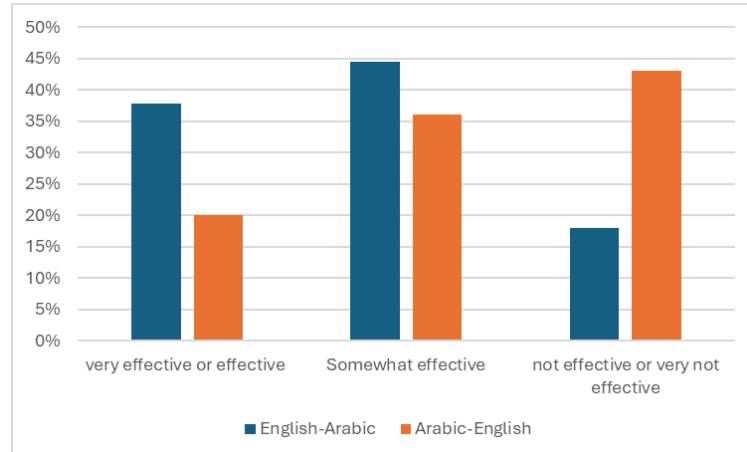


Figure 6. Summarized Effectiveness Ratings of GT by Instructors

When examining the specific purposes of translation, it is evident that both instructors' and students' effectiveness ratings decreased as the translation segment transitioned from single-word translation to paragraph translation, which is to be expected. However, instructors consistently rated the effectiveness higher for English-to-Arabic translation than vice versa, a distinction not apparent on the part of students. Both instructors and students agreed that GT is less effective for translating anything above the word level, with instructors providing slightly more positive evaluations overall.

It is well-established in the literature that there is a translation asymmetry where English-to-X translations are of higher quality than X-to-English, especially when X is a resource-poor language (Abu-Al-Sha'r & Zughouli, 2009; Jabak, 2019). Superior translation quality from English is due to the refined translation algorithms which are based on the higher quality and quantity of digital corpora available for resource-rich languages such as English when it comes to training these models (Wang et al., 2022). Abu-Al-Sha'r and Zughouli (2009) have also noted that English-to-Arabic translations are better than vice-versa. The fact that students did not perceive such asymmetry indicates a gap in their evaluation and understanding of MT, likely due to inadequate guidance from their instructors regarding the nuances of MTs.

Regarding the statement on whether the quality of English-to-Arabic GT translations is better than their own, only 44% of students clearly expressed confidence in their own translation quality by disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the

statement. Conversely, 46% of students either agreed, strongly agreed, or somewhat agreed with the statement, while 10% were unsure.

The results related to GT's role in helping students achieve their language goals were mixed. Most students (73%) and instructors (75%) agreed that GT can help improve students' vocabulary choices in English (see Figure 7). Additionally, nearly half of the students (43%) and 25% of the instructors considered GT to be effective for improving sentence structure in English. For overall English performance, 50% of instructors and 37% of students believed that GT can help improve students' overall English proficiency. On the other hand, 44% of instructors and 21% of students agreed that GT is not a good learning tool. Moreover, a majority of instructors (62.5%) indicated that GT might be helpful to the language learning process. However, only 29% of students believed that their instructors would think so. In fact, 46% of the students held the belief that their instructors would consider GT to be potentially harmful and detrimental to language learning.

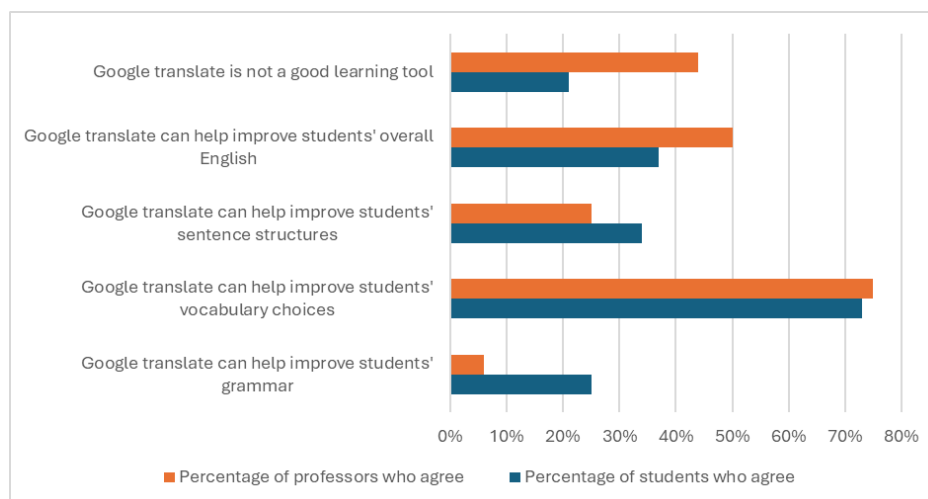


Figure 7. Instructors' and Students' Views on the Effectiveness of GT as a Learning Tool

### C. What Ethical Considerations, Policies, and Training Practices do Translation Students and Instructors Follow Regarding the Use of Google Translate?

With regard to ethical considerations, nearly half of the students (46%) believe that using GT is not cheating, regardless of how it is used. However, 34% of students think that their instructors view the use of GT for assignments as unethical and dishonest, regardless of how it is used. Almost half of the students (49%) agreed that whether GT use is considered cheating depends on how it is used, and a similar percentage (52%) believed that their instructors hold the same view. Only a small percentage of students (2.6%) agree that GT use is cheating, regardless of its usage.

Specifically, a majority of students (63%) believed that translating full sentences is ethical, whereas a minority (26%) considered translating full paragraphs to be ethical. One student commented on this issue, stating: "My work as a translator is to come up with the best translation possible, and after all, I'm using a tool to help enhance the translation (not cheating)." In contrast, 75% of instructors reported that the ethicality of GT use depends on how it is used, and only 12.5% considered GT completely ethical, regardless of how it is used.

Regarding the policy on the use of GT for completing translation assignments, the majority of instructors (68%) did not allow full-paragraph translation at all, and 39% also prohibited sentence translation. The remaining instructors permit GT use beyond the word unit, but under certain conditions. Students' reports corroborate these numbers, indicating similar percentages on whether their instructors allow the use of GT. For example, one student wrote: "Most of them do not agree with the use of Google Translate. They believe that students may overly depend on it and that stops their English improvement." Despite this, when instructors were asked if they have an official policy regarding GT use available to students, 50% reported not having one. One professor commented, "The course specification demands that students use dictionaries and nothing else".

Moreover, the majority of instructors (73%) did not spend any time in class demonstrating the use of GT, and most have never assigned activities requiring the use of GT or other online translation tools (60%). However, a significant number of instructors (69%) and students (75%) agreed that it would be beneficial if instructors spent time teaching students how to effectively use GT. Notably, the same percentage of instructors (69%) indicated that they had never received any training related to GT or other computer-assisted translations. Despite this, 50% of instructors expressed interest in learning more about GT. As far as traditional dictionaries are concerned, 75% of instructors allowed their use in general, with only 18% imposing certain conditions. Additionally, 85% of students reported receiving training on dictionary use.

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings reveal a clear discrepancy between the pedagogical practices advocated by instructors and the actual behaviors of students regarding GT use. Despite instructors' emphasis on traditional dictionary skills—supported by dedicated training sessions—students overwhelmingly prefer the convenience of GT. This trend aligns with previous research such as that of Alhaisoni (2016) and Lee and Briggs (2021), who also observed a significant reliance on MT tools due to their enhanced accuracy. Additionally, Liu et al. (2022) found that over 60% of Chinese-to-English translation students frequently used MT for their assignments, underscoring its growing prevalence in academic settings.

Students not only rely on GT for single words but also use it for translating larger segments such as sentences and paragraphs. While the frequency of GT use decreases as the text length increases, a substantial number of students continue to use it for larger passages, as shown by Mulyani and Afina (2021). However, the appropriateness of GT use for translating full paragraphs depends heavily on post-editing skills, which, as this study reveals, tend to be lacking among students. Only 35% of the students attempt post-editing, a deficiency likely resulting from insufficient training. This raises concerns about students' reliance on GT without the necessary post-editing skills to ensure accuracy and fluency in translation.

In fact, as Koponen (2016) pointed out, post-editing has become an established component of the translation workflow in professional contexts. Similarly, Vieira (2019, p. 12) noted that “post-editing is no longer a separate task undertaken only in MT development circles. Rather, it is increasingly part of what translators do.” These observations underscore the importance of integrating post-editing training into translation programs. Of course, the effort required for post-editing depends on factors such as the language pair and the type of text (Vieira, 2019). This being said, the majority of instructors in our research indicated never having received any training with respect to GT or other MT tools. This educational oversight is highlighted in the literature, with Jolley and Maimone (2015), and Samman (2022) echoing the critical need for such training, particularly given the increasing demand for these skills in the marketplace, as emphasized by Povilaitienė and Kasperė (2022).

Students' and instructors' perceptions regarding the quality of GT vary, but both groups generally view it as an effective tool for translation tasks. About half of the students and a majority of the instructors consider GT to be somewhat or very effective, particularly in improving vocabulary choices. This aligns with previous studies such as those of Jolley and Maimone (2015) and Liu et al. (2022), where participants rated MT outputs as accurate or somewhat reliable. Tsai (2019) and Amin (2020) also noted that GT helps reduce grammatical and content errors in student writing, contributing to overall language development. However, our study revealed that instructors tend to give GT higher marks for English-to-Arabic translation compared to Arabic-to-English, while students do not make such distinctions. This variance in directionality reflects instructors' deeper awareness of the limitations of MT, especially when handling more complex language structures. Despite this, both groups agree that GT becomes less effective when translating beyond word level, further highlighting the need for post-editing to enhance translation quality.

The ethicality of using GT is a contested issue, with nearly half of the students believing that GT use is not cheating, regardless of how it is employed. A significant portion of students also consider full sentence translation ethical. This view aligns with international perspectives, in that Mulyani and Afina (2021) and Ata and Debreli (2021) found similar attitudes among Indonesian and Turkish students learning English. However, instructors remain divided on the use of GT beyond single-word translations. Most professors discourage its use for sentences and paragraphs, and formal academic policies still focus on the use of traditional dictionaries, with little to no mention of GT. This lack of policy is mirrored in the finding that most instructors have not integrated GT into classroom activities, possibly because they themselves lack formal training in MT (Rico & González Pastor, 2022). Without clear policies, students are left to determine for themselves whether their use of GT is ethical, often basing their judgments on the degree of post-editing or specific use cases. For example, Liu et al. (2022) found that 71% of their Chinese-English translation students associated the extent of post-editing with the ethicality of using MT, with more extensive post-editing perceived as making GT use ethical. In addition, 24% of the students in our study believed that using MT for graded assignments constituted an ethical issue.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This study highlights the widespread use of GT among Saudi translation students and instructors, revealing a notable gap between students' reliance on GT and the lack of formal academic policies or training surrounding its use. While both students and instructors acknowledge the effectiveness of GT in translation tasks, instructors often discourage its use beyond single-word translations, and traditional dictionary skills remain the primary focus of translation training. Despite the growing use of MT in professional translation, institutions have been slow to adapt, leaving students without the necessary skills to effectively use and post-edit MT outputs. Glendinning (2014) emphasized that many educational institutions have yet to address the growing role of MT in language education, despite its increasing integration into the professional translation landscape.

Given the inevitability of GT use by students, even when not allowed, it is crucial to formally integrate GT into translation curricula. Educators should establish clear policies regarding GT use, ensuring students understand when and how to use it appropriately. Structured training sessions on the use of GT should be introduced, focusing on post-editing, the limitations of MT, and best practices for improving translation quality. Rather than discouraging the use of GT by emphasizing its errors, instructors should guide students on how to refine and enhance GT output. Providing take-home assignments that explicitly require GT use could further help students develop practical skills, enabling them to engage

with MT tools confidently and ethically within a supportive learning environment. By acknowledging and embracing MT in the classroom, educators can better prepare students for the realities of the modern translation industry.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# The Impact of Self-Efficacy on Academic Achievement Mediated by Learning Motivation and Moderated by Socioeconomic Status Among Jordanian EFL Students

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**Abstract**—With learning motivation as a mediator and socioeconomic status (SES) as a moderator, this study examined the role of self-efficacy in predicting academic achievement among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Jordan. A survey was conducted among EFL students from Jordanian universities during the 2022-2023 academic year. A stratified random sampling was used, resulting in a total of 429 completed questionnaires. The data were analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results indicate that self-efficacy is positively related to academic achievement and to learning motivation. Thus, higher self-efficacy is associated with better academic achievement. Furthermore, learning motivation significantly contributes to academic achievement, highlighting its crucial role as a mediator. Additionally, socioeconomic status influences learning motivation and interacts with self-efficacy to affect it. In conclusion, higher self-efficacy is linked to increased learning motivation, leading to improved academic achievement, and socioeconomic status plays a critical role in moderating the relationships between self-efficacy, learning motivation, and academic achievement.

**Index Terms**—self-efficacy, academic achievement, learning motivation, socioeconomic status

## I. INTRODUCTION

For developing countries all around the world, the improvement of their educational system is always at the top of the list, as highly educated citizens are key to both individual and social economic progress (PISA, 2018; Lamas, 2015). Among the dynamic concerns in education research lies the influence of self-efficacy (SE) on academic achievement (AA); it is an integral function affecting one's language capabilities when connecting learning motivation (LM) and educational outcome. For instance, Marian and Spivey (2003) found evidence that suggests that one's motivation and attitude towards academic achievement can actually promote furthered linguistic competency. Further corroborated by the Self-Determination Theory, learning motivation and attainment of a student can be improved if the core psychological needs of relatedness, autonomy, and competence are met. The same can be said about the achievement of EFL students and the moderating role of SES outlined in Darazi et al. (2023). This research replicates the complexities of SES and provides the opportunity to investigate previously discussed issues further, as the relationship between the factors is unclear and intertwined. The interaction among socioeconomic status (SES), self-efficacy, and learning motivation, with SES as a moderator and learning motivation as a mediator in the context of Jordanian EFL student achievement, opens up a vast array of different psychological and financial aspects of educational success.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Self-Efficacy

The studies conducted by Cascio et al. (2013) and Li and Lalani (2020) underscore the central role of self-efficacy in the context of online learning, making it a vital factor of academic progress. Nevertheless, although Alqurashi (2016) and Hodges (2008) agree on the fact of its significance, there is still a lack of understanding in terms of how it impacts the learning process online and a need to bridge the gap in knowledge that this issue creates. In addition, it is necessary to recall that Key (2020) emphasized the importance of research-based notions in the field of education and that, although it is evident that self-efficacy might be able to improve task completion, further studies are required to learn how to influence it.

### B. Learning Motivation

As Ghobari and Abu Sharia (2010) and Hamdan (2007) discussed, the multiple aspects of learning motivation convey its complex bidirectional relationship with cognitive and emotional factors. Moreover, while literature often mentions the central role of teachers, it tends to overlook the variance in students' responses to various applications of motivation (Abdullah, 2012). It has been suggested that social media may improve motivation; however, it has been suggested that

this approach might have potential distractions and unclear long-term effects, as argued by Mihailidis (2014) and Tambunan et al. (2022).

### C. Academic Achievement

Academic achievement refers to the progress made in learning to meet the educational objectives, including content and knowledge learned in an academic environment. However, it is solely defined by performance in particular educational activities, as opposed to the general knowledge and learning experiences encountered in and out of the classroom (Naglieri & Goldstein, 2009). Thus, the concept of the evaluation of the academic achievement may be based on the standard approach put forward by Haik (2023) and limited to students' grades and test scores. However, this approach completely disregards other facets of learning, including skills acquired or critical thinking developed. In addition, while focusing on academic achievements being the primary aim, it is proposed by El-Adl and Alkharusi (2020) that non-academic abilities should also be deemed important to include them in a diverse skillset that is critical to ensuring growth and productivity in students.

### D. Socioeconomic Status

It is common knowledge that the impact of socioeconomic status on education has been reviewed by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2018; Broer et al., 2019). However, this subject requires a more elaborate type of research, which should go far beyond the limits for both correlational analysis and investigation of casual paths. Further, the interventions that should be designed to minimize or eliminate the effect of low socioeconomic status on learning should be analyzed in the corresponding level of detail.

## III. RELATED STUDIES

Recent studies address the comprehensive interaction of self-efficacy, academic achievement, and learning motivation, alongside socioeconomic background. For example, Darazi et al. (2023) sought to determine the impact of feedback provided by ESL teachers on the goal-oriented behavior of the ESL undergraduate students and their academic performance. This study involving the students of the English Language and Literature Department is based on a well-structured survey questionnaire. The authors used random sampling to increase the representativeness of the results, recruiting 379 participants. The results of the study have supported all the formulated hypotheses. Similarly, Hsu and Wilde (2019) discovered that low self-efficacy creates more difficulties for accomplishing the tasks because the individuals' self-comparisons are too negative to allow enhancing self-efficacy.

In contrast, Estira (2020) revealed that the students are eager to participate in distance learning, though they need to be more proficient in successfully using the online instruments for academic purposes. Additionally, the socioeconomic status also affects the participation intensity, as students belonging to a rich family are more independent in terms of online learning.

Moyano et al. (2020) studied the interrelation between academic achievement in subjects like mathematics and languages and a blend of non-cognitive factors and cognitive factors, where the latter are deemed to be the mediators. The study was conducted on 133 elementary school students, utilizing the meditational regression approach for assessing a number of models.

El-Adl and Alkharusi (2020) also sought to determine the link between the students' academic achievement in terms of mathematics, learning motivation, and the aspects of the learning strategy. The study, which involved 238 students of grade nine from the basic schools of Oman, employed the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire. The positive connection was established between the motivational aspects, the online efficacy of the students, and their academic performance.

Finally, Broer et al. (2019) endorse a stable, positive relationship between academic achievement and socioeconomic background. This study conducted a synthesis of research and concluded that the strength of the aforementioned connection can vary across different contexts and educational systems in general.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study is designed around three key hypotheses and aims to investigate the relationships between self-efficacy, learning motivation, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement among Jordanian EFL students.

### A. Research Hypotheses

This research is guided by the following three hypotheses:

1. H(1): Self-efficacy directly enhances the academic achievement of Jordanian EFL students. This hypothesis is grounded in the findings of Hsu and Wilde (2019), who demonstrated that individuals with lower self-efficacy struggled more to complete assignments. This suggests a potentially strong correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement.
2. H(2): Learning motivation acts as a mediator between self-efficacy and academic achievement. According to Darazi et al. (2023), professors' feedback directly impacts the motivation of ESL students, which in turn may

indirectly influence their academic achievement. This highlights the role of motivation as an intermediary factor in the relationship between self-efficacy and academic outcomes.

3. H(3): The socioeconomic status of the student moderates the effect of self-efficacy and learning motivation on academic achievement. Estira's observation that students from higher socioeconomic levels tend to participate more in distance learning supports this hypothesis. Additionally, the research of Mansoorian and Razmjoo (2021) underscores a strong relationship between student motivation and socioeconomic status, further justifying this hypothesis.

The conceptual framework for this research is illustrated in Figure 1.

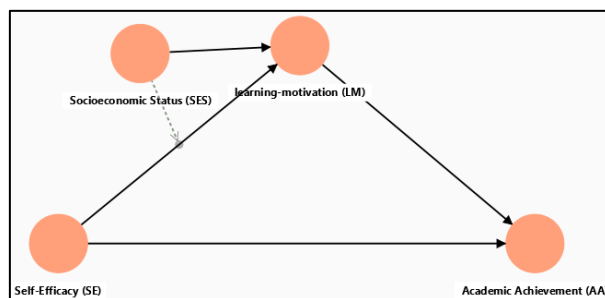


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### B. Participants

The sample of this study represents all EFL students from Jordanian universities. The sample consisted of 429 EFL students, who were randomly selected in a survey approach during the academic year 2022 - 2023. All students signed the consent letter to participate voluntarily after being informed of the aim of the current study.

### C. Instruments

A questionnaire, a 5-point Likert scale, included two instruments and a section for the demographic variables that included sex, age, study level, and grade point average to measure academic achievement. Two instruments were used. The first, namely the Online Learning Self-Efficacy Scale (OLSES), readapted from Zimmerman and Kulikowich (2016), contained 15 items. The second instrument features ten items developed by Moneva et al. (2020) to measure learning motivation. The questionnaire was validated by a number of specialists from the three universities.

### D. Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was presented to the students through electronic means. Afterward, the data was supplied by SPSS, and SMARTPLS4 was used for the analysis using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach. The measurement and the structural models were analyzed by the PLS-SEM.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Measurement Model

The PLS-SEM model covers socioeconomic status, academic achievement, as measured by grade point average, and the latent variables of self-efficacy and learning motivation. In this study, the assessment of learning motivation and self-efficacy was performed on 11 and 15 items, respectively, which presented a range of loadings from 0.42 to 0.8 for learning motivation (LM) and 0.39 to 0.77 for self-efficacy (SE). However, for maintaining the integrity of the model, the items that had loadings below the threshold value of 0.5 were removed from the final model. This point is critical because, according to the PLS-SEM approach, loadings above 0.5 are necessary. This fact implies that except for several items, most of them are necessary and provide a good loading value for both LM and SE. Such an approach allows a more nuanced examination of the performance of the items in question, while recognizing that even with such reduced levels, they still validly measure the constructs. Therefore, these new assessments with regards to the loadings of the variables LM and SE in analyzing the relationships with these variables and those of academic achievement among Jordanian EFL students should lead to a new understanding of the educational processes. The loadings of these constructs are shown in both Table 1, below, and Figure 1, above.

TABLE 1  
OUTER LOADINGS FOR ITEMS ON CONSTRUCTS

| Items-Construct                  | Outer Loadings | Items-Construct            | Outer Loadings |
|----------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Aa <- Academic Achievement (Aa)  | 1              | SE12 <- Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.53           |
| LM1 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.61           | SE14 <- Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.61           |
| LM10 <- Learning Motivation (LM) | 0.62           | SE15 <- Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.55           |
| LM2 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.66           | SE2 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.64           |
| LM3 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.7            | SE3 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.63           |
| LM4 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.57           | SE4 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.52           |
| LM5 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.56           | SE6 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.7            |
| LM6 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.8            | SE7 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.71           |
| LM7 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.71           | SE8 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.65           |
| LM8 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.77           | SE9 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)  | 0.77           |
| LM9 <- Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.67           | SE12 <- Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.53           |
| SE11 <- Self-Efficacy (SE)       | 0.51           | SE14 <- Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.61           |

The structural equation model presented in Figure 2 demonstrates that learning motivation mediates the effect of self-efficacy (SE) on academic achievement (AA). In the model, socioeconomic status serves as a moderator. Items of (SE) and learning motivation (LM) show moderate outer loadings, which are 0.51 to 0.77 for SE and 0.56 to 0.8 for LM. It means that SE and LM are great predictors of all pathways. The path coefficient analysis suggested that all constructs are positively influenced by one another. For instance, there is a positive path coefficient from LM to AA that is 0.20. Therefore, this value implies that students with a higher learning motivation will have better academic achievement. The model explains 44% of the variance in LM, which indicates that the model accounts for significantly more variance in LM. At the same time, the model explains only 13% of the variance in AA, meaning that there are other factors that influence students' academic achievement but are not modeled. In such a way, SEM has demonstrated a detailed model of the relationships between self-efficacy, learning motivation, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement. Still, there might be other variables that influence the academic success of the research population.

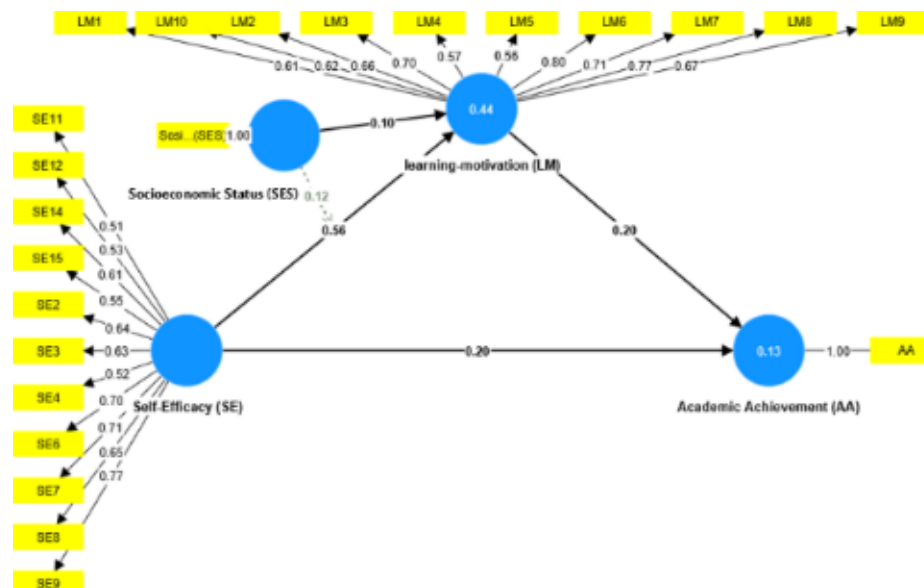


Figure 2. Construct With Their Outer Loadings, Path Coefficients, and R<sup>2</sup>.

As seen in Table 2, below, the reliability measures for self-efficacy (SE) and learning motivation (LM) point to a robust internal consistency. Specifically, both constructs can be deemed solid on account of Cronbach's alpha values of 0.84 for SE and 0.86 for LM, which are well above the 0.7 cut-off value. Besides, the composite reliability of the constructs, as evidenced by rho<sub>a</sub> and rho<sub>c</sub>, is also above 0.7 for both of them. It implies that the items used in both scales are sufficient in their quality to measure the constructs. As for Average Variance Extracted (AVE), it is equal to 0.51 and 0.56 for SE and LM. It means that a majority of the variance can be attributed to the construct under study rather than a measurement error. Thus, the constructs have proven their robustness and good convergent validity – that is why it can be concluded that the scales for measurement of these variables are reliable and valid for the study.

TABLE 2  
CONSTRUCTS RELIABILITY

|                          | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability<br>(rho_a) | Composite Reliability<br>(rho_c) | Average Variance Extracted<br>(AVE) |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Self-Efficacy (SE)       | 0.84             | 0.86                             | 0.87                             | 0.51                                |
| Learning Motivation (LM) | 0.86             | 0.87                             | 0.89                             | 0.56                                |

Table 3 shows the construct discriminant validity in a structural model; respectively, AA correlates moderately with SE and LM at 0.34 and 0.35, respectively. The same can be related to SES at 0.11 and SE somewhat higher at 0.22, but all imply that the two are different. At last, the interaction term SES x SE correlates at a modest level with other constructions implying that it is unique, yet linked. Nevertheless, these results may indicate certain problems of discriminant validity, but at the same time are generally favorable of discriminant validity.

TABLE 3  
DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

|                                                 | Academic Achievement<br>(AA) | Self-Efficacy<br>(SE) | Socioeconomic Status<br>(SES) | Learning Motivation<br>(LM) |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Academic Achievement (AA)                       |                              |                       |                               |                             |
| Self-Efficacy (SE)                              | 0.34                         |                       |                               |                             |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES)                      | 0.11                         | 0.22                  |                               |                             |
| Learning Motivation (LM)                        | 0.35                         | 0.71                  | 0.29                          |                             |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES) x Self-Efficacy (SE) | 0.28                         | 0.4                   | 0.37                          | 0.42                        |

In a regression model, Table 4 provides the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics for academic achievement (AA) items, learning motivation (LM) items, self-efficacy (SE) items, socioeconomic status (SES), and the interaction between SES and SE. All variables appear to be free at minimal concerns of multicollinearity. AA has a VIF of 1, suggesting no multicollinearity, and it can be understood that the variable is free and independent within the model. SES has a similar VIF value and is also free from multicollinearity. The LM results are located within the range of 1.33 and 2.35, which suggests no severe question of multicollinearity but a moderate level. LM6, LM8, and LM9 are slightly higher than other variables, but the value of less than 5 implies moderate concerns. SE variables also have moderate concerns of multicollinearity, with the VIF ranging from 1.28 to 2.35. SE14, SE15, and SE9 are slightly higher but effectively below 5. The same can be said about the interaction. The VIF results help to conclude that the model is mostly free of severe multicollinearity, and the independent variables are being different and suitable information for the analysis.

TABLE 4  
COLLINEARITY STATISTICS (VIF)

| Variables | VIF  | Variables | VIF  | Variables                                          | VIF  |
|-----------|------|-----------|------|----------------------------------------------------|------|
| AA        | 1    |           |      | SE3                                                | 1.7  |
| LM1       | 1.68 |           |      | SE4                                                | 1.43 |
| LM10      | 1.71 |           |      | SE6                                                | 1.64 |
| LM2       | 1.88 |           |      | SE7                                                | 1.85 |
| LM3       | 1.68 | SE12      | 1.35 | SE8                                                | 1.52 |
| LM4       | 1.33 | SE14      | 2.35 | SE9                                                | 2.31 |
| LM5       | 1.39 | SE15      | 2.25 | Socioeconomic Status (SES)                         | 1    |
| LM6       | 2.35 | SE2       | 1.53 | Socioeconomic Status<br>(SES) x Self-Efficacy (SE) | 1    |

In the analysis provided for the effects of self-efficacy on academic achievement, mediated by learning motivation and moderated by socioeconomic status among Jordanian EFL students, for both the saturated and estimated models, there are intriguing findings related primarily to model fit, as reported in Table 5. An evident aspect is the 0.07 for the estimated model and the saturated model being SRMR, which is an acceptable fit below 0.08. Another observation is that the estimated model has marginally lower discrepancy function values, specifically d\_ULS 1.42 and d\_G 0.43, which imply a slightly more favorable fit than the saturated model. Even though Chi-square values for the estimated model and the saturated model are different, measuring 987.51 and 993.34, respectively, their considerable magnitude may raise concerns regarding whether the model fits acceptably. Furthermore, both models have an NFI of 0.73. As usual, the recommended benchmark for acceptable model fit is either 0.90 or 0.95, which implies that the model has an optimal fit. Consequently, based on the SRMR and discrepancy function values, it is acceptable to conclude that the model fits moderately well.

TABLE 5  
MODEL FIT

|            | Saturated Model | Estimated Model |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| SRMR       | 0.07            | 0.07            |
| d_ULS      | 1.46            | 1.42            |
| d_G        | 0.43            | 0.43            |
| Chi-square | 993.34          | 987.51          |
| NFI        | 0.73            | 0.73            |

The R-square and adjusted R-square for academic achievement (AA) and learning motivation (LM) are the most important statistics, which indicate the proportions of the variance in these dependent variables, which can be explained with independent variables of the model. As for the academic achievement of Jordanian EFL students, the R-square is 0.13, and the adjusted R-square is similar, which means the number of predictors that were in the model explains 0.13% of the total variance in the academic achievement. Specifically, this model, including variables such as self-efficacy, learning motivation, and possibly others, explains roughly 13% of the variance in academic achievement. In turn, the R-square for the learning motivation model is higher and constitutes 0.44. Meanwhile, the adjusted R-square is close to 0.43, which means that the model explains 43% of the variance in that model, as shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
R<sup>2</sup>

|                           | R-Square | R-Square Adjusted |
|---------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Academic Achievement (AA) | 0.13     | 0.13              |
| Learning Motivation (LM)  | 0.44     | 0.43              |

## B. Path Analysis With Bootstrapping

### 1. Direct Effects

The study demonstrates that there are statistically significant relationships among self-efficacy (SE), learning motivation (LM), socioeconomic status (SES), and academic achievement (AA), according to path coefficients and their statistical significance. It is observed in Table 7 that SE positively and significantly affects AA with a path coefficient of 0.2, a T-statistic of 3.25, and a P-value of 0. At the same time, this influence is even more substantial in relation to LM. It is also revealed that SES positively influences LM, although with a coefficient impact of 0.1 and a T-statistic of 2.36, which is not as substantial as the effect of having SE influence LM. All the relationships can be regarded as statistically significant, and at the same time, LM positively impacts AA, according to the path coefficient of 0.2 and a T-statistic of 3.17, P-value = 0. At the same time, it is also necessary to state that the effect of the interaction of SES and SE on LM is statistically significant. It is equal to 0.12, with a T-value of 3.48, while the P-value is 0.

TABLE 7  
PATH COEFFICIENT

| Path                                                                        | Path coefficient | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics ( O/STDEV ) | P values |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Self-Efficacy (SE) -> Academic Achievement (AA)                             | 0.2              | 0.06                       | 3.25                     | 0        |
| Self-Efficacy (SE) -> Learning Motivation (LM)                              | 0.56             | 0.03                       | 17.93                    | 0        |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES) -> Learning Motivation (LM)                      | 0.1              | 0.04                       | 2.36                     | 0.02     |
| Learning Motivation (LM) -> Academic Achievement (AA)                       | 0.2              | 0.06                       | 3.17                     | 0        |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES) X Self-Efficacy (SE) -> Learning Motivation (LM) | 0.12             | 0.03                       | 3.48                     | 0        |

### 2. Indirect Effect

Table 8 describes the indirect effects of self-efficacy (SE), socioeconomic status (SES), and their interaction on academic achievement (AA), mediated by motivational features. As can be seen, the indirect effect of SE on AA through learning motivation (LM) is significant and positive. The T-statistic is 3.1 and the P-value is 0, which means a strong impact of SE on AA with the help of LM. The indirect effect of SES on AA through LM is less and marginally significant. The T-statistic is 1.9 and the P-value is 0.06, which means less specific influence of SES on AA with the help of LM than SE. The interaction of SES and SE has less but a significant effect on AA with the help of LM. It is 0.02 with T-statistics of 2.19 and a p value of 0.03 accordingly. The results of the study show that SE has a defined and positive indirect effect on AA with the help of LM. At the same time, the role of SES and the interaction of SES and SE are less and not as decisive as the effect of SE, indicating the crucial role of LM as a mediating factor.

TABLE 8  
INDIRECT EFFECT

| Path                                                                                                     | Path Coefficient | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | T-Statistics (O/STDEV) | P-Values |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| Self-Efficacy (SE) -> Learning Motivation (LM) -> Academic Achievement (AA)                              | 0.11             | 0.04                       | 3.1                    | 0        |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES) -> Learning Motivation (LM) -> Academic Achievement (AA)                      | 0.02             | 0.01                       | 1.9                    | 0.06     |
| Socioeconomic Status (SES) X Self-Efficacy (SE) -> Learning Motivation (LM) -> Academic Achievement (AA) | 0.02             | 0.01                       | 2.19                   | 0.03     |

The two histograms that are presented in Figure 3 reflect the meaning of the visual distribution of the bootstrapped indirect effect estimates related to two distinct relationships within an SEM, which complement the findings reported in Table 8.

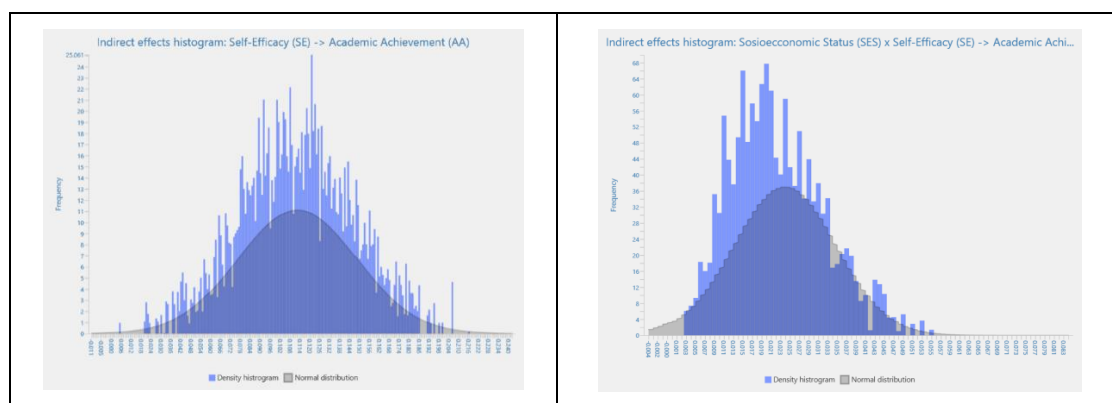


Figure 3. Density Histogram

## VI. CONCLUSION

### A. Findings

According to the research results, the comprehensive analysis of the study demonstrates a solid and positive relationship between self-efficacy (SE) and academic achievement (AA) among Jordanian students learning English. These results coincide with the classic findings by Bandura (1997) and Pajares (1996). Both advocate for the paramount importance of students' belief in their capabilities, as these notions define their educational outcomes. In the case of our research, these relationships (self-efficacy (SE) -> academic achievement (AA)) are measured with a path coefficient of 0.2 and are also confirmed with a p-value of less than 0.001 constantly. Moreover, the research examines the relationship between SE and LM and presents a significant coefficient of 0.56 with a p-value of less than 0.001. This means that robust self-efficacy allows students to reach academic results and motivates them to master various language tasks. This relationship is also confirmed with a path coefficient of 0.2 reported by Vallerand et al. (1992). The research also examines the role of socioeconomic status and the nature of the relationships. The outcomes suggest that this variable directly impacts LM among students with a coefficient of 0.1 and a p-value of 0.02. Additionally, it influences the nature of the relationship between self-efficacy and motivation, as illustrated by an interaction effect coefficient of 0.12 with a p-value of less than 0.001. This means that students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds can enjoy more ambitious advantages if they have robust self-efficacy. The indirect effects calculated in the research and supported by current literature indicate the role of LM as a mediator of the relationship between SE and AA with a coefficient of 0.11 and a p-value of zero (Darazi et al., 2023). These outcomes correspond with recent studies by Darazi et al. (2023). The indirect effect on AA via LM illustrates relatively weaker relationships, but it is still rather significant. The direct effect indicates the significant impact of SES on AA with a p-value of zero on the indirect effect on AA via LM but a more significant interaction effect of SES and SE on AA through LM with a coefficient of 0.02 and a p-value of 0.03. This is in line with the findings of Estira (2020) and Mansoorian and Razmjoo (2021), who observed the significant impact of socioeconomic background on educational engagement and strategy use.

### B. Implications

The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the knowledge about the dynamics of the academic achievement of Jordanian EFL learners. First of all, it is essential to highlight the vital role of self-efficacy (SE) and learning motivation (LM) and the relatively subtle but ubiquitous influence of socioeconomic status (SES). As for the impact of self-efficacy on academic achievement, results of a robust positive correlation are supported by a path coefficient of 0.2 and a significant p-value, underscoring the supreme role of a student's confidence in their abilities,

which supports H(1). It is an issue that is raised by the major theories of the construct, such as the seminal works of Bandura (1997) and Pajares (1996). Meanwhile, the statistically significant relationship between learning motivation with self-efficacy and academic achievement is relevantly strong, suggesting that a student's faith in their learning skills may boost both their academic achievement as well as enthusiasm for learning and persistence in their educational pursuits. The findings of the mediation analysis also make a significant contribution, showing a noticeable indirect effect of self-efficacy on academic achievement using learning motivation as a mediator, which supports H(2). It is a critical issue for an understanding of the nature of the process in the context of language learning because motivation can have a substantial effect on a person's ability to perceive and master new languages. Furthermore, the results of testing for a moderating influence of SES demonstrate that the construct may not affect academic achievement directly, yet it is critical for modulating the impact of self-efficacy on learning motivation, which supports H(3). This finding implies that the interplay of a student's self-efficacy with their background shapes their educational experience. From the perspective of educators and policymakers, these implications require that interventions should work towards improving self-efficacy and motivation and be adjusted for the characteristics of students' SES background with their psychological and social factors taken into account.

### C. Recommendations

There are several ways to boost academic achievement among Jordanian EFL students. To increase self-efficacy, positive comments can be combined with exercises designed for goal-setting. Besides, viewing successful learning paradigms can have an equally great effect. Motivation to learn should be nourished by the instruction of materials that are meaningful for students. Multiple pedagogical approaches can also be useful, such as teamwork-driven learning and projects. To boost academic achievement, the provision of support should be adapted to students' socioeconomic status and their peculiarities. To these ends, teachers must acknowledge the role of motivation and self-efficacy and learn to promote these components in their work.

### D. Limitations

Although the results bring considerable benefits, they have the mark of our research being focused on Jordanian EFL students, and this might not apply to other contexts, requiring additional validation. The use of self-reported data for such critical variables as self-efficacy, learning motivation, and socioeconomic status may introduce a bias, indicating that the findings could be more on subjective points of view rather than objective data. Another issue is the general nature of cross-sectional analysis, which cannot facilitate making confident causal inferences. However, they can help to highlight the situation at a single time point, indicating that a longitudinal analysis will be required to understand how the dynamics between the selected variables might change over time.

### E. Future Studies

Expanding the scope of this study to include different educational contexts and cultures could inform us as to the generalizability of our findings. We may also supplement our data by using standardized language proficiency tests to evaluate academic achievement. Additionally, exploring the relationships between teacher efficacy, teaching methods, and results would provide insights that could direct EFL instructors toward implementing more effective approaches to develop strong self-efficacy and lasting motivation in students.

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# Tolerance Attitude Analysis of the Social Piety Value in the Novel *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* Based on Prophetic Ethics

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**Abstract**—This study analyzes tolerance attitude as a manifestation of social piety values within the framework of prophetic ethics in the novel *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* by Ahmad Tohari. This study aims to understand how the novel depicts tolerance in the context of diversity in Indonesia. Using Goldmann's genetic structuralism approach and Jurij Lotman's semiotics, qualitative research methods were used, involving hermeneutic analysis and interviews with the author. The results showed a binary opposition between the character Kang Suyud, who represents a rigid interpretation of Islam, and Kyai Ngumar, who prioritizes tolerance. The novel illustrates how differences in religious understanding do not have to lead to conflict, emphasizing the importance of social piety manifested through tolerance and empathy. Kyai Ngumar's tolerant attitude contrasts with Kang Suyud's intolerance, showing the importance of moderation and understanding diversity to maintain social harmony in Indonesia, aligning with prophetic ethical values. This study concludes that tolerance is the key to building an inclusive society in Indonesia, which is rich in cultural and religious diversity.

**Index Terms**—Kuntowijoyo's prophetic ethics, social piety values, tolerance

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population and has the challenge of becoming a guide for Islamic civilization. Indonesia's geographical condition consists of various ethnic groups, cultures, and languages, so tolerance for Indonesia's diversity is always an exciting topic to discuss. Indonesia's credibility as a heterogeneous nation has been at stake in recent years since Islamic movements harassed the credibility of Islam in Indonesia (Azra, 2020). The phase currently happening and developing in Indonesia is the creation of a big dichotomy named "radicalism". This phenomenon can threaten the integrity of the very heterogeneous Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia in various situations and dynamics. This radicalism movement, labeled as intolerant, has also colored the political agenda in every democratic party. The peak occurred when the people of Jakarta had to choose their governor in 2017 (Jamil, 2021; Khamdan & Wiharyani, 2018). If this continues, Islam in Indonesia may only become a well-documented historical record in a museum.

The story presented in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* differs from the stories in Ahmad Tohari's other works, which are about conflicts among Muslims. The novel's title, first published in 1995, stylistically tells a story that circles to form a specific pattern. However, in the end, it looks like the arrangement of harmonized lines is analogous to land and water that complement each other. The novel's conflict starts from a different perspective in understanding Islam, for example, in terms of activities. Kang Suyud believes that working together is best if the people involved are all Muslims. This point of view differs from the thinking held by Kyai Ngumar, who is very tolerant. Kang Suyud's belief in the necessity of collaboration exclusively among Muslims highlights a more rigid interpretation of Islam, while Kyai Ngumar embodies a more tolerant approach.

The difference in views of tolerance reminds the author of Navis in the short story titled *Robohnya Surau Kami*. What happened to Haji Saleh in the short story was a suitable form of satire. In daily activities, ritual piety measures the quality of human worship in Haji Saleh's view. This transactional view will birth the idea that Muslim activities, such as prayer, zakat, and hajj, are the only way to achieve happiness. As a result, a person is a good Muslim if he/she only carries out activities based on the pillars of Islam alone. The attitude that a Muslim should have is a sense of empathy. Empathy is aligned with the social education values found in the Qur'an, which emphasize helping others, promoting

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good, and preventing wrong, thus fostering social solidarity and brotherhood (Islamy & Saihu, 2020). This sense of empathy is a moral obligation and a social responsibility that encourages Muslims to actively participate in addressing social phenomena in society. Empathy is linked to moral development and concern for others, providing the basis for moral behavior and social attachment processes (Decety, 2014). For example, if there is a social phenomenon in the environment around the place of residence, a Muslim should participate in helping to resolve the phenomenon (Zaini, 2018). In social phenomena like this highlight social piety, even though there should be only one piety, that is, *muttaq*i piety (Bisri, 1996).

Studies that discuss social piety have varied views; however, the study's results focused more on piety in a family context. Piety in a family context is the relationship between children and their elderly parents, which is in line with the research of Park (2021) and Li et al. (2018). Meanwhile, the focus on social piety in this study is the same as the focus of the research conducted by Prayitno et al. (2020). The object of the research is the study of the novel *Sang Pencerah*, which tells the life of K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. The study concludes that there was progressivism in the monotheism of the founder of Muhammadiyah. Many valuable lessons are taken to follow the development of the communication era and the current era of industrialization. The values include compassion, patience, help, generosity, humanity, sensitivity, and social responsibility. This sense of responsibility was developed based on tolerance in this study.

Based on this point of view, the analysis of this research object in Ahmad's *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* aims to find an attitude of tolerance as a manifestation of social piety values within the framework of prophetic ethics initiated by Kuntowijoyo. The views above inspired the title of this article, which is like uniting land and water in the sense of combining two crucial components (tolerance) in life as a circle that continues to rotate. The goal is to provide an understanding that tolerance is needed to reestablish public awareness that Indonesia is a country of various kinds of existing diversity. Tolerance analysis as a manifestation of social piety in prophetic ethics highlights the importance of fostering an inclusive society in Indonesia, characterized by rich cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity. In education, for example, this is in line with the role of multicultural education in fostering tolerance among students, as multicultural education instills values that encourage mutual respect and understanding (Rahmawati et al., 2023; Saputri et al., 2024).

The analysis of tolerance attitudes in the novel *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* through the lens of prophetic ethics reveals the significance of mutual respect and understanding in a multicultural society. As emphasized in various educational initiatives, tolerance is crucial for fostering harmonious relationships among diverse groups (Muhtarom et al., 2024). The integration of tolerance within religious moderation values further illustrates how these principles can be instilled in students, promoting a culture of respect and dialogue (Firmansyah & Putra, 2023; Muhajir & Latief, 2023). Furthermore, the role of cultural tolerance in communities showcases how communication and understanding can mitigate conflicts and enhance social cohesion (Nurhayati, 2023). Thus, the novel can reflect these prophetic ethical values, advocating for a society rooted in tolerance and mutual respect.

## II. METHOD

This qualitative study uses the theoretical basis of Goldmann's genetic structuralism with a literary sociology approach. The method used is the dialectical method. The approach and method were used to interpret the story's events as cultural events. Jurij Lotman's semiotics and Kuntowijoyo's prophetic ethics concept are also used in this research. (Prakoso et al., 2024; Wibowo & Abdullah, 2023) The method can trace Ahmad Tohari's views in the novel *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* (2019). The views described are critical, considering that Ahmad Tohari is one of the authors who used his works to preach until now (Supriyanto, 2014). The primary data source used in this research is the novel *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* by Ahmad Tohari (2019), while the secondary data source used is elements outside the novel, which includes studies or analyses of the novel by researchers/critics related to tolerance or harmony between religious communities. For further analysis, two interviews were conducted (8 June 2021 and 14 August 2021) with Ahmad Tohari, who also serves as one of the objects of this research. The first interview explored the main color of storytelling in spiritual life. Meanwhile, the second interview explored Tohari's views on tolerance and diversity. The data that has been collected is then analyzed using hermeneutic reading techniques to obtain in-depth results linked to the results of the interviews that have been conducted (Khasanah & Prakoso, 2023; Prakoso et al., 2023).

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

### A. Worldview as a Metamorphosis of Ahmad Tohari's Attitude

As a study of genetic structuralism, the story in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* is a collective subject and a human fact. The characters studied were Amid, Kiram, Jun, Kang Suyud, Kyai Ngumar, Mbok Nikem, and other figures. The characters represent different thoughts, even though they are Muslims. Kyai Ngumar is on one side, but Amid, Kang Suyud, Jun, and Kiram are on the other.

Based on the result, Kang Suyud and Kyai Ngumar were in binary opposition. Kang Suyud is the most influential character in the Darul Islam movement. Kang Suyud's view reflects the understanding currently synonymous with radical Islam. Meanwhile, Kyai Ngumar is a character who believes Islam is a giver of grace to all human beings,

regardless of their religion. These two characters become the researchers' foothold in determining the built environments and the form of oppositional relations raised with the following explanation. First, the natural environment formed in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air is dominated by wilderness. Besides, the environment is in the village, where Amid and his friends, Kyai Ngumar and Karangtalun (the location of the retribution collector), are located. As a novel that tells the story of a guerrilla struggle, it was interesting to depict the wilderness environment with all its inhabitants and particular names. Second, the cultural environment in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air is a village. The description of interactions and patterns of community life is reflected in the dialog between individuals in the story. Kyai Ngumar's positive characteristics include humility and becoming a role model for the villagers. In addition, the attitude of accepting Amid's presence during the struggle in the wilderness is another example. There is tolerance among them. Third, the social environment in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air tells the story of the interactions of people's daily lives in conditions of the post-independence revolution. This interaction is colored by heterogeneity in various aspects, such as religion, political faith, and diversity. Socially, their solid interactions are seen in a small group. They fought together in the Cigobang forest and witnessed the train "trap" in Kebumen (Tohari, 2019). Especially in the relationship between humans and all their ethnicities, the social environment built in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air reflects Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. The tolerance for diversity is reflected in the appearance of the character Asui, a Chinese girl who owns a shop whom Kiram often teases. Fourth, the ideological environment found in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air is Islamic ideology. Islam in this novel is then grouped into two. The first part is Islam, which started from the struggle of Hezbollah soldiers, namely Amid, Kiram, Jun, and Kang Suyud, even though Amid "is not a true Hezbollah" (Tohari, 2019). The second part is the Islam of Kyai Ngumar, which is adhered to by Kyai Ngumar and firmly upholds tolerance.

Meanwhile, the oppositional relations formed from the imaginary world of Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air include the following. First, a religious pattern of life characterizes cultural opposition. The struggles of Kang Suyud and Kyai have become dominant characters in the post-independence Indonesian journey throughout the novel's storytelling. However, they both have different perspectives on the issue of Islamic teachings, as stated by the researcher. For example, Amid became part of Kang Suyud because he believed it was the best choice.

Second, the "natural" opposition can be identified on several grounds, such as the appearance of the characters of Mantri Karsun and Hianli. These two people have selfish personality traits because they only care about themselves. They are Dutch spies. In the real world, figures like them always exist, even though they are in the form of a different person.

Third, social opposition identified several attitudes and behaviors of characters who live in the area where Amid also lives. These characters reflect a person full of a sense of family, tolerance, and wisdom, as reflected in Kyai Ngumar. Kyai Ngumar believes that the harmony of life brings blessings. Even though Amid, Kiran, Jun, and Kang Suyud originally came from the village as well, the dynamics of the struggle they went through made them change roles. The separate barriers between Amid and his friends are shown when they return from their struggle. These characteristics are rural communities. Fortunately, the figure of Kyai Ngumar could lighten the situation. Kyai Ngumar is sincere and open to welcoming Amid and his friends (Tohari, 2019). This attitude is stated in Ahmad Tohari's message: always empathize with those persecuted for unfair treatment. "I remember when I was in high school in grade 2, and I saw many people who were victims of humanity under the pretext of being involved in the G30S/PKI. Even, many of them don't really know what communism is" (from an interview with Ahmad Tohari, June 8, 2021).

Fourth, this ideological opposition dominates throughout the story in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air. Based on the results, the author has several thoughts. Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air has a time background during the early days of Indonesia's independence, telling the story of the struggle of Islam, especially related to Darul Islam. The conflicts that arise are then identified with two thoughts. On the one hand, the presence of Kyai Ngumar manifests an attitude that shows moderate thoughts about religion. On the other hand, if there are differences in understanding within a Muslim group, they cannot fight together.

Fifth, human opposition is identified as the two sides that always face each other in Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air. The most easily identifiable figures are Kyai Ngumar and Kang Suyud. Both represent different typologies. The attitude of Kyai Ngumar has an understanding that every Muslim needs to spread kindness always. This act is reflected when Amid and his friends choose to return to the village, and then Kyai Ngumar shows an attitude of love for fellow humans by accepting Amid. In fact, at that time, Amid had a negative stigma as a rebel (Tohari, 2019). This kind of character was later shown to Mbok Nikem, a traditional birth attendant who helped Amid's wife give birth in the wilderness.

Based on the story's structure, Ahmad Tohari has a very strong worldview, namely, the attitude of always upholding the harmony of life. Disputes due to different points of view and understanding of the aqeedah should not create a commotion between them. The ideological difference between Kyai Ngumar and Kang Suyud is indeed very basic. The polarization of this ideology is currently threatening Indonesia as a pluralistic nation. The emergence of community organizations that define themselves as the most Islamic parties, as shown in the 2017 social phenomenon, colors politics in the election of the governor of DKI Jakarta (Jamil, 2021). However, in the context of Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air, polarization can be avoided when Kyai Ngumar is impartial and in a position in the middle of the situation. Based on the tolerance attitude, the difference between Kyai Ngumar and Kang Suyud can be understood as a difference that does not have to lead to disputes if one understands the importance of awareness.

#### *B. Tolerance as an Entity of Social Piety Values in the Prophetic Ethics Framework*

This research discusses the importance of tolerance and its role in this section. The result of the analysis shows that Kang Suyud is a figure who judges that diversity is impossible. Meanwhile, Kyai Ngumar has a different thought. Kyai Ngumar values heterogeneity and intercommunity harmony, while Kang Suyud does not. What Kang Suyud believed was the idea outlined by their command, which came from Sekarmaji Marijan Kartosuwiryo, the caliph of Darul Islam, the supreme commander of the Indonesian Islamic Army (DI/TII).

In this context, Kyai Ngumar tries to be a mediator in diversity. What Kyai Ngumar did reminds researchers of Dorothe Rosa Herliani's statement (Herliany, 2018). Kyai also thinks that harmony and harmonization will be built with this heterogeneity. This harmony can be realized by being tolerant. From the value of social piety perspective, tolerance is a tangible manifestation of the social piety variables, namely, fairness and balance, as well as other aspects (Istiqomah, 2019). More comprehensively, Kyai Ngumar tries to become a liaison of thought that seeks to moderate Islam *kaffah*, including the behavior that must be shown (Kuntowijoyo, 2019).

Tohari's character in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* is very attached to Kyai Ngumar. In the novel, Ahmad Tohari strives to relate his background, which is that he was born from the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) culture. This view is also in line with what Junaidi (2018) conveyed. Tohari said in his interview that he greatly admired his father figure, who was also an NU administrator in Jatilawang. Tohari said that his father took him for a walk to see his garden one day. Unexpectedly, there was a thief who stole the bananas he had planted. Ahmad Tohari was surprised because his father let the thief take the banana (Interview II; August 14, 2021). What Ahmad Tohari conveyed provided information about humanism and the idea that the thief might indeed have nothing to eat. The true story experienced by Ahmad Tohari is an example of the implementation of Islam in a *kaffah* manner.

The implementation above is in line with Kyai Ngumar's thoughts in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air*, which always emphasizes the harmony of life by mediating Kang Suyud's correct thoughts. From Kuntowijoyo's prophetic ethics, what Ahmad Tohari said in interviews and the character of Kyai Ngumar were a form of affirmation of the guidance the Prophet Muhammad SAW conveys to build virtuous human civilization. Ahmad Tohari said, "The Great Prophet Muhammad was sent to earth to perfect human character. So, in such a context, the pillars of Islam are the means used, and not the goals to be achieved" (Interview I; June 8, 2021). The argument presented by Faishal Zaini is in line with Tohari's view that there must be a transformation of goodness that was initially individual to social goodness (Zaini, 2018). The actual form is to change ritual piety into social piety. For this social piety to manifest in daily activities, the diversity of attitudes and perspectives on worship should be seen as the estuary of Islam embraced by its adherents, not merely as questioning the rituals.

### C. Diversity of Attitudes and Perspectives on Worship as a Real Form of Tolerance

Self-righteousness is the will that destroys harmony in life, characterized by the belief that one's beliefs or behavior are superior to those of others. This disorder stems from the inherent nature of self-righteousness, closely related to dogmatism and intolerance of ambiguity. It fosters an environment where different perspectives are not valued or respected (Falbo & Belk, 1985). Such attitudes can lead to conflict and disruptions in social harmony, often resulting in a lack of empathy and understanding towards others.

Most of these characters feel guided by the Koran and Hadith and view other teachings as wrong. Ahmad Tohari clearly described a character with this attitude in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air*. These characteristics are confirmed by Tohari's statement when he saw the phenomenon of groups who felt that their rituals were the most correct. This group even refers to other groups as infidels/*kafir*. Tohari, an author born in Tinggarjaya, tried to reveal individual beliefs regarding their societal perspective. For example, in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air*, the most basic form is the character of Kang Suyud. Characters like this are real in society. Tohari continued to present his story as an enlightenment and a way of incorporating the importance of thinking about the value of social piety.

Ritually, no one doubts Kang Suyud's Islam. According to Ahmad Tohari, beliefs, and perspectives on an issue might differ but cannot be separated from God's destiny. The many races and ethnicities are a blessing for Indonesia. Ahmad Tohari explained that being born into a devout Muslim family and having great empathy for those around him was a blessing (Interview II; August 14, 2021).

Kyai Ngumar realized that Kang Suyud's ideology differed from Kyai Ngumar's belief. However, Kyai Ngumar did not force Kang Suyud's thoughts to conform. When there was a debate about whether to join the republican army or to form an army of its own, Kyai Ngumar's opinion was different from Kang Suyud's. Based on the debate, Kyai Ngumar continued to show affection for all (Tohari, 2019). Although it was finally canceled due to a betrayal, the wise attitude shown by Kyai Ngumar by giving guarantees to Amid, Kiram, and Jun when they wanted to join the republican army was the value of piety shown by Kyai Ngumar.

Among Ahmad Tohari's many works, *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* is a novel with different characters based on the social structure surrounding it. In this novel, Ahmad Tohari is "serious in preaching". The ultimate goal of *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* is to achieve harmony in life and harmonization. The characters in opposition are united in the purpose of the prophetic philosophy thought. The purpose of thinking is still based on the philosophical thought of *sangkan paraning dumadi* (everything starts from one point and then returns to its original point), equivalent to *innalillahi wa'inna ilaihi roji'un* (Indeed, we belong to Allah, and Indeed, to Him, we shall return).

## IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the explanations presented, tolerance is important as a manifestation of social piety, which refers to the essential teachings of the prophet. Religious rites are important but only as a way. Through the terminology of tolerance, every human being, regardless of religion, should always carry an attitude of mutual respect and never think of himself as a person with the highest rank in the eyes of God. *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* has shown that heterogeneity should be considered the foundation of thought. No religion condones humiliation, harassment, and self-righteousness while fighting others who do not share the same faith. As the author of *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air*, Ahmad Tohari is nervous about the egoism of religious adherents in Indonesia. He believes religion should be the voice of peace and the exaltation of human values. Kang Tohari chose to be religious in togetherness with others, namely in diversity. Ahmad Tohari also said that the Koran has clearly instructed that humans should consist of men and women and live in tribes and nations so that they will know each other. All must accept other people, nations, religious differences, and even heterogeneous local cultures. Without this understanding, the entire local culture will be eroded in the name of religion. Tolerance toward differences and different perspectives on a belief should be the main binder in the thinking of Muslims in Indonesia. Individual worship rituals are essential, but socially related rituals are equally important. Without such an attitude, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia will be threatened that it will no longer adhere to the motto of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*. The unification of “land and water” in *Lingkar Tanah Lingkar Air* has a message of harmony in human life. These two things are the fundamental foundations of creating tolerance. These notes also serve as a foothold for researchers to further deepen their studies with more exciting topics. Some things are still very open for studies that can take advantage of new theories so that the results enrich literary studies in Indonesia and the world.

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# Reception of Fyodor Dostoevsky's Works Among Chinese Readers

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**Abstract**—Existing research on the reception of Fyodor Dostoevsky's works in China primarily focuses on the academic reception history, with limited attention paid to ordinary readers on the internet. This study employs the qualitative analysis software NVivo 12 to analyze comments from ordinary readers on Douban. By integrating Stanley Fish's reader-response criticism and Stuart Hall's reception theory, the study identifies three distinct reader reception models and analyzes their influencing factors. Faithful fans, influenced by the Russian classical literature horizon of expectations, offer highly positive evaluations. Rational evaluators exhibit a complex attitude of both criticism and appreciation, driven by their rational stance and cultural aesthetic differences. Critics, encounter frustration in their expectations due to conflicts between their local aesthetic perspectives and the works. This study broadens the scope of audience in the reception research of Dostoevsky's works in China, revealing the diversity and complexity of ordinary readers' reception, and provides important insights for cross-cultural reader studies.

**Index Terms**—Chinese readers, Dostoevsky, reception theory, content analysis, reception model

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fyodor Dostoevsky was one of the literary giants of 19th-century Russian literature. His first novel, *Poor Folk* (1846), received widespread acclaim upon its publication. From 1849 to 1859, Dostoevsky was arrested by the Tsarist government and exiled to Siberia for participating in revolutionary activities. His creative output was interrupted due to imprisonment and military service. It wasn't until 1861, with the consecutive publication of *Humiliated and Insulted* (1860) and *Notes from a Dead House* (1861), that he returned to the public eye. In 1866, his masterpiece *Crime and Punishment* was published, earning him worldwide fame. Subsequently, *The Idiot* (1868), *Demons* (1872), and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880) were published, cementing his place in literary history.

Dostoevsky's global reputation has long been established, and his dissemination and reception in different countries have become a topic of in-depth academic exploration. Bowers and Holland's (2021) study meticulously outlines the significant trends and key events in Dostoevsky studies in North America over the past five years, providing a valuable perspective for understanding the reception of his works in the region. McCabe (2013), through a comprehensive examination of translation strategies, comparative analysis of adapted works, and the intertextual dialogue between fictional, critical, and philosophical texts, dissects the history of Dostoevsky's dissemination and reception in France. Aiello's (2017) research focuses on the trajectory of Dostoevsky's reception in the United Kingdom, also demonstrating how his works transcend national boundaries to resonate widely within the British literary community. Clarkin's (1960) exhaustive survey of Dostoevsky's reception history in the United States reflects the interpretation and response of American literary circles, academia, and even ordinary readers to his works across different periods. Chinese scholar Ding Shixin has conducted a systematic study of Dostoevsky's reception history in China since 1918. Zhang (2014) provides a detailed overview of the latest progress and trends in Dostoevsky studies in Chinese academia since the new century. Tian and Wang (2006), from a more macro perspective, study the overall evolution of Dostoevsky's reception in China. They point out that with the development of Chinese literature and changes in research methods, Dostoevsky has presented three distinct facets.

Previous studies have often been confined within academic circles, with little attention paid to ordinary readers. However, with the improvement of socio-economic levels and the increasing openness of the cultural environment, Dostoevsky's works have gained wider acceptance and dissemination in China. The advent of the digital age has made e-book platforms, online reading tools, and social media convenient channels for the masses to access these classic works. Not only have authoritative publishing houses actively introduced multi-volume collections, but platforms like iReader and WeChat Reading have also made the works readily accessible. Furthermore, lively discussions on social media platforms such as Baidu Post Bar, Weibo, and Zhihu have further enhanced the influence of Dostoevsky's works in contemporary society. Notably, the massive influx of introduction and interpretation videos on short-video platforms like Bilibili, Douyin, and Xiaohongshu has attracted a large number of young viewers with their intuitive and vivid presentations. Some of these videos have even surpassed 600,000 views.

This study selects reader comments from Douban as the research objects. Douban, launched in 2005, is a community website specializing in movies, music, and books. Among the most popular Dostoevsky works among Chinese readers on this platform are *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment*, which, as Dostoevsky's masterpieces, have



long been ranked among the top 250 books on Douban Reading. Among the numerous groups discussing Dostoevsky's works, the "Dostoevsky" group stands out for its vast membership and vibrant discussion atmosphere. By the end of December 2023, it had gathered over 61,219 members and generated 2,739 individual posts. These posts are rich and diverse, ranging from in-depth interpretations of the works to announcements of online and offline events, as well as sharing of e-book resources and answers to reading questions, comprehensively demonstrating readers' enthusiasm and exploration of Dostoevsky's works. It is noteworthy that compared to other Russian literary giants like Tolstoy, Chekhov, and Pushkin, who have groups on Douban with fewer than 8,000 users each, the prosperity of the Dostoevsky group is particularly remarkable. So, why is Dostoevsky still so popular in China today? How do contemporary readers understand and receive Dostoevsky's works?

This paper aims to explore readers' interpretation of Dostoevsky's works in Douban communities and attempt to reveal the underlying logic behind their popularity within the context of Chinese culture. The guiding questions of this study are: 1) How do readers in the Dostoevsky group decode the text? 2) What are the characteristics of each reception mode? 3) What are the factors that influence readers' reception of Dostoevsky and his works?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The study and reception of Dostoevsky and his works by Chinese scholars have spanned over a century. During the May Fourth Movement period, he was highly esteemed as a writer striving for the meaning of life, with *Crime and Punishment* becoming a research hotspot, though it also encountered criticism from left-wing literature. Between 1949 and 1979, political factors led to fluctuations in his literary status. In the 1980s, the introduction of Bakhtin's polyphony theory challenged traditional critical frameworks and opened up new research perspectives. In the 1990s, research underwent a turning point, breaking free from the constraints of vulgar sociology, and prospering in various fields such as narratology, psychoanalysis, religious cultural studies, etc. While drawing on international scholarship, Chinese scholars strived to voice their independent opinions. In the 21st century, the study of Dostoevsky has continued to deepen and specialize, with notable achievements in areas such as communication, reception, comparative studies, polyphony theory, and religious sociological criticism (Ding, 2006, 2021, 2023).

Specifically within the realm of reception studies, the reception of Dostoevsky in China can be categorized into three types: translation and dissemination, writers' reception, and history of reception studies. The first category examines the dissemination of Dostoevsky's works in China from the perspectives of publishing and translation. For instance, Li and He's (1988) research identified two key characteristics in translation efforts after 1979: firstly, translations of previously controversial works were supplemented; secondly, national-level publishing houses began systematically introducing Dostoevsky's works, a rare phenomenon in China's translation history. Such studies present extensive data from journal sources but lack specific and detailed analysis.

The second category focuses on the reception of Dostoevsky by Chinese writers, with the most in-depth studies being comparisons between Dostoevsky and Lu Xun. From 1982 to 1996, Li Chunlin published a monograph titled *Lu Xun and Dostoevsky* (1985) and 13 essays. He argues that both Lu Xun and Dostoevsky are great judges of human souls. Due to similar national conditions at the time, Lu Xun's literary creations were influenced by Dostoevsky. Additionally, academia has conducted extensive research on the influence of Dostoevsky on contemporary Chinese writers such as Zhang Xianliang, Tie Ning, and Lu Ling, yielding fruitful results (Xu, 1986; Tan, 2023; Shi, 2006).

The third category of studies concentrates on the genealogical analysis of Chinese scholars' reception of Dostoevsky, with Ding Shixin as a representative scholar. He systematically reviews the Chinese academic community's evaluation of Dostoevsky across different historical periods. His recent research points out that from 1949 to 1979, "Dostoevsky underwent shifts in academic mirroring in China, transitioning from being regarded as a 'realist writer for life' to a 'great writer embodying contradictory qualities of progressiveness and reaction,' and then labeled as a 'reactionary writer,' before once again being recognized as a 'great writer embodying contradictory qualities of progressiveness and reaction'" (Ding, 2023, p. 114).

Current research primarily examines the reception and evaluation of Dostoevsky by Chinese translators, writers, and scholars, with only one master's thesis incorporating ordinary Chinese readers into its research scope. Tao (2013) explored the unique portrayal of Dostoevsky in Baidu Post Bar, adopting a combined quantitative and qualitative approach to classify the content of posts and comparatively analyze the contextual differences between popular and elite cultures. The scope covers 570 topic posts from the "Dostoevsky Bar" on Baidu Post Bar from 2007 to 2011. The researcher concludes that the viewpoints of the masses, to a certain extent, subvert the traditional elite cultural perceptions of Dostoevsky, reflecting the reshaping of elite culture by popular culture. This study focuses on demonstrating the reshaping of elite culture by popular culture but does not provide a detailed analysis of readers' acceptance.

The booming development of the internet has prompted reader groups to converge in cyberspace, sharing and discussing literary works together, and endowing reading with new social value. Many scholars have focused on ordinary readers' online comments, particularly their acceptance of exotic cultural works. Multiple studies have analyzed readers' online comments from various angles and using various technical tools.

E (2017) employed a corpus-based word frequency method to explore the reactions and acceptance of the Chinese image and culture embodied in *The Woman Warrior* among foreign general readers by comparing data from the

Goodreads website and texts of reader reviews. Fu and Wu (2021), through a combination of corpus-assisted keyword-in-context analysis and sentiment quantification, discovered that the translation and introduction of Yu Hua's novels in the United States exhibit characteristics of contradictory unity and multidimensional differentiation. By contrasting the evaluations of professional readers and ordinary readers, they explored the regular patterns in cognitive utility and acceptance levels among different reader groups. Although corpus technology can efficiently process large data, when it comes to statistically analyzing a rich variety of sentiment words, the word frequency method has limitations in fully reflecting emotional tendencies due to the scattered frequency of individual words. Zhang (2019) focused on readers' emotional characteristics and utilized Python sentiment analysis technology to mine online evaluations of *The Three-Body Problem* by overseas readers, analyzing readers' sentiment tendencies from four dimensions: characters, plot, narrative perspective, and translation. However, Python sentiment analysis technology lacks refinement of textual content and may overlook important detailed information due to its over-reliance on numerical representation of text content. White (2023) adopted the method of netnography, delving into platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and blogs, to examine the presentation of Flannery O'Connor and her popular short stories on social media. The study revealed that O'Connor's works have regained popularity but also encountered misunderstandings in the digital environment, emphasizing the unique contributions and influences of online communities on modern literary discourse. Nevertheless, while the netnographic approach can provide in-depth understanding, it still faces challenges in maintaining objective descriptions.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Given the strengths and limitations of the aforementioned studies, this research intends to employ content analysis to explore reader comments in the Dostoevsky group on Douban. Content analysis not only captures keyword frequencies and sentiment tendencies but also delves deeply into the rich information within textual content, thereby overcoming the constraints of single technical methods and providing more profound insights into the cross-cultural reception of literary works.

The researcher utilized Houyi collector to capture all 2,739 data entries from the Dostoevsky group on Douban, excluding meaningless comments that did not address the content of the works and duplicate entries. Stratified sampling by year was applied, with a sampling ratio of 30.4%, resulting in 600 posts selected for content analysis.

This study adopts NVivo 12 for coding short comment texts. As a qualitative analysis software, NVivo effectively assists researchers in extracting information through coding, querying, and other functions. The coding process with NVivo is divided into three stages. Firstly, open coding involves extracting keywords to establish free nodes. For instance, texts such as "be moved" and "tear-jerking" are categorized under the initial code of "emotionally moved." Secondly, axial coding involves grouping initial codes based on their commonalities. For example, the initial code of "emotionally moved" is subsumed under the focused code of "positive experience," ultimately yielding nine focused codes. Lastly, theoretical coding integrates sub-nodes into three reception modes according to Stuart Hall's model. For instance, "positive experience" evaluations are classified under the theoretical code of "dominant reception". This study conducted multiple rounds of coding tests and rule revisions on sample articles. The consistency between two independent coders was verified using Cohen's kappa ( $\kappa > 0.70$ ), and the remaining samples were coded collaboratively, ensuring the reliability, accuracy, and consistency of the coding process.

This research analyzed the diverse stances of readers in interpreting Dostoevsky's works and constructed a reception model for readers using Stuart Hall's encoding-decoding model. This model emphasizes the impact of different decoding positions (such as dominant-hegemonic decoding, negotiated decoding, and oppositional decoding) on the reconstruction of work meanings. This study extends the fundamental principles and assumptions of Hall's model to capture readers' decoding and reception patterns of Dostoevsky and his works. Dominant reception implies that readers comprehend the information in the works and interpret them according to the writer's dominant encoding without challenging the works. Readers actively praise the writer and their works. Negotiated reception occurs when readers only understand part of the information in the works, as their comprehension of the writer's intentions is based on their cultural backgrounds and knowledge structures. Readers' interpretations share commonalities with the writer's encoding intentions but also exhibit differences. They adopt a selective acceptance approach, treating the writer's works rationally without strong emotional preferences. Oppositional reception refers to readers who either fail to understand the author's intended meaning or understand it but interpret it in a manner contrary to the encoding intention, presenting an antagonistic stance towards the encoder. To further explore specific factors influencing the reception process, this study draws on Stanley Fish's interpretive communities theory to analyze the interpretation strategies employed by readers within each model. Fish argues that readers are not isolated individuals but emphasizes the importance of the interpretive communities they belong to. "These groups of readers build imaginary communities which may be found through tests and interviews, in their physical gatherings, and nowadays in their internet-based groups and communities" (Farhadipour, 2016, p. 13). This theory underscores that shared interpretation strategies stem from a set of public understandings, including traditional concepts and cultural traditions, which construct and shape readers' consciousness and perceptions. Readers within the same interpretive community share interpretation strategies, resulting in similar textual constructions. In this study, the three reception modes constitute three interpretive

communities, where readers within each community share interpretation strategies, enabling mutual recognition of different readers' responses and converging textual meanings.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Different readers, based on their cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences, interpret the same author or work in various ways. Their attitudes of appreciation, neutrality, or resistance during the reception process create different reception models. Readers actively decode the texts, reconstructing their meanings in dynamic ways. Text decoding extends far beyond mere interpretation of the text's meaning, forming complex socio-cultural phenomena (Willis, 2018). Adopting the reader's decoding stance as an analytical framework, this article delves into how members of the Dostoevsky group interpret the works of Dostoevsky. Through coding analysis of the samples, readers are categorized into three reception models: the dominant reception of devout fans, the negotiated reception of rational evaluators, and the oppositional reception of critics. Each category is examined from three perspectives—creation, ideology, and emotional experience—to analyze readers' evaluations.

##### A. Dominant Reception of Devoted Fans

The dominant reception of Dostoevsky's works by devoted fans is reflected in three aspects: 1) Praise for the artistic creation. 2) Inspirational insights gained from the ideas. 3) Strong and active emotional experiences.

Dostoevsky's novels are characterized by their distinctive dialogues. Extensive passages of dialogue are not merely plot-driven but serve as crucial tools for expressing ideas. The conflicts between characters in their dialogues showcase intense ideological clashes. Bakhtin (1988) argues that Dostoevsky's works feature numerous independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses. The true polyphony, composed of voices with significant value, is a fundamental characteristic of Dostoevsky's long novels. Devoted fans express a strong admiration for the protagonists' lengthy discourses, even being completely enthralled by the characters' dialogues. As one participant remarked after reading *The Brothers Karamazov* "extended monologues and ceaseless character dialogues imbue the novel with a hysterical temperament. Yet, amid this frenetic outpouring of language, there is a meticulous and relentless logical spirit, charging forward in tireless debates." Dostoevsky's compelling inner monologues, lengthy dialogues, and oratorical debates evoke resonance in readers, triggering admiration and positive emotional responses.

Devoted readers of Dostoevsky's works shower praise on his psychological portrayals, describing them as "textbook-level," "unmatched," and "terrifyingly captivating." Many readers are drawn to the dramatic psychological struggles, immersing themselves in the protagonist's inner turmoil. These readers can empathize with the characters' psychological states and focus on affirming their complexities. As one reader of *Crime and Punishment* expressed:

Raskolnikov's clumsy return from seeing himself as a great man to recognizing his humanity—though he is a gloomy, radical, and vain criminal, he is also a proud young man. How can he not be lovable? How can he not touch the soul?

When reflecting on *The Brothers Karamazov*, one reader noted "Dmitri's passionate impulses reveal a pure soul, while Ivan's rational detachment carries moral constraints. Katerina's obsessive sacrifices are not for love but for pride, and Grushenka's flamboyant life contains the sincerity of a young girl".

Devoted fans highly praise Dostoevsky's artistic craftsmanship, psychological portrayal, and character development. While they find artistic satisfaction, they are particularly drawn to Dostoevsky's exploration of human nature and his profound philosophical reflections. Dostoevsky's works cover a wide range of fields, including religious theology, philosophy, ethics, morality, and psychology. For these readers, his exploration of human nature addresses topics such as the complexity of humanity, human suffering, and redemption, holding great intellectual value. One reader of *The Brothers Karamazov* commented "Dostoevsky truly deserves the title of master in depicting human nature. This book reveals various aspects of humanity in a real and profound way". Notably, Dostoevsky's religious themes have been well received by readers in the Douban group. They reflect on themselves and share their thoughts on issues of human nature, religious morality, faith, love, and society prompted by the works. One reader noted, "The strong religious undertones in the work deeply moved me and made me feel the conviction of religious figures". Through their reading experiences, readers gain profound insights and revelations from the intellectual collisions presented in Dostoevsky's works. They expand their perspectives, stimulate their thinking, and experience personal growth and spiritual elevation.

Dominant reception readers highly praise Dostoevsky. They praise him as a "soul explorer", "prophet", and "spiritual leader". Readers often use positive feelings such as "shocking", "enjoyable", "exciting", and "resonant" to describe their reading experience. One reader shared his feelings while reading "White Nights": "I really finished it in one breath in the middle of the night, and when I finished, it was just dawn. I felt unusually excited. Few novels can make me read straight through." These comments received a lot of likes, indicating that other readers resonated with this emotion. This type of reader is an active sharer. They share excerpts from the original text of the work or share personal anecdotes in posts to show how Dostoevsky's works have influenced their thoughts and actions. A few readers said that their reading experience has even affected important choices in their real lives. For example, one reader said that because they really like Dostoevsky's works, they plan to learn Russian. Another reader said that because of reading Dostoevsky's works, they have sprouted a belief. In the Douban group, readers actively share their reading experiences. This social interaction not only satisfies readers' social needs and sense of belonging but also further deepens their emotional

connection to Dostoevsky's works. Loyal fans have become an important force driving the dissemination and discussion of works. They are the most active members, actively publish positive reviews, and defend writers and works. Their enthusiasm and loyalty have won more attention and recognition for the works.

TABLE 1  
A RECEPTION MODEL FOR DEVOTED FANS

| Node               | Sub-node                         | Number of Reference Points | Reference Point Example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dominant Reception | Praising the Artistic Creation   | 345                        | Dostoevsky's mastery in portraying intricate character portraits and his techniques are truly remarkable. Despite the intricate web of relationships in his books, such as in <i>"The Idiot,"</i> he seamlessly untangles events with a few strokes of his pen. |
|                    | Receiving Inspiration on Thought | 225                        | Reading this particular chapter in <i>The Brothers Karamazov</i> suddenly made me realize how comical my past self was, akin to Ivan's current predicament. It seems that the absence of religious faith inevitably leads to a terrifying, reckless state.      |
|                    | Positive Emotional Experience    | 295                        | I found myself staying up until dawn, devouring "White Nights" in one sitting. The exhilaration upon finishing it as dawn broke was unparalleled; rarely do novels captivate me to such an extent.                                                              |

Since the latter half of the 20th century, with the rise of literary movements such as existentialism and modernism, Dostoevsky's works have been reinterpreted from new perspectives, gaining broader recognition globally. In the context of China's comprehensive study and adoption of foreign academic trends since the reform and opening up, Dostoevsky's esteemed reputation and extensive influence have undoubtedly affected Chinese readers' reception of his works. As scholar Yu (2020) notes, "The works of 19th-century Russian writer Dostoevsky have undoubtedly entered the pantheon of classic literature." Dostoevsky's works are considered classics in contemporary China, evoking readers' expectations for classic literature, which is "a familiar expectation" (Jauss, 2022, p. 15). Readers hope to gain philosophical insight, strength, and shock from the works, and Dostoevsky's writings meet their aesthetic, cognitive, and emotional expectations, further reinforcing the classic nature of his works. As reader Li Yuandu remarked: "I read this book (*White Nights*) with great impatience because I wanted to understand why figures like Wang Xiaobo, Lu Xun, and even Allen Woody read and highly praised his works".

Additionally, the dominant reception among devoted fans benefits from their familiarity with Russian culture and history. Douban reader Duke (2023) notes,

understanding the 19th-century Russian historical and cultural background—such as the War of 1812, the Decembrist uprising, the Russian serfdom reform—Russian intellectual currents like Westernism, socialism, anarchism, nihilism, and Slavophilism, and the constant clash of ideas all appear continuously in Dostoevsky's works.

In summary, devoted fans approach Dostoevsky's works with an expectation of "Russian classic literature." They are familiar with the Russian cultural background and approach the foreign works with a positive mindset, thereby achieving a comprehensive satisfaction of their aesthetic, emotional, and cognitive expectations during their reading experience.

#### B. Negotiated Reception by Rational Evaluators

Rational evaluators display a negotiated reception of Dostoevsky's works in three main ways: 1) Critiquing while appreciating the artistry; 2) Interpreting the works through the lens of Chinese culture; 3) Experiencing conflicting and confusing emotions.

Unlike devoted fans, rational evaluators acknowledge that while Dostoevsky's dialogues authentically reflect character personalities, they are often seen as excessively lengthy and verbose, affecting the flow of reading. For example, A reader commented on *The Idiot* by saying, "Although I don't like the lengthy dialogues and had to endure them, I must admit that the Duke and Nastasya are portrayed exceptionally well." Regarding psychological portrayal, rational evaluators appreciate Dostoevsky's deep psychological analysis, finding it nuanced and capable of striking a chord with readers' souls. At the same time, they critique it for being sometimes too lengthy, which limits the readers' imaginative engagement.

In contrast to the admiration expressed by dominant readers, rational evaluators take a more rational and neutral stance toward the characters. For instance, regarding Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*, one reader points out, "Even though the protagonist is kind and talented, I cannot ignore the fact that he is a murderer". Concerning Myshkin in *The Idiot*, another reader remarks,

as the book title suggests, this character is an 'idiot'. Although he has a profound Christ-like spirit of salvation, he remains an overly naive and idealized figure, resembling a Christ figure—abstract and pallid, only to be admired.

Evaluations of Nastasya are also mixed; one reader notes, "Nastasya is fine in the first part, somewhat like "Lady Du Angrily Sinks Her Treasure-Chest", but in the later parts, she almost becomes a 'madwoman'... The first part is quite

good, but the latter part is increasingly 'muddy'. Regarding Ivan's internal struggles in *The Brothers Karamazov*, readers both appreciate the authenticity of the character portrayal and find the self-doubt confusing. "When Smerdyakov says Ivan doesn't even believe his own ideas, I was puzzled. As Dostoevsky's representative of human rationality, does Ivan really start doubting himself?".

Due to differences in local aesthetic traditions and Russian cultural backgrounds, these readers often reinterpret the works based on their own experiences. For example, some readers use characters from classical Chinese culture to interpret Dostoevsky's works. One reader compares Raskolnikov from *Crime and Punishment* to a Chinese knight-errant, suggesting he embodies the knight-errant spirit and should not be burdened with responsibility. Another reader compares Prince Myshkin to Jia Baoyu from *Dream of the Red Chamber*, suggesting that like Jia Baoyu, the Prince Myshkin cannot fit into human society and thus ends up as a "fool," while Jia Baoyu retreats from the mundane world. A reader also interprets *Crime and Punishment* through the lens of Laozi's philosophy, noting, "To some extent, evil can make one appreciate good and justice. Illness can make one value health. Nothing is absolute, as Laozi said, 'Blessing depends on misfortune; misfortune depends on blessing'". This analogy extends to the authors themselves, with one reader suggesting, "Dostoevsky seems to align with Gu Long in terms of bizarre and dark narratives, while Tolstoy and Jin Yong appear to follow a path of grand, righteous storytelling".

Readers with negotiated reception express complex reading experiences, finding both pain and attraction in the works. One reader mentions about *The Brothers Karamazov*, "I'm in my twenties, and it feels heavier the more I read. Each time I read it, I feel so sad, but I can't let go. What should I do? Pain, pain, pain". Another reader notes, "To read *Crime and Punishment*, I endured all the characters' ramblings. All readers must endure it, right? But it's so good, so I just have to endure it while reading". After finishing the works, these readers often have questions about certain content. Common questions include issues regarding character endings, plot design, and details of the works, such as whether Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment* really converts to religion, why Smerdyakov commits suicide in *The Brothers Karamazov*, and why Nastasya flees her wedding in *The Idiot*. These confusions relate to the deeper thoughts and religious themes within the works, and readers' existing cognitive frameworks may not fully understand some aspects of the content due to a lack of background knowledge.

TABLE 2  
A RECEPTION MODEL FOR RATIONAL EVALUATORS

| Node                 | Sub-node                                        | Number of Reference Points | Reference Point Example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Negotiated Reception | Both Criticizing and Appreciating the Creation  | 78                         | Frankly, while reading " <i>The Idiot</i> ," I found the narrative flow lacking continuity, leaving a disjointed impression. However, what held my attention was the purity of heart and the choices it confronted.                                                                        |
|                      | Interpreting the Work Based on Chinese Culture  | 124                        | Regarding Nastasya, her character transitioned from intriguing, reminiscent of Du Shiniang's fiery spirit to almost manic later on. While I adored the first half, the latter part felt somewhat protracted.                                                                               |
|                      | Confused and Contradictory Emotional Experience | 31                         | As for Aglaya's conclusion in <i>The Idiot</i> , her marriage to the pseudo-count, conversion to Catholicism, and rebellion against her family baffles me. I ponder the significance of such an ending and Dostoevsky's intention behind it. What is Aglaya's true role in this narrative? |

Rational evaluators maintain a relatively objective and rational attitude towards Dostoevsky's works. Based on their personal reading experiences, they acknowledge the excellence of the works while not hesitating to point out the limitations or shortcomings of the works. They approach the works with moderate expectations, willing to embrace new ideas, perspectives, and emotions presented in the works with an open mind, while also employing critical thinking to understand them. This analytical approach allows them to evaluate the works more objectively, avoiding excessive excitement or disappointment due to personal emotions.

Although rational evaluators acknowledge Dostoevsky's literary achievements, they focus on the realistic portrayal and the impressive character development and psychological analysis in his works. However, the religious consciousness and suffering-related rebellion in Dostoevsky's works, and his probing into issues such as theism vs. atheism, reason vs. spirit, happiness vs. suffering, while interpreted to some extent, fail to gain genuine acceptance from Chinese readers in terms of aesthetic emotions. Dostoevsky's works often convey a sense of confusion, agitation, convulsion, and suffering. His direct confrontation with the dark abyss of the human soul and harsh realities is admirable, but the excessively heavy and oppressive artistic style makes it challenging for Chinese readers to accept. Therefore, readers tend to interpret the works through the lens of Chinese culture. By using local cultural backgrounds as a framework for understanding, readers can more easily bridge cultural gaps and comprehend universal themes related to human nature, social issues, and philosophical reflections present in the works. Differences in cultural aesthetic psychology and the distance from religious thoughts constrain Chinese readers' engagement with Dostoevsky's works (Ding, 2009). Dostoevsky's works are renowned for their profound intellectual content, complex character

relationships, and philosophical exploration, which inherently make them challenging to interpret. With the passage of time, the historical and cultural gaps between readers and the works have further intensified, making the understanding of these works an even more daunting task.

In summary, rational evaluators display a complex attitude of both criticism and admiration when engaging with Dostoevsky's works. They employ a more proactive interpretative strategy, respecting his classic status while incorporating personalized interpretations based on Chinese literary aesthetics. As a result, their expectations from Dostoevsky's works are partially met, yet they also encounter difficulties.

### C. The Oppositional Reception of Critics

The opposing reception of Dostoevsky's works by critics is manifested in three aspects: 1) frustration of expectations at the level of literary creation; 2) rejection and negation of religious thoughts; 3) negative emotional experience.

Critics struggle to appreciate the lengthy sentences and dense dialogues in Dostoevsky's works. They label him as "loquacious" or "verbose", arguing that the dialogues are excessively long and tedious, severely impacting their reading experience. Dostoevsky's language style becomes especially apparent in comparison. One reader noted, "Flaubert's prose is so refined, and then when I started reading *Crime and Punishment*, I felt Dostoevsky's narrative was incredibly dragged out, and the protagonist smirked countless times, which was really tiresome".

Critics also express dissatisfaction with Dostoevsky's character development and portrayal. They perceive most characters in his works as overly eccentric and absurd, akin to being on a chaotic opera stage. Each character is immersed in extreme passion and exaggeration, with behaviors that often exceed conventional understanding, making them difficult to grasp and understand. A reader commented,

I recently read *The Idiot*, and after getting through more than half, I felt mentally exhausted. I couldn't fathom the psychological states of the characters and felt no sense of immersion. I just wondered why everyone was so bizarre, one moment extremely excited, another moment calm, then panic-stricken. I wanted to ask, are you all insane?

When readers attempt to interpret the religious content in Dostoevsky's works from their own value perspectives, they often experience intense ideological conflicts. One reader stated, "In fact, many wars and atrocities are inspired by religion. Conflicts between different religious beliefs, or even different sects within the same religion, are often more bloody". This reader views religion as a root cause of war and violence, which intensifies their aversion to the religious themes in the works. Another reader criticized Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot* as representing Dostoevsky's outdated religious ideals, suggesting these ideals no longer fit modern society. Similarly, a reader questioned the transformation and redemption process of Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*. They found the protagonist's sudden access to unreasonable financial and social support, including the companionship of a kind-hearted prostitute, to be unrealistic. They also dismissed Sonia's greatness and sanctity as mere fantasies of a spiritually weakened individual and showed disinterest in such unrealistic portrayals. This denial of characters reflects their skepticism towards the religious redemption themes in Dostoevsky's works.

Many readers express negative emotions such as "tedious", "obscure", and "disliked" in their posts. For example, one reader, after finishing *The Idiot*, said, "I previously saw someone compare it to being run over by a tank, and that really was my feeling. At least for me, I endured discomfort to finish it". They express confusion, frustration, and disappointment during their reading experience. Dostoevsky's work is often described as opaque, and some readers report complete lack of understanding. For instance, "After finishing *The Idiot*, I was completely bewildered, I could barely understand it, only grasped about 1%". "I often read long speeches and didn't know what was being said, which made me anxious and impatient". Some readers report significant stress from reading Dostoevsky's works, with one expressing their experience: "I just couldn't finish *The Brothers Karamazov* because it stressed me out so much; the book scared me".

TABLE 3  
A RECEPTION MODEL FOR CRITICS

| Node               | Sub-node                                         | Number of Reference Points | Reference Point Example                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Opposite Reception | Frustration in Expectations of Literary Creation | 47                         | Many characters '(The Idiot) monologues are so lengthy, with so much pleasantries, that it almost drives me mad.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                    | Rejection and Negation of Religious Ideas        | 20                         | The thoughts are superficial, and the world's top ten masterpieces are no more than that. The core idea of <i>Crime and Punishment</i> is about self-redemption, but it is also guided by religious belief. Nowadays, many works of self-redemption based on simple humanity far surpass this book in terms of ideological height. |
|                    | Negative Emotional Experience                    | 109                        | <i>Notes from Underground</i> leaves me perplexed. The protagonist's verbose, cryptic monologues seem to allude to and satirize something profound, yet I struggle to decipher them. My interest waned after a few pages, lost amidst the labyrinthine layers of metaphor and irony.                                               |

Critics' expectations are deeply rooted in the rich soil of indigenous literary aesthetics, shaping their pre-reading understanding and aesthetic preferences. When encountering Dostoevsky, a writer from a distinctly different cultural and intellectual tradition, their attempt to interpret his works through a native cultural lens results in unprecedented clashes and challenges to their expectations.

Dostoevsky's novels feature a polyphonic style, where multiple protagonists' voices coexist, each with a complete theoretical framework. These dialogues are not merely linguistic exchanges but represent clashes of thoughts, beliefs, and ideologies. This narrative style contrasts sharply with the Chinese literary tradition, which values "narrative fluency." Traditional Chinese novels emphasize the evolution of the plot, so extensive dialogues and detailed psychological descriptions in Dostoevsky's works are often viewed as redundant and obstructive to plot development. Furthermore, traditional Chinese literature often carries the mark of oral storytelling, where the narrator is expected to reveal everything about the story. As a result, readers accustomed to traditional novelistic narrative modes may find Dostoevsky's dialogues verbose, plots monotonous, and lacking in rhythm, leading to a poor reading experience.

Dostoevsky's deep psychological analysis is another hallmark of his works. He excels in depicting the complexity and contradictions of characters' inner lives, exploring universal spiritual dilemmas through their struggles and growth. This extreme exploration of individual psychological worlds contrasts with the Chinese literary focus on external conflicts and the reflection of societal phenomena through grand narratives and collective destinies. Characters in Dostoevsky's works, who are often portrayed as highly idealized or extreme, may appear to deviate from everyday realism. This perception might be influenced by Confucian aesthetic ideals, leading readers to prefer more balanced and everyday characters. Their pragmatic attitudes make it difficult for them to relate to idealized figures like Prince Myshkin or to appreciate the passionate and unconventional characters like Nastasya. To them, such characters seem detached from reality and fail to resonate with their own life experiences and values.

The religious themes in Dostoevsky's works are also a source of contention. While religion has had some influence in Chinese history, it has not penetrated as deeply into the general psyche as in other cultural contexts. Critics coming from Confucian backgrounds and modern values may use utilitarian and atheistic standards to evaluate religious themes. Whether questioning Raskolnikov's religious conversion or ridiculing Prince Myshkin's idealized character, these criticisms reflect a lack of familiarity, rejection, or even aversion to Dostoevsky's religious ideas among some Chinese readers. Confucian culture's focus on pragmatism and realism makes the transcendental and spiritually aspirational aspects of religion appear incongruous, leading to criticisms of religious ideals as impractical or outdated.

Moreover, Dostoevsky's works are closely tied to the historical changes, political upheavals, and ideological conflicts of Russian society. However, readers who lack knowledge of Russian historical and cultural contexts often struggle to connect the novel's plot, characters, and events with contemporary realities, affecting their understanding of the work's overall significance. This cultural and historical disparity exacerbates the inequality between Dostoevsky and Chinese readers, making the reading process particularly challenging. One reader commented on an e-book of *The Idiot*: "Reading this book often resulted in interruptions and took a long time to finish due to the differences in culture and religious beliefs, which made the reading difficult". This disparity not only hinders understanding but also becomes a significant factor affecting the widespread reception of Dostoevsky's works in China.

In summary, Chinese readers have demonstrated their unique understanding and appreciation of Dostoevsky's works through decoding from various perspectives. This diversity of interpretations not only enriches the dimensions of literary reception but also highlights the cultural exchange and collision between China and Russia. At the same time, it signifies the need for Chinese readers to enhance their cross-cultural understanding capabilities to better appreciate foreign literary works. In the era of digital reading, traditional book reviews are intricately intertwined with the "internet." Online reader comments not only influence readers' reading experiences but also bring about significant transformations in the dissemination and reception of classic authors like Dostoevsky and their works. Dostoevsky's enduring legacy is further transmitted and developed through diversified online reception forms, transcending time and space boundaries and exhibiting unprecedented vitality. Given this, in-depth research on how new media influences literary reception is particularly urgent. Future studies can focus on platform interaction patterns, quantitative analysis using big data, and exploring effective strategies to promote classic works on online platforms while enhancing the public's interest in and literacy of literature.

## V. CONCLUSION

This paper aims to explore the reception of Dostoevsky and his works among readers in the Dostoevsky group on Douban, a Chinese online community. Taking comments from Douban community as research samples, content analysis is adopted with the encoding-decoding model as the theoretical framework. By utilizing NVivo 12 software for coding and analysis, this paper dissects the interpretations and receptions of Dostoevsky and his works from readers with different perspectives, presenting a more comprehensive and detailed picture of reader feedback. The contributions of this paper are primarily reflected in: 1) presenting three modes of reception of Dostoevsky's works by readers; and 2) revealing how different interpretation strategies impact readers' reception of foreign cultural works within the contemporary Chinese context.

This paper illustrates how Chinese readers interpret Dostoevsky's works from multiple perspectives within the Chinese cultural context. Enthusiastic fans, familiar with Russian cultural backgrounds, have classic expectations of

Dostoevsky's works. They attempt to restore the authentic context of the works in their original cultural setting, exhibiting an open and inclusive cultural attitude. In the reading process, Dostoevsky's outstanding creativity and complex thoughts provide them with spiritual shock and meet their expectations. Rational evaluators critically point out both strengths and weaknesses of the works, understanding them through the lens of their own reading experiences with Chinese literature. They express confusion and present a complex reading experience. Critics, based on indigenous cultural strategies, face challenges and express poor reading experiences. Although they do not directly challenge the author's reputation, they criticize various aspects such as language style, character portrayal, and religious themes. This study shows that Chinese readers' reception of Dostoevsky is active and diverse. An unexpected finding of this study is that rational evaluators, while negotiating reception, interpret works through their own cultural or knowledge structures, thereby producing new meanings and becoming code producers of novel significance.

Previous research on Dostoevsky's reception in China mainly used historical approaches, emphasizing the impact of political situations and social environments. This paper shifts focus from academic reception to network community reception, broadening the scope of Dostoevsky's reception studies in China. Tao (2013) examined "The Dostoevsky Bar" on Baidu Tieba from 2007 to 2011, exploring the unique presentation of Dostoevsky and the transformation of mass culture into elite culture. This study extends Tao's research methodology but chooses a different research object. Baidu Tieba, which emphasizes broad interest exchange and community interaction, has gradually declined due to commercialization and user attrition. In contrast, Douban focuses on in-depth discussions and social relationships in the fields of books and media, continuing to develop robustly with its high-quality content and social functions. The advantage of this study lies in its use of reader response criticism and reception theory to analyze the specific viewpoints of the three decoding models and explore the impact of cultural factors on Chinese readers' reception of Dostoevsky.

In terms of research methods and theories, the existing research is limited to the general statement of research materials, lacking a solid theoretical basis, especially the discussion from the perspective of reception theory is insufficient. This study employs Hall's model to classify the reception modes of readers in online communities. By adapting the model to focus on a positive attitude toward evaluating works rather than reflecting ideological positions, it becomes more applicable to literary interpretation contexts. Through Fish's concept of interpretive communities, this study analyzes the differences in reception effects caused by the various interpretation strategies of the three types of interpretive communities. While scholars have the knowledge and understanding to reveal structural patterns and formal features in texts, ordinary readers share reading experiences, exchange information, and help each other understand the implicit content of works. Although there is much casual conversation in the Dostoevsky group, it is undeniable that there are more profound exchanges than expected. Thus, Fish's theory of interpretive communities is also applicable to ordinary readers' receptions.

This paper has not fully considered the reception of the author's works by scholars, writers, offline readers, and readers from other digital media platforms. It is recommended that future research broaden its perspective by incorporating methods such as interviews and surveys to analyze the unique insights of different reader groups, particularly those within digital media, towards Dostoevsky's works.

Lastly, this study analyzes the diverse interpretations of Dostoevsky's works by readers in the cyberspace, effectively filling the gap in previous research that lacked attention to the reception of ordinary readers. In the digital age, the voices and immediate feedback of readers have become a non-negligible driving force in shaping the acceptance and widespread influence of literary works, carrying significant implications for the dissemination and reception of Dostoevsky's works in the new era.

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# Algerian Women in Western Online News During the ‘Hirak’: Emerging Images and Recurring Stereotypes

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**Abstract**—The Algerian ‘Hirak’ refers to a series of manifestations to protest against the ruling system in Algeria, which began in February 2019. It is considered a historical marker that featured a significant role of women in political change. This research project examined the image of Algerian women in Western media during this period using corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis. It is based on 36 articles reporting on Algerian women during the ‘Hirak’ movement published by different English news websites. Sketch Engine was used to extract the significant lexical items associated with Algerian women in these articles. Then these items were classified into groups according to the theme they reflect. The analysis of the extracted terms indicates that the framing of Algerian women in English news is linked to six main themes: activism, empowerment, oppression and violence, rights, religion, and family and lifestyle. The findings revealed that the news articles under investigation documented gendering the Algerian ‘Hirak’ and highlighted the emerging image of women as active agents of change, in a similar fashion to that of Arab women during the Arab Spring. They were framed in powerful settings, fighting for their rights and condemning gender-based injustice. Yet, the articles continued to reflect the stereotypical depiction of women’s vulnerability and victimization, linking that to the embedded patriarchal notions in society.

**Index Terms**—Algerian women, Western media, Algerian ‘Hirak’, media discourse, Corpus Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

Studying media discourse has been a topic of interest because of its powerful impact on public opinion, particularly in terms of the construction of stereotypes of different social groups or minorities in society. Research has shown that Western media tend to disseminate negative stereotyped images of Arab women and merge them with Muslim women (Al-Hejin, 2012; Manley, 2009; McCafferty, 2005). Various studies have shown that Muslim women are often assigned presumptive depictions as submissive, subjugated, victims, and passive dependent individuals (Issaka, 2021). Such portrayals can significantly contribute to public prejudice, resulting in increased discrimination against them in Western societies.

Many studies have recently tackled the major role of Arab women in the Arab Spring, which refers to the onset of massive protests against autocratic rules in some Arab countries, starting in Tunisia in late 2010, where citizens protested the country’s economic and political instability (Badawi, 2019). Such a role has shown a profound impact changing Arab women’s image from passive victims of social norms and patriarchal structures to active agents of change, participating in protests and joining political transitions (Al-Ali, 2012; Dastgeer & Gade, 2016; Mustafa-Awad et al., 2020; Mustafa-Awad & Kimer-Ludwig, 2017; Pompper, 2014).

Studies on the depiction of Arab women from different Arab countries in media during the Arab Spring revealed diverse experiences, reflecting their significant contributions to the movements in addition to the challenges they encountered. For instance, Pompper’s (2014) analysis of mainstream news highlighted Tunisian women’s roles as leaders and patriotic citizens during the 2011 Tunisian revolution. Furthermore, Al-Nuaimi’s (2020) study on Egyptian newspapers’ representation of women during 2011-2014 uprisings revealed that these publications highlighted institutionalized hegemonic masculinity, which strives to systematically silence women.

Echoing the Arab Spring, Algeria’s ‘Hirak’ movement, which began in February 2019, is considered a significant historical milestone that witnessed widespread involvement of women of all ages and social backgrounds (Daoudi, 2021). They played a significant role as a support system, demanding alongside men the regime’s withdrawal. Taking part in these movements enabled women to overcome social and cultural constraints and eliminate the stereotypical image of being confined to restrictive and reductionist roles.

The impact of their significant contribution to the ‘Hirak’ on their portrayal in news has not received enough attention. Their image in the media has been often associated with Arab and Muslim women. Indeed, research focusing on the

portrayal of Algerian women in the media is limited to some reports highlighting their image in advertisements (Hassnaoui, 2018; Khelouf, 2019; Zeghdi, 2014) and their representation in the news arena (Birardi, 2016; Malik, 2021). The current research represents an exploratory endeavor in its attempt to analyze English online news' depiction of Algerian women during the 'Hirak'. Specifically, it seeks to examine the lexical items used to describe them and to what extent they contribute to their novel portrayal during that period as opposed to their established stereotypes in English digital media.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research on the representation of Arab women in media has been reflected in different forms, ranging from studies on the image of Arab and Muslim women in Western news outlets (Bashatah, 2017; Falah, 2005; Manley, 2009; McCafferty, 2005) and Arab media (Hamid et al., 2021; Allam, 2005; Kefi, 2019) to the influence of media on audiences' attitudes towards Arab women (Mustafa-Awad & Kimer-Ludwig, 2017).

Muslim and Arab women are mostly treated as one homogenous group that has been assigned a negative image in Western media. They are often portrayed as victims of their Islamic patriarchal society, uneducated, and submissive to male dominance (Al-Hejin, 2012; Bashatah, 2017; Falah, 2005; Manley, 2009; McCafferty, 2005). For instance, McCafferty (2005) studied the image of Muslim women in the New York Times around September 11. The findings indicated that the images reflected three categories of women. One category was portrayed as powerless, oppressed, and submissive to their male compatriots, while another category was depicted as politicized and defiant; she pointed out that their success is often attributed to Western emancipation. The last one was viewed as mysterious and exotic.

The representation of Arab women in media is merged with Middle Eastern women; both are treated as one entity, regardless of the different ethnicities they belong to. Manley (2009) conducted a content analysis of 61 news stories from different American satellite channels, such as NBC and CNN, aired between 2001 and 2008, to analyze the depiction of Middle Eastern women in television news. The study's findings are consistent with existing literature, which depicts Muslim/Middle Eastern women negatively. Television journalists tend to describe them as submissive victims of their societies. They are viewed as an "other" entity that seeks Western rescue.

Because of their significant contribution to the Arab Spring that recently swept across numerous MENA countries, Arab women have received considerable attention in global media. A number of studies scrutinized news coverage of their remarkable participation, which became emblematic of the political uprisings. Through examining the visual framing of Muslim women during the Arab Spring, Dastgeer and Gade (2016) found that media from the US and the Middle East framed women positively as active participants in the political unrest. Similarly, Mustafa-Awad and Kimer-Ludwig (2017) examined media depictions of Arab women during the same period and found that, despite the recurrent negative portrayal of Arab women, positive images emerged due to their significant role during the Arab Spring.

The research on Algerian women's representation in media is quite limited, focusing on analyzing their image in advertisements while disregarding other important sources such as newscasts and documentaries, for example (Birardi, 2016; Hassnaoui, 2018; Khelouf, 2019; Rabahi, 2010; Zeghdi, 2014). For instance, Hassnaoui (2018) studied women's image in Algerian advertising by analyzing the content of commercials from the Algerian channel Al-Nahar. Her findings reinforce the idea that women are showcased as sexual objects in advertisements, which is used as a marketing strategy to attract consumers. Additionally, their role was presented as mostly restricted to that of housewives and caregivers, ignoring the other significant roles they play in society. Birardi (2016) investigated the representation of Algerian women in news discourse by looking at the way Algerian media covered their issues and to what extent they approached the offline reality of Algerian women. The findings revealed that the Algerian press emphasized women's traditional roles and associated them with common societal issues like violence and divorce.

Studies on media coverage of Algerian women during the 'Hirak' period are not many, despite their broad participation at the forefront of these demonstrations. For instance, Malik (2021) conducted a critical discourse analysis on the framing of women by a Kabylia website during the Algerian protests. She analyzed ten articles covering Algerian, Amazigh, and Kabylia women using a gendered perspective and framing theory alongside a critical discourse analysis. The articles revealed that women have been portrayed in both conforming and non-conforming gender roles, in addition to their depiction in stereotypical ways. As a matter of fact, there remains a notable lack of research on media discourse during the 'Hirak' period.

The current research focuses on online media, documenting the depiction of Algerian women in Western news during the period of 'Hirak'. The significance of the study comes from the power of media to influence the image and progress of women in society in addition to how they are perceived and treated in various contexts.

## III. METHOD

Corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis combines computational methods with linguistic analysis to uncover patterns of power and ideology in discourse. Corpus-based analysis of discourse as a research methodology has been promoted and adopted by many scholars (e.g., Baker et al., 2008; Hardt-Mautner, 1995; Marchi & Taylor, 2009; McEnery & Wilson, 2010; Orpin, 2005; Partington, 2003; Stubbs, 2009). Corpus Linguistics (CL) enables researchers to quantitatively process a great number of texts, and the statistical tools it offers assist in describing the investigated data.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), on the other hand, provides a qualitative analysis of the data, which helps researchers establish an in-depth explanation of the topic under investigation.

In this research project, corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis was used to analyze the news articles published in English on Algerian women during the ‘Hirak’ period. The articles were analyzed for the most significant lexical items used to describe them during that period using Sketch Engine.

The news corpus was composed of articles that covered the same subject (Algerian women) during the ‘Hirak’ movement between February 2019 and December 2021. The search terms used to compile the corpus were ‘**Algerian women**’ and ‘**Algerian woman**’, which were searched for in the whole article. A total of 36 articles were collected from Westlaw Next in addition to Google News, with a word count of (35.833).

The following table provides a detailed account of the number of articles covering the years that represent the Algerian uprising, in addition to the word count and the data source.

TABLE 1  
THE ENGLISH DATA

| Source                       | 2019  | 2020  | 2021 | Total |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Washington Post              | 3     | -     | 2    | 5     |
| The New Arab                 | 2     | 3     | 2    | 7     |
| Noticias Financiers- English | -     | 3     | 1    | 4     |
| The Arab Weekly              | 2     | 1     | -    | 3     |
| Middle East Eye              | -     | 2     | -    | 2     |
| Others                       | 4     | 7     | 4    | 15    |
| Total                        | 11    | 16    | 9    | 36    |
| Word count                   | 14402 | 11963 | 9468 | 35008 |

The articles were manually filtered to select the ones with the main topic of Algerian women, not just mentioning them. Therefore, the research opted for 36 English articles that thoroughly cover Algerian women’s issues. The websites are based in the following countries: U.S., UK, and France. Also, the ones with only one article in the studied period were included in the ‘others’ row, as shown in Table 1 above.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

##### A. Results of the Wordlist and N-Grams

The quantitative processing of the corpus through the Sketch Engine reveals valuable results on the lexical choices in representing Algerian women in news data. These include wordlists, n-grams, and collocations as well. The wordlist generates a list of all words according to their frequency. It yields the most frequent words in the corpus and determines the frequency of a certain word. N-grams represent clusters of 2-6 words that exist in a certain order and are either meaningful or not. Clusters allow researchers to obtain a better understanding of the context of the words. The frequency cut score for the wordlist and n-grams was set at 5.

The wordlist and n-grams were used to find out the most frequent terms and expressions pertaining to Algerian women. ‘**Algerian women**’ and ‘**Algerian woman**’ were the search terms used in collecting the data for the inquiry. The most frequent words used to refer to Algerian women are shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2  
THE FREQUENCY LIST OF ITEMS REFERRING TO ALGERIAN WOMEN

| Lexical item      | Frequency |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Women             | 495       |
| Woman             | 60        |
| Algerian women    | 87        |
| Female (s)        | 29        |
| Girl (s)          | 12        |
| Young women/woman | 21        |

Table 2 shows that the word ‘women’ was the most frequent item used in English referring to Algerian women. The term ‘Algerian women’ was also notable in our corpus since it was used as a search term for data collection. Other expressions, such as *females*, were infrequently used in the articles.

Table 3 below lists the most frequent expressions in the news about Algerian women.

TABLE 3  
LIST OF THE FREQUENT N-GRAMS IN ENGLISH

| N-gram                    | Frequency | N-gram                    | Frequency |
|---------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Algerian women            | 87        | Violence against women    | 15        |
|                           |           | Gender- based violence    | 6         |
| Woman right               | 44        | Woman right activist      | 12        |
| Women's rights in Algeria | 5         | Woman activist            | 5         |
| The street                | 36        | Right activist            | 13        |
|                           |           | Right organization        | 5         |
| Social media              | 30        | Social issues             | 10        |
| The death                 | 29        | Algerian man              | 10        |
| The protest               | 29        | The election              | 10        |
| Protest movement          | 7         |                           |           |
| The demonstrations        | 8         | Fifth term                | 10        |
| Death penalty             | 28        | National liberation       | 11        |
| Muslim women              | 26        | Gender equality           | 10        |
| The veil                  | 19        | The suspect               | 9         |
| The family                | 23        | Djamila Bouhired          | 9         |
|                           |           | Zohra Drif                | 5         |
| The victim                | 22        | Arab states               | 9         |
|                           |           | Arab country              | 9         |
| Black decade              | 21        | Human right               | 9         |
|                           |           | Equal right               | 5         |
| The government            | 21        | The police                | 9         |
| Young woman               | 21        | Acid attack               | 9         |
| Public space              | 18        | Election Law              | 9         |
|                           |           | New election law          | 7         |
| The regime                | 17        | A feminist                | 8         |
| The Islamist              | 19        | Rape and murder           | 8         |
| Islamist Extremist        | 7         |                           |           |
| Algerian society          | 17        | Women participation       | 8         |
| The Berber                | 8         |                           |           |
| North Africa              | 17        | National Liberation Front | 8         |
|                           |           | Ruling party              | 6         |
| Abdelaziz Bouteflika      | 15        | The revolution            | 10        |
| The president             | 8         | Freedom fighter           | 6         |
| Family code               | 15        | Mounia Meddour            | 6         |
| Civil society             | 15        | The Hirak                 | 6         |
| The war                   | 15        | Arab spring               | 6         |
| Civil war                 | 14        |                           |           |
| Algerian war              | 7         |                           |           |
| The movement              | 15        | Domestic violence         | 6         |
| The struggle              | 14        | The murder                | 6         |
| International Women's Day | 12        | Political participation   | 5         |
| Man and women             | 10        | Femicides Algeria         | 5         |
| Political party           | 5         | Street protest            | 5         |
| Female candidate          | 5         | Women in politics         | 5         |

The list of n-grams reflects different topics, the majority of which include women's issues such as women's rights, participation, activism, and violence against women. Because the investigated period corresponds to the Algerian uprising, the majority of expressions relate to the political and social contexts in which women were active agents, significantly advocating for political and social reforms. For instance, the recurring words: *the protests* (29), *a feminist* (8), *women's participation* (8), *right activist* (13), and *women rights activists* (12) reflect Algerian women's agency by highlighting their contributions to the political unrest and nation-building. Algerian women rallied for the cause of political reforms and regime change that ensure equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender and reinforce the state's democratic values. The corpus included some women's names, such as *Djamila Bouhired* (9), a nationalist and guerilla fighter during the war of independence who has been an inspirational figure for many Algerian women to join the 'Hirak' movement. The

expressions have also covered women's struggle to achieve their rights and denounce violent and discriminatory acts against them, as evidenced by the following: *violence against women* (15), *gender-based violence* (6), *women's rights* (44), and *gender equality* (10). It is worth noting that some expressions featuring in the data referred to religion as in (*Muslim women* (26), *Islamist* (19)), dress regulations (*the veil* (19)), and Family Code (*Family Code* (15)).

### B. The Results of Collocates

At this level, the most frequent collocates of the lemma 'woman' were extracted, selecting a range of five words to the right and left as well. The significance of collocates was determined according to the following measures: Cooccurrence, LogDice, Mutual Information, and T-score. **Cooccurrence (CC)** expresses the frequency of two items that appear together. **LogDice (LD)** measures the strength of the collocation. **Mutual Information score (MI)** is used to find out how many times words are likely to co-occur compared to their separate occurrences. **T-score** measures the strong association between the node and its collocate. In other words, the t-score allows us to discover whether the co-occurrence is random or not and is affected by the frequency of the collocation. For a collocate to be counted, the cut scores were set as CC = 3; LD = 6.0; MI = 2.5; t-score = 1.5.

The list of collocations was then classified into groups according to the themes they reflect following Mustafa-Awad's and Kimer-Ludwig's (2017) approach in their study on the representation of Arab women in the Arab Spring. The identified topics associated with women during the Algerian uprising were: activism, empowerment, rights, religion and dress regulations, oppression and violence, and family and lifestyle.

The tables below represent the significant collocates reflecting each of the identified topics.

#### (a). Activism

Activism seems to be the most relevant theme highlighted in the corpus since the English news on Algerian women were released during a critical period of reform in Algeria. The lexical expressions reflecting this topical frame are listed in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO ACTIVISM

| Word                     | CC | LD    | t-score | MI   |
|--------------------------|----|-------|---------|------|
| Activists                | 24 | 10.12 | 4.74    | 4.96 |
| Activist                 |    |       |         |      |
| Uprising                 | 6  | 8.19  | 2.34    | 4.51 |
| Movement                 | 12 | 9.11  | 3.21    | 3.79 |
| Protest/s,<br>Protesting | 31 | 10.32 | 5.18    | 3.85 |
| Fighting                 | 6  | 8.14  | 2.20    | 3.28 |
| Stand                    | 3  | 8.50  | 1.96    | 4.20 |
| Reform                   | 3  | 7.20  | 1.67    | 4.45 |
| Demand                   | 8  | 8.52  | 2.52    | 3.18 |
| Feminist                 | 11 | 9.01  | 3.13    | 4.15 |
| Organization             | 13 | 9.28  | 3.48    | 4.86 |
| Campaign                 | 5  | 7.93  | 2.13    | 4.34 |
| Resistance               | 8  | 8.61  | 2.76    | 5.43 |

Algerian women's activism during the 'Hirak' significantly contributed to pushing for social and political reforms. The most significant items referring to this domain in the corpus are: *protest(s)/protesting*, which appeared (31) times in the English corpus with an LD of 10.32, t-score of 5.18, and MI of 3.85. The expressions *activist/s* were also notable in the English corpus at CC of 24, LD of 10.12, t-score of 4.74, and MI of 4.96.

Examples from the corpus are given below:

"**Algerian women activists** on Thursday also called for a special day of protest on Friday in celebration of International Women's Day." (The New Arab, 08.03.2019).

"In this context, the participation of **women** in the **street protests** today is particularly inspiring." (Washington Post, 04.04.2019)

Algerian women have become key figures in the most recent uprising, which served as a historical marker that brought them to the forefront. These results conform to previous literature on the positive portrayal of Arab women as active agents of change (Allam, 2005; Dastgeer & Gade, 2016; Falah, 2005; Mustafa-Awad & Kimer-Ludwig, 2017; Tabaza & Mustafa-Awad, 2022).

#### (b). Empowerment

Women's empowerment was also a topic of interest in English news about Algerian women. The collocates related to this theme are listed in Table 5.

TABLE 5  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO EMPOWERMENT

| Word           | CC | LD   | t-score | MI   |
|----------------|----|------|---------|------|
| Participation  | 12 | 9.17 | 3.36    | 5.08 |
| Participate    | 7  | 8.40 | 2.53    | 4.50 |
| Role/roles     | 13 | 9.59 | 3.20    | 4.81 |
| Representation | 7  | 8.43 | 2.59    | 5.65 |
| Involvement    | 5  | 7.94 | 2.19    | 5.53 |
| Involved       | 7  | 8.42 | 2.58    | 5.36 |
| Work           | 6  | 8.14 | 2.19    | 3.24 |
| Lead           | 6  | 8.18 | 2.33    | 4.35 |
| Hold           | 13 | 9.28 | 3.49    | 5.02 |
| Powerful       | 4  | 7.61 | 1.92    | 4.56 |
| Achieve        | 4  | 7.61 | 1.91    | 4.43 |
| Give           | 5  | 7.91 | 2.07    | 3.75 |
| Progress       | 3  | 7.21 | 1.69    | 5.26 |
| Join           | 5  | 7.92 | 2.12    | 4.25 |

The most significant and frequent lexical items reflecting the topic of women's empowerment in the English corpus are related to their involvement in the country's public affairs. 'Role' and 'hold' were the most significant collocates in English, occurring 13 times with an LD of 9.59 and 9.28, t-score of 3.20 and 3.49, and MI of 4.81 and 5.02, respectively. The words *participation/participate* were also prominent in the related news, occurring 12 and 7 times, LD of 9.17 and 8.40, T-score of 3.36 and 2.53, and MI of 5.08 and 4.50, respectively. While these terms capture women's participation in politics and economy, they mostly focus on their participation in the demonstrations that represent milestones in Algerian history.

Examples from our corpus are listed below:

"The **participation** of women in the street protests today is particularly inspiring. Women joined the marches, and a feminist group even established a 'feminist square' by the gates of the downtown campus of the University of Algiers." (Washington Post, 08.03.2019)

"After the 2012 elections, women **held** 31.6 percent of the seats and 30 percent of the cabinet after 2014, the highest rate among Arab countries." (Noticias Financieras, 07.02.2020).

This finding contradicts previous literature regarding Arab in addition to Algerian women's depiction as victims and passive individuals constrained to traditional roles (Arvas, 2014; Bashatah, 2017; Birardi, 2016; Drim & Shemakhi, 2015; Hassnaoui, 2018; Manley, 2009).

### (c). Rights

Another important topic discussed in the news about Algerian women during that period was related to their rights. The significant expressions regarding women's rights highlighted their fight for liberation and equality with their male compatriots by opposing gender-based injustices. In addition, reforms that promote women's political integration have received considerable attention. The terms related to this topic in our corpus are given in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO RIGHTS

| Word                         | CC | LD    | t-score | MI   |
|------------------------------|----|-------|---------|------|
| Rights                       | 65 | 11.43 | 7.84    | 5.18 |
| Equality                     | 8  | 8.57  | 2.66    | 4.06 |
| Equal                        | 4  | 8.15  | 1.84    | 3.68 |
| Politics                     | 13 | 9.27  | 3.47    | 4.70 |
| Political                    | 14 | 9.28  | 3.44    | 3.63 |
| Parliament                   | 4  | 7.61  | 1.91    | 4.43 |
| Elected                      | 4  | 10.2  | 1.67    | 4.84 |
| Elections                    | 5  | 7.86  | 1.93    | 2.85 |
| Quotas                       | 4  | 7.62  | 1.92    | 4.70 |
| Support                      | 4  | 7.59  | 1.84    | 3.62 |
| Freedom                      | 5  | 8.49  | 2.11    | 4.20 |
| Liberation                   | 7  | 8.40  | 2.52    | 4.36 |
| Protect/protection/protected | 8  | 8.59  | 2.71    | 4.62 |

The word 'rights' is the top collocate of women with a CC of 65, LD of 11.43, t-score of 7.84, and MI of 5.18. Most of the expressions indicating women's rights have to do with their integration in politics, which remains a questionable issue. *Parliament*, *politics*, and *quotas* are some of the instances referring to the political right in the corpus, as it can be seen in:

"Women's participation in **politics** is key, but it does not always guarantee a breakthrough in rights and freedoms for the female population." (Noticias Financieras, 13.11.2020)

In Algeria, women's participation in politics is relatively weak, as the gender quota has been largely neglected. Indeed, the social environment, deep-rooted stereotyped attitudes, and men's convictions about women's incompetence in

occupying positions traditionally reserved for men are the main causes of political ignorance regarding the gender quota. Women are not usually supported by political parties to run for parliament candidacy, and they continue to be rejected in the political realm due to their perceived incongruity with politics (Ait-Zai, 2016).

This result affirms what was reported in previous studies regarding the perception of Arab women in politics. The issues emphasized included their limited representation in parliament and candidacy in political parties, along with their efforts to raise awareness of their political rights (Allam, 2005; Aissa, 2020). For instance, in 2018, the Arab Berometer published research on the roles and rights of women across the Middle East and North Africa, which investigated Arab perceptions of men as better political leaders. Indeed, four out of five Algerian participants (81%) agree with the statement, making up the highest percentage among the seven Arab countries involved in the study.

Other significant terms observed in our data were *equality/equal*, which occurred 12 times with a t-score of 2.66 and 1.84, MI of 4.06 and 3.68, and LD of 8.57 and 8.15, respectively. It should be mentioned that Algerian women have been fighting for gender equality at various national events over the years. Such fight was underscored during the last Algerian uprising, where the emphasis on equal rights was an integral aspect of women's demands. This finding relates to previous studies, which highlighted women's role in the fight for equality during the Arab Spring (Al-Ali, 2012; Dastgeer & Gade, 2016; Mustafa-Awad & Kimer-Ludwig, 2017).

#### (d). Oppression and Violence

Gender-based violence and oppression have been featuring as topics in global media worldwide. The annual figures released by different countries are worrisome, and Algeria is no exception. Algerian women have been victims of different forms of violence, including harassment, rape, and even femicide and battery resulting in death. Related incidents are often underreported since women are discouraged from testifying against their aggressors in what is considered a patriarchal society. However, this topic is underscored in the media during the 'Hirak', bringing women's experiences to light. The most frequent expressions related to this topic are given in Table 7.

TABLE 7  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO OPPRESSION AND VIOLENCE

| Word                        | CC | LD    | t-score | MI   |
|-----------------------------|----|-------|---------|------|
| Violence                    | 24 | 10.08 | 4.68    | 4.45 |
| Murder                      | 11 | 9.02  | 3.15    | 4.35 |
| Killed                      | 8  | 8.58  | 2.69    | 4.37 |
| Killing                     | 6  | 8.78  | 2.38    | 5.13 |
| Struggle/<br>Struggles      | 19 | 9.78  | 4.18    | 4.59 |
| Rape/<br>Raped              | 12 | 9.12  | 3.25    | 4.05 |
| Oppression                  | 6  | 8.20  | 2.38    | 5.14 |
| Attack                      | 7  | 8.37  | 2.45    | 3.78 |
| Repression                  | 4  | 7.80  | 1.67    | 4.75 |
| Discrimination/discriminate | 4  | 7.62  | 1.94    | 5.02 |
| Marginalization             | 5  | 8.2   | 2.73    | 4.90 |

Violence is the most significant expression related to oppression in English news. It was prominent in English with a CC of 24, LD of 10.08, t-score of 4.68, and MI of 4.45. Less frequent but still significant are terms related to different forms of violence, such as *rape/raped* and *murder*, which occurred in the English corpus with a CC of 12 and 11, LD of 9.12 and 9.02, t-score of 3.25 and 3.15, and MI of 4.05 and 4.35, respectively.

Examples of violence and its forms are illustrated below:

"As part of the Hirak popular movement, which began in 2019, women's rights groups have demanded an end to all forms of **gender-based violence** and greater gender equality. Their demands include calling for Algeria's Family Code, which they believe **discriminates** against women in matters of inheritance, marriage, divorce, child custody, and guardianship to be repealed. They have also called for the 2015 Penal Code to be amended in order to criminalize **violence against women**." (Middle East Eye, 11.11.2020)

"One woman held a sign reading in French: 'We dream of a country where **women** who talk about **rape** are heard more than men who talk about the veil.'" (The Arab Weekly, 09.10.2020).

The fact that Algerian women are subject to different forms of violence is highlighted in our corpus. Official national statistics on domestic violence, intimate partner/non-partner violence, sexual harassment, or even child-early and forced marriages are unavailable (Ait Hamou, 2020). Nevertheless, some figures published by the National Security Directorate in 2019 reported around 7.083 complaints of conjugal and physical violence, with more cases registered for the latter (ibid.).

Since the investigated period represents a historical marker that brought women's issues to the forefront, gender inequality and discrimination were highlighted in the expressions indicating oppression against women. Interestingly, reference to women's struggle at different levels was prominent in the corpus, such as the words *struggle/struggles*, which were found with a CC of 19, LD of 9.78, t-score of 4.18, and MI of 4.59.

The emphasis on violence against women in its different forms is in line with previous literature reporting Arab women matters (Eltantawy, 2007; Narli, 2018; Tabaza, 2018).



(e). *Religion and Dress Restrictions*

News on Arab women has always tackled religious affairs and dress regulations. Table 8 shows the most frequent terms related to this topical frame.

TABLE 8  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO RELIGION

| Word           | CC | LD    | t-score | MI   |
|----------------|----|-------|---------|------|
| Muslim         | 29 | 10.42 | 5.28    | 5.70 |
| Veiled/veiling | 8  | 8.55  | 2.60    | 3.62 |
| Religious      | 4  | 10.5  | 1.65    | 3.54 |
| Islamist       | 5  | 7.85  | 1.88    | 2.64 |
| Headscarves    | 3  | 12.7  | 1.84    | 6.65 |

The English news highlighted aspects of religion and dress regulations when reporting Algerian women's issues during the investigated period. This can be illustrated in terms associated with religion as *Muslim*, which featured at CC of 29, LD of 10.42, t-score of 5.28, and MI of 5.70.

Western media give considerable attention to veiling practices when reporting on Muslim women (Bullock & Jafri, 2000). The corpus included references of Muslim women's dress code with regard to its significance, such as the word *veiled*. It is worth noting that different terms for the Islamic veil occurred in the corpus, such as *Hijab*, *Headscarves*, and *Jilbab*.

The following is an example from the corpus:

"French imperialists wielded local **religious** practices, including the **veiling** of **Muslim** women, child marriage and gender seclusion, to demonstrate to the French public the necessity of intervention in the region." (Washington Post, 13.04.2021)

The findings relate to previous studies on Arab women's depiction in Western news concerning the emphasis on religious affiliation in reporting Arab women's matters (Al-Hejin, 2012; Mostafa, 2018; Mustafa-Awad & Kirner-Ludwig, 2017; Tabaza, 2018).

(f). *Family and Lifestyle*

The news also addressed family-related issues, in addition to the lifestyle of women in Algeria. The most frequent expressions related to this topical frame are given in Table 9.

TABLE 9  
COLLOCATES RELATED TO FAMILY AND LIFESTYLE

| Word    | CC | LD    | T-score | MI   |
|---------|----|-------|---------|------|
| Man     | 25 | 10.09 | 4.71    | 4.11 |
| Young   | 23 | 10.07 | 4.66    | 5.11 |
| Society | 10 | 8.85  | 2.90    | 3.58 |
| Family  | 5  | 8.32  | 1.85    | 2.55 |
| Rural   | 5  | 7.94  | 2.16    | 4.88 |
| Divorce | 6  | 8.19  | 2.36    | 4.79 |
| Child   | 6  | 8.15  | 2.24    | 3.51 |

The news reported issues related to divorce and child custody, which are derived from the Family Code. It is worth noting that although the word *husband* was found in the corpus, it was not a collocate of *woman* but rather other negative terms, such as: *divorce*, *abusive*, *victim*, etc.

The following is an example:

"If a woman wants to get **divorced** she has to go before the judge and prove why, she has to explain and bring with sometimes very difficult to prove issues." (Noticias Financieras, 13.11.2020).

The results of the study indicated that the most prominent topic in English news coverage of Algerian women during the period of 'Hirak' was their activism, in which they were portrayed as agents of resistance and change, particularly in the latest uprising. The positive framing of Algerian women aligns with existing literature on the depiction of Arab women during the Arab Spring. Indeed, the news reported on their resistance throughout the war of independence and thereafter against the ruling system in addition to their ongoing struggle for their rights. Some of the established stereotypes of Arab women, such as their vulnerability and oppression, have been recurrent in the news reports about Algerian women. Issues related to religion and dress regulations were also highlighted pertaining to Arab women's depiction in Western news. These images were reflected by the most significant terms associated with women, namely rights, violence, Muslim, activists, and protest. Checking the concordances revealed the specificity of addressing the family code, which is derived from Islamic laws, and its implications for women's status in Algeria.

## V. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the analysis of the articles related to the framing of Algerian women in Western media during the 'Hirak' period revealed six main themes: **activism, empowerment, oppression and violence, rights, religion, and family and**

**lifestyle.** Women's activism was a prominent topic, highlighting their crucial involvement in the uprisings that recently swept the country. The English media outlets covered the gendering of the 'Hirak' movement, which contributed to projecting a positive image of women as active agents challenging patriarchal norms and opposing autocratic rule. The participation of Algerian women in the uprising has led to a shift in the media's representation of them, which is particularly reminiscent of the portrayal of Arab women in Western media during the Arab Spring. Empowerment and rights also featured in the media's depiction of Algerian women, emphasizing women's efforts to achieve their rights as full citizens engaged in social and political situations and denounce gender-based injustices. Nevertheless, Algerian women's representation in English news continues to reflect the stereotypical image of Arab women as victims of gender-based violence in all its forms, emphasizing social conventions as well as discriminatory acts motivated by deeply rooted patriarchal notions in society. Topics pertaining to religion and dress restrictions on Muslim women were also identified in Western news, as well as issues related to vulnerability and victimization. Yet, there was an emerging image in the mainstream media of Algerian women breaking free from traditional roles and finding a spirit of resilience to fight for their rights.

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# Vitality of Moi Language: A Case Study of Moi Tribes in Southwest Papua, Indonesia

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**Abstract**—This study aims to explore the language preference of Moi tribe within family settings. It ultimately seeks to evaluate how these language choices affect the preservation of the Moi language in the multilingual environment of Southwest Papua. The research involves 300 participants, categorized by gender and age. Data were gathered through semi-structured interview questionnaires and observations. The results indicate that Indonesian is primarily used in family interactions. While the participants often engage in code-switching, the findings reveal that younger generations tend to be passive speakers of the Moi language, with some lacking even a basic comprehension of their mother tongue. Factors such as social context, peer relationships, and motivation play a significant role in shaping the language choices of the participants. Furthermore, the study indicates a clear shift from the Moi language to Indonesian in the linguistic practices of the participants.

**Index Terms**—language preference, language shift, language vitality, Moi language

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a crucial element of culture and identity, functioning not only as a means of communication but also as a vessel for the values, beliefs, and traditions of a community (Álvarez Mella et al., 2023; Balaska, 2024). In Indonesia, known for its rich linguistic diversity, there are over 700 languages, each representing a unique cultural heritage (Fitriati & Wardani, 2020; Hassan et al., 2015). Among these languages is Moi, spoken by the Moi people in Southwest Papua. Understanding the vitality of this language is essential for appreciating its role within the Moi community and in the broader context of cultural preservation in Indonesia (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2024).

The Moi tribe inhabits the southern coastal areas of Papua Barat, characterized by a distinctive cultural identity shaped by their history, environment, and social structures (Ibrahim et al., 2023). The Moi language serves as a marker of identity for the tribe, reflecting their worldviews and communal values. However, the Moi language faces significant challenges in the contemporary era, including the impacts of globalization, urbanization, and the dominance of national and international languages such as Indonesian and English. These challenges are particularly felt by the younger generations, who are increasingly shifting their language use toward more widely spoken languages, thereby threatening the continuity of their native tongue (Alshammri, 2024; Ravindranath & Cohn, 2014).

Several factors contribute to the decline in the use of the Moi language. The influence of mass media, especially television and social media, plays a vital role in exposing Moi youth to dominant languages (Tawalbeh, 2019). Furthermore, educational policies often prioritize the national language, leading to the marginalization of local languages (Inan et al., 2024). As a result, there is a generational shift where the Moi language is increasingly perceived as less valuable or relevant in a rapidly changing socio-economic context (Abdelsayed & Bellinzona, 2024; Ariyani et al., 2022; Mackiewicz, 2018). This shift raises critical questions about the survival of the Moi language and, more broadly, the cultural identity of the Moi people (Ibrahim et al., 2023).

The concept of language vitality refers to the extent to which a language is actively used and passed down through generations. This concept encompasses various dimensions, including the number of speakers, the contexts in which the language is used, and the community's attitudes toward it (Chen, 2023; Louf et al., 2021). To comprehensively assess the vitality of the Moi language, it is important to explore these dimensions through qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Mackiewicz, 2018; Yuan, 2022). This study aims to analyze the current state of the Moi language, identify its usage within family contexts, and gather insights from the Moi community regarding the importance of their language (Slavkov, 2017). By conducting in-depth interviews with speakers from different generations, this study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how the Moi language is valued and utilized in everyday life. Understanding these

perspectives can provide insights into the cultural significance of the language and the motivations behind its use or abandonment (Küün, 2015).

Furthermore, this research will investigate the role of the Moi language in family interactions. Families often serve as the primary site for language transmission (Abdelsayed & Bellinzona, 2024; Álvarez Mella et al., 2023; Balaska, 2024; Inan et al., 2024), and understanding how parents communicate with their children in the Moi language can reveal much about the intergenerational transmission of this language. The findings of this research are expected to have broader implications, not only for the Moi community. In the face of globalization threatening linguistic diversity worldwide, understanding how local communities navigate these challenges can contribute to broader discussions about language policy and cultural preservation (Jamallullail & Nordin, 2023). Insights from this study are anticipated to support the development of effective policies that promote linguistic diversity and support the revitalization of endangered languages in Indonesia and beyond (Mendieta, 2024; Nursanti & Andriyanti, 2021).

In addition to academic contributions, this research aims to raise awareness about the importance of the Moi language and its cultural significance. By giving voice to the Moi people and documenting their experiences, this study seeks to advocate for the recognition and support of indigenous languages as integral components of cultural heritage. This aligns with the global movement toward linguistic rights, emphasizing the need to preserve the linguistic diversity that enriches human culture (Jenkins, 2024).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Language Vitality and Endangerment

Language vitality refers to the robustness and resilience of a language, particularly concerning its use, transmission, and sustainability across generations (Zhang et al., 2023). The concept encompasses several dimensions, including the number of speakers, the contexts in which the language is actively used, and community attitudes towards it (Edmonds, 2024). A vital language is characterized by active, intergenerational transmission and its use in various domains such as education, media, and daily communication (Ouabi et al., 2022). Conversely, language endangerment occurs when a language is at risk of falling out of use, often leading to its extinction (Ramonienè & Ramonaitè, 2024).

Several factors contribute to the vitality of a language (Jung, 2023). First, the number of speakers is a crucial indicator. Languages spoken by a larger population are generally more likely to thrive than those with few speakers. However, the mere number of speakers is not sufficient; the context in which the language is used also matters significantly. For instance, languages that are employed in formal education, government, and media tend to have higher vitality compared to those that are confined to informal settings or home environments.

Another critical factor is the attitudes of the community towards their language (Bromham et al., 2020). When speakers perceive their language as a vital part of their identity, culture, and heritage, they are more likely to engage in practices that support its maintenance (Lim, 2020). Positive attitudes can foster intergenerational transmission, where parents actively teach their children the language and use it in daily life. Conversely, if a community views their language as inferior or less valuable compared to dominant languages, this can lead to a decline in its use and transmission (Lee, 2020a).

Language shift occurs when speakers begin to favor another language over their native tongue, often due to social, economic, or political pressures (Connell et al., 2021). This shift can happen gradually; for instance, younger generations might adopt a dominant language for educational or employment opportunities, leading to reduced use of their indigenous language (Bromham et al., 2022). Over time, this can result in a situation where the native language is no longer spoken fluently by younger members of the community, putting it at risk of endangerment (Hameed, 2022).

The phenomenon of language endangerment can be classified into several stages. According to UNESCO's Language Vitality and Endangerment framework, these stages range from "safe" to "extinct". A language is considered "safe" when it is spoken by all generations, while it is "vulnerable" if children are not learning it as their first language. It becomes "definitely endangered" when the language is spoken only by older generations, and "critically endangered" when it is spoken by very few individuals. Finally, a language is classified as "extinct" when there are no remaining speakers.

The loss of a language has profound cultural implications. Language is not merely a tool for communication; it carries the history, traditions, and knowledge of its speakers (Bouchard, 2022). When a language disappears, the associated cultural practices, oral histories, and traditional knowledge are often lost as well. This loss diminishes the community's social cohesion and identity, as language is a primary means through which cultural values and norms are transmitted (Hassan et al., 2015).

Efforts to counter language endangerment often focus on revitalization strategies that aim to strengthen the use of endangered languages within communities (Louf et al., 2021). These strategies can include educational programs, community workshops, and media initiatives that promote the use of the language in everyday life (Gutierrez, 2022). Moreover, fostering positive attitudes toward the language and encouraging its use in various contexts are essential components of successful revitalization efforts (Ting, 2024).

Understanding language vitality and endangerment is crucial for addressing the challenges faced by indigenous languages around the world (van de Haar, 2022). By identifying the factors that contribute to the vitality of languages

and recognizing the processes that lead to endangerment, communities and policymakers can develop targeted strategies for language preservation. Protecting linguistic diversity is not just about saving words; it is about preserving unique worldviews, cultures, and identities that enrich humanity as a whole (Bhatt & Bolonyai, 2022; Montroy, 2022).

### *B. Globalization and Indigenous Languages*

Globalization poses significant challenges to indigenous languages, often leading to language shift as speakers adopt dominant languages like English or national languages (Chan & Chou, 2022). In Indonesia, the promotion of Bahasa Indonesia in education, media, and public life has contributed to the marginalization of local languages, making it increasingly difficult for them to survive (Ariyani et al., 2022). Research indicates that younger generations increasingly favor dominant languages due to perceived economic and social advantages, which leads to concerns about the survival of languages like Moi (Ibrahim et al., 2023).

The impact of globalization on language use is multifaceted. On one hand, increased access to education and economic opportunities can lead to the adoption of national languages, often perceived as gateways to advancement (Lee, 2020b). This shift towards dominant languages is particularly pronounced in urban areas, where economic integration and modernization pressure individuals to prioritize languages that enhance their job prospects and social mobility. On the other hand, this transition can create a disconnect between younger generations and their cultural roots, as language is a vital component of cultural identity. Studies have shown that when children do not learn their indigenous languages, they may struggle to connect with their cultural heritage, resulting in a loss of traditional knowledge and practices (Lim, 2020).

The intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages is vital for their survival. Factors such as family language use, community practices, and the presence of educational programs in indigenous languages significantly influence whether a language is passed on to the next generation (Bouchard, 2022). In this context, the role of families in maintaining the Moi language becomes critical. Families that prioritize the use of the Moi language at home and in community settings contribute to its resilience. Conversely, families that adopt Indonesian or other dominant languages for communication inadvertently contribute to the decline of the Moi language, as children become less exposed to and proficient in their native tongue (Hameed, 2022).

The effects of globalization are not only limited to language shift but also encompass the sociocultural dynamics within indigenous communities. As dominant languages gain prestige, local languages can become stigmatized, leading to decreased motivation among younger speakers to learn and use their native tongue. This stigma can discourage families from speaking their indigenous language at home, further accelerating language shift and endangerment (Bromham et al., 2020).

The Moi language, spoken by the Moi tribes in Southwest Papua, is more than a means of communication; it is a vital component of cultural identity. Research by Bromham et al. (2022) highlights the deep interconnection between language and cultural identity within indigenous communities. Language reflects social norms, values, and the unique worldview of its speakers. For the Moi people, the Moi language serves as a repository of their traditions, stories, and cultural practices, making its preservation essential for maintaining their identity and heritage (Abdelsayed & Bellinzona, 2024).

Moreover, the Moi language plays a crucial role in community cohesion and social bonding. Within the Moi community, shared language fosters a sense of belonging and collective identity. As members engage in cultural rituals, storytelling, and communal activities, the Moi language acts as a medium through which cultural knowledge is transmitted and reinforced. The language serves not only as a tool for communication but also as a means of affirming group identity and belonging, which is crucial for maintaining social unity (Hameed, 2022).

Research indicates that language is intimately tied to concepts of place and identity. The Moi language carries specific terms and expressions that are unique to the environment and cultural practices of the Moi people, which are often lost in translation to more dominant languages. This linguistic connection to the land and community enhances the significance of the Moi language as a cultural asset and underscores the urgency of its preservation (Zhang et al., 2023). The loss of the Moi language would not only impact communication but would also signify a loss of cultural heritage, traditional ecological knowledge, and the collective memory of the Moi people.

The interplay between globalization and indigenous languages is complex and multi-dimensional. While globalization can facilitate access to new opportunities, it can also threaten the survival of languages like Moi. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing effective strategies for language preservation that honor the cultural heritage and identity of indigenous communities (Qiu & Qiu, 2022). This context reinforces the importance of community-led initiatives aimed at revitalizing the Moi language and ensuring its continued relevance in the lives of the Moi tribes.

### *C. Language Revitalization Efforts*

Efforts to revitalize endangered languages have gained significant momentum globally, with a focus on community involvement, educational programs, and cultural events that promote the use of these languages across various contexts (Dołowy-Rybińska & Hornsby, 2021; Flores Farfán & Olko, 2021). In Southwest Papua, local initiatives aimed at teaching the Moi language in schools and community centers have emerged as vital strategies for revitalization (Ibrahim

et al., 2023). These efforts are crucial for creating an environment where the Moi language can thrive and adapt to modern contexts, ensuring its relevance for future generations.

Community led initiatives play a central role in these revitalization efforts. Programs often include language classes, cultural workshops, and the development of educational materials in the Moi language. Such initiatives provide participants with practical language skills while reinforcing cultural identity and pride. For instance, community members can engage in storytelling, traditional songs, and dances that incorporate the Moi language, thus deepening their connection to their cultural heritage. By emphasizing the importance of the Moi language in daily life, these initiatives help counteract the trend of language shift among younger generations, who may otherwise gravitate towards dominant languages (Lu et al., 2024; Ting, 2024).

Moreover, the inclusion of elders as language teachers is a significant aspect of these programs. Elders possess a wealth of traditional knowledge and linguistic expertise, which they can impart to younger community members (Carpenter et al., 2024). This intergenerational exchange is crucial for maintaining the language's authenticity and ensuring that cultural practices are preserved alongside the language (Lane, 2023). When young people learn from elders, they not only acquire linguistic skills but also develop a sense of respect and appreciation for their cultural heritage (Costa, 2023).

Technology has also opened new avenues for language revitalization, making efforts more accessible and engaging (Ariyani et al., 2022; Carpenter et al., 2024). Digital platforms, social media, and mobile applications can facilitate language learning and create virtual communities where speakers can interact. For example, mobile apps designed for language learning offer interactive exercises, quizzes, and vocabulary lists tailored to the Moi language, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective (Ariyani et al., 2022).

Social media platforms can serve as vibrant spaces for sharing cultural content, stories, and language lessons. Community members can post videos, songs, and discussions in the Moi language, thus promoting its use in everyday contexts and reaching wider audiences. This online engagement can attract younger individuals who are more accustomed to digital communication, ensuring that the Moi language remains relevant in the contemporary digital landscape (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2024).

In addition to these initiatives, cultural events such as festivals, storytelling sessions, and language camps play a vital role in revitalization efforts (Dołowy-Rybińska & Hornsby, 2021). These events not only celebrate the Moi language but also provide opportunities for community members to practice their language skills in a supportive environment. By fostering a sense of pride in their language and culture, these gatherings encourage participants to use the Moi language more frequently in their daily lives (Montroy, 2022).

Importantly, these revitalization efforts extend beyond language preservation; they empower the community by enhancing social cohesion and reinforcing cultural identity (Peace-Hughes, 2022). By actively participating in language revitalization initiatives, community members contribute to the sustainability of their cultural heritage. As the Moi language continues to be a vibrant part of daily life, it serves as a bridge connecting generations and strengthening communal ties.

The revitalization of the Moi language through community engagement, educational initiatives, and the use of technology presents a comprehensive approach to addressing language endangerment. These efforts are essential for ensuring that the Moi language not only survives but flourishes in contemporary society, maintaining its role as a vital expression of the Moi people's identity (Hansal et al., 2022; Wiltshire et al., 2022). Through sustained commitment and innovative strategies, the Moi language can thrive, securing its place in the future of the community.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative and quantitative method to explore the language choice of Moi tribes at family domain. A purposive sampling was used to determine the number of research subject. This study focuses on language choice of Moi tribes in Sorong city, Southwest Papua. The participants of this study were 300 participants and were classified based on gender and ages.

The questionnaire was distributed directly to the respondents. It contained information about the respondents, as well as questions and statements regarding their language choices when communicating with all family members in the family domain.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 participants. Each participant was interviewed for 30 minutes in their home. Subsequently, the researcher sought permission and arranged a time with the participants to observe their language use within the family domain. To analyze the data, the interviews were transcribed, and notes from field observations were gathered.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Questionnaire

##### *Language Use Based on Gender*

Based on gender, the language use of the Moi Tribes in Southwest Papua is shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

| Gender | Language Use (%) |            |                |
|--------|------------------|------------|----------------|
|        | Moi              | Indonesian | Mixed-language |
| Male   | 35.90            | 57.80      | 6.30           |
| Female | 37.10            | 59.70      | 3.20           |

The language usage data shows that male and female respondents have similar tendencies, although there are some differences. A total of 57.80% of male respondents use Indonesian, followed by 35.90% who use Moi language and 6.30% who use mixed language. On the other hand, female respondents also show a dominance of Indonesian with 59.70%, while 37.10% use Moi language and only 3.20% use mixed language. Although female respondents use Moi language more than males, both groups indicate that Indonesian is the most commonly used language in daily communication.

The data on language usage among male and female respondents provides crucial insights into the vitality of the Moi language, highlighting both its current standing and the significant threats it faces due to the dominance of the Indonesian language. This analysis seeks to explore these dynamics in detail, examining the implications for cultural identity, community cohesion, and the future of the Moi language.

The data reveals that 57.80% of male respondents and 59.70% of female respondents prefer using Indonesian. This dominance underscores the position of Indonesian as a lingua franca in Indonesia, serving as a unifying language across diverse ethnic and cultural groups. In contrast, the Moi language is used by 37.10% of female respondents and 35.90% of male respondents. While these percentages indicate that a significant portion of the population still engages with Moi, the overall trend shows a clear preference for Indonesian.

The preference for Indonesian can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the educational system in Indonesia primarily employs Indonesian as the medium of instruction, leading to higher proficiency and familiarity with the language among younger generations. Secondly, the pervasive influence of mass media, including television, radio, and social media, predominantly features Indonesian content, further entrenching its status in everyday communication. As a result, while Moi maintains a presence, it is increasingly overshadowed by Indonesian.

Despite the overshadowing presence of Indonesian, the usage of Moi among respondents suggests a vital connection to local culture and identity. The higher percentage of female respondents using Moi may indicate a stronger attachment to cultural roots, as women often play a key role in preserving traditions and language within families and communities. This connection can be critical for the language's survival, as it reflects an emotional and cultural investment in the Moi language.

Moreover, the use of Moi can serve as a form of resistance against cultural homogenization brought about by globalization. In a world where dominant languages tend to marginalize local tongues, the active choice to use Moi can be a statement of cultural pride and identity. This resistance is crucial, as it helps to maintain the richness of cultural diversity and the unique heritage that languages encapsulate.

However, the vitality of the Moi language is under threat from several factors. One major concern is the low usage of mixed language among respondents, with only 6.30% of males and 3.20% of females opting for this mode of communication. This suggests that there is a tendency to favor the more dominant and standardized Indonesian, which can lead to the gradual erosion of Moi. As the community increasingly opts for Indonesian, the generational transmission of Moi may weaken, risking a decline in its use over time.

Furthermore, the encroachment of globalization presents a significant challenge. The global landscape often prioritizes major languages, which can lead to the diminishing status of local languages like Moi. In such an environment, younger generations may perceive Indonesian, and other global languages, as more advantageous for social mobility, education, and employment opportunities. Consequently, the Moi language may be viewed as less relevant or useful, leading to decreased motivation to learn and use it.

The decline of the Moi language poses serious implications for cultural identity. Language is not merely a means of communication; it is a repository of cultural knowledge, traditions, and values. When a language becomes endangered, the unique perspectives and histories it conveys are at risk of being lost. This is particularly concerning for communities that rely on their language as a key component of their identity.

In the case of the Moi language, the loss of its speakers could mean the disappearance of traditional stories, songs, and customs that are integral to the cultural fabric of the community. The intergenerational transmission of these cultural elements often occurs through language, making its vitality essential for cultural continuity. Without active efforts to preserve and promote Moi, future generations may find themselves disconnected from their heritage.

To counteract the threats facing the Moi language, it is essential to implement strategies that actively promote its use and vitality. Education plays a pivotal role in this regard. Incorporating the Moi language into school curricula can help ensure that younger generations develop proficiency in it. Bilingual education models, where both Moi and Indonesian are taught, can foster an environment where children feel encouraged to engage with their local language while also gaining the benefits of proficiency in the national language.

Additionally, community-driven initiatives can further support the preservation of the Moi language. Cultural events, storytelling sessions, and workshops that celebrate Moi can reinforce its significance and encourage community



members to use it more frequently. Collaborations with local organizations and cultural institutions can also amplify efforts to raise awareness about the importance of preserving the Moi language.

Social media and digital platforms can also serve as valuable tools for revitalization. Creating content in Moi, such as videos, podcasts, and social media posts, can engage younger audiences and make the language more visible in contemporary contexts. By harnessing the power of technology, the Moi language can find new avenues for expression and relevance.

The analysis of language usage patterns among male and female respondents highlights both the vitality and the threats facing the Moi language. While a significant portion of the population continues to engage with Moi, the overwhelming preference for Indonesian and the encroachment of globalization pose challenges to its survival.

To ensure the longevity of the Moi language, proactive measures must be taken, including educational initiatives, community engagement, and the use of digital platforms. By fostering a sense of pride in their linguistic heritage, the Moi-speaking community can work towards preserving their language and cultural identity in the face of ongoing challenges. The future of the Moi language depends not only on its speakers but also on collective efforts to celebrate and protect it as an integral part of Indonesia's rich cultural tapestry.

#### *Language Use Based on Ages*

TABLE 2

| Ages  | Language Use (%) |            |                |
|-------|------------------|------------|----------------|
|       | Moi              | Indonesian | Mixed-language |
| 11-15 | 33.30            | 66.70      | 0              |
| 17-27 | 19.80            | 69.10      | 9.9            |
| 28-49 | 41.70            | 58.30      | 0              |
| >50   | 64.70            | 35.30      | 0              |

Based on the language usage data across different age groups, it is evident that language preferences vary significantly.

Among respondents aged 11-15 years, 33.30% use the Moi language, while 66.70% prefer Indonesian. No respondents from this group use mixed language. In the 17-27 age group, the use of the Moi language decreases to 19.80%, while Indonesian remains dominant at 69.10%. A small portion, specifically 9.9%, uses mixed language. For the 28-49 age group, there is an increase in the use of the Moi language, with 41% of respondents opting for it, while 58.30% use Indonesian. As before, there is no use of mixed language. Interestingly, in the group aged over 50 years, the majority of respondents, 64.70%, use the Moi language, followed by 35.39% who prefer Indonesian. In this group, there is also no use of mixed language. Overall, it can be concluded that the use of the Moi language tends to increase with age, although Indonesian remains the primary choice for most age groups, with minimal use of mixed language.

The data on language usage across various age groups reveals intriguing trends that reflect social and cultural dynamics within society. In this analysis, we will discuss several key aspects arising from the data, including the differences in language preferences among age groups, the social and cultural impacts of language usage, and the implications for education and language policy in the future.

First, the differences in age and language preference are striking. Among respondents aged 11-15 years, a majority 66.70% use Indonesian, while 33.30% use the Moi language. This data suggests that Indonesian, as the country's official language, is more dominant among younger individuals, likely due to the influence of formal education where Indonesian is taught as the primary language of instruction. Additionally, the social environment that predominantly uses Indonesian reinforces this tendency. However, looking at older age groups, particularly those aged 28-49, there is a significant increase in the use of the Moi language, rising to 41%. This trend indicates that as individuals age, they may feel a stronger connection to their local language and culture.

Interestingly, the age group above 50 shows the highest proportion of Moi language usage at 64.70%, compared to 35.39% for Indonesian. This may reflect stronger life experiences and nostalgia associated with the Moi language, which might be used in social and familial contexts. As older generations use the Moi language, they not only preserve it but also teach and pass it on to younger generations. In this context, the Moi language can be seen as a symbol of a robust cultural identity, embodying local wisdom and values that are handed down through generations.

Next, the social and cultural impacts of language usage warrant attention. The high usage of the Moi language among adults may indicate a collective desire to preserve and celebrate their cultural identity. This can be seen as a reaction against globalization and cultural homogenization, which often threaten the existence of local languages. In an increasingly digitally connected society, where international languages like English frequently dominate, the use of the Moi language can be viewed as a form of resistance to maintain cultural diversity. This language not only reflects a mode of communication but also how individuals perceive themselves within a broader cultural context.

Additionally, the data shows that the use of mixed language is minimal across all age groups. This may suggest that people prefer to maintain consistency in their language usage, whether it be Moi or Indonesian. In many contexts, using a single language can provide clarity and avoid confusion in communication. However, in daily life, we often observe phenomena of code-switching, particularly among younger generations. The low incidence of mixed language usage in this data could indicate that respondents feel more comfortable and valued when communicating in a specific language.

The implications of these findings are significant for education and language policy. The increase in the use of the Moi language among adults suggests a need to pay attention to and promote this language in educational contexts. Educators and policymakers should consider how they can incorporate elements of the Moi language into curricula, not just as a communication tool but also as a means of appreciating and celebrating cultural diversity. There may be opportunities to develop programs that encourage the preservation of local languages, enabling future generations to better appreciate and understand the value of their linguistic heritage.

On the other hand, future trends in language usage also need consideration. With the advancement of technology and communication, it is likely that the ways in which people communicate will continue to evolve. Social media and digital platforms may influence language usage, potentially leading to the creation of new language forms that combine elements from various languages. Further research is necessary to understand how future generations will adopt or reject these languages.

Overall, the data on language usage across various age groups provides valuable insights into changing social and cultural dynamics. The increased use of the Moi language among adults and the elderly indicates a need to preserve language and cultural identity amid the challenges of modernization. Additionally, the minimal use of mixed language reflects a societal tendency to maintain clarity in communication.

In this context, it is crucial to continue monitoring and evaluating language usage trends to better understand changes in identity and culture within society. Deeper discussions and further research will help us find the best ways to support the preservation of diverse languages, ensuring that cultural diversity continues to thrive and develop within our communities. With an inclusive approach that values diversity, we can ensure that both the Moi and Indonesian languages remain integral parts of our national identity.

#### *B. Semi-Structured Interview*

In a study on language choice among the Moi tribe, interviews with ten participants revealed that in the study on language use among Moi tribe, it was revealed that despite efforts to introduce the Moi language to their children, most of them prefer to use Indonesian in daily interactions. This is evident from the confusion that arises when terms in the Moi language are introduced, as well as the children's difficulties in understanding many words in that language. The influence of social media and television also contributes to the children's language preferences, who tend to be more familiar with Indonesian. Although some parents strive to teach the Moi language through stories and games, the children continue to show a greater interest in content in Indonesian. Furthermore, despite the significant challenges faced, there is an awareness of the importance of introducing the Moi language and culture to future generations. These findings reflect a clear shift from the use of the Moi language toward Indonesian within the family context, raising concerns about the survival of the Moi language and culture in the future.

This study reveals that despite significant efforts by Moi parents to introduce the Moi language to their children, most of the children prefer to use Indonesian in their daily interactions. This indicates a gap between the parents' desire to preserve the language and the reality faced by the younger generation. The confusion that arises when Moi terms are introduced reflects the children's unfamiliarity with the language. Many of them struggle to understand even basic words in the Moi language, indicating that its use within the household is increasingly marginalized.

The influence of social media and television on children's language preferences is also significant. In this digital age, children are exposed more to content in Indonesian, which is more accessible and relevant to their daily lives. The availability of Indonesian-language television programs and social media platforms has made children feel more comfortable and familiar with the language. This impacts their language choice, leading to the further neglect of the Moi language.

Although some Moi parents strive to teach the Moi language through engaging methods, such as storytelling and games, these efforts have not been effective enough to capture children's interest. The greater interest in content in Indonesian suggests that children tend to choose what they find more enjoyable and relevant to their world. This phenomenon highlights the challenges faced in language preservation efforts, where content that does not align with children's interests often receives less attention.

Amid these challenges, there is a growing awareness among Moi family regarding the importance of introducing the Moi language and culture to future generations. They recognize that without concrete efforts, the Moi language risks extinction alongside the increasing dominance of Indonesian. This awareness demonstrates a sense of hope and commitment to taking action for the preservation of their language and culture.

However, these findings also reflect a clear shift from the use of the Moi language to Indonesian within the family context. This shift raises deep concerns about the future viability of the Moi language and culture. If the younger generation continues to adopt Indonesian as their primary language, they are likely to lose their connection to their cultural heritage.

In facing these challenges, more systematic strategies are needed to preserve the Moi language. For example, involving children in activities that highlight the Moi language and culture, such as cultural festivals or language competitions, could be effective steps. Additionally, collaboration with educational institutions to integrate the Moi language into school curricula is crucial. This way, children not only learn the Moi language but also experience the cultural values embedded within it.

Overall, this study underscores the importance of collective awareness and planned efforts in maintaining the Moi language and culture. Without concrete actions, this language is at risk of extinction, and the cultural identity of the Moi tribe may fade away. Therefore, the involvement of all parties' families, communities, and educational institutions is essential to ensure that this language and culture remain vibrant and relevant amidst changing times.

## V. CONCLUSION

Based on the data regarding language use within the Moi community families, it is evident that Indonesian is predominantly used over the Moi language. Despite efforts from family members, particularly women, to introduce and teach the Moi language to children, many of them prefer to communicate in Indonesian. This reflects a significant difficulty in understanding the Moi language, as children often feel confused by its terms.

Factors such as the influence of social media, television, and a preference for content in Indonesian contribute to this shift. While some parents attempt to teach the Moi language through stories and games, children's interest in Indonesian remains stronger.

This situation raises concerns about the future viability of the Moi language and the cultural identity of the Moi people. Without more structured efforts and strong support to preserve this language and culture, there is a risk that the Moi language will become increasingly marginalized and potentially extinct. Therefore, it is crucial for the community and relevant stakeholders to develop more effective strategies to enhance the use of the Moi language within families and ensure that this cultural heritage remains protected.

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# Emojis as Tools for Learning: Understanding Their Pragmatic Functions in EFL Students' Tweets

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**Abstract**—The rise of emojis has piqued the interest of many scholars over the past few decades, as is evident by a growing body of emoji literature within various fields. This study adopted a qualitative ethnographic approach to explore the pragmatic functions of emojis in the tweets of 15 female undergraduate and graduate EFL students. The focus was on the roles emojis occupied relative to speech acts, identity representation, and language change. Semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations were used as data collection methods while reflexive thematic analysis followed for the analysis. There were six pragmatic functions of emojis, namely expressing emotions, making meaning, mirroring personal beliefs, signaling familiarity, decorating the tweet, and substituting nonverbal cues. Additionally, emojis mitigated speech acts: They were chiefly used to emphasize expressives, but also to soften directives and accompany representatives and commissives. Such emojis represented the participants' identity, yet the participants' personalities and societal roles were rarely represented by these emojis due to personal preferences. The evolution of emojis from emoticons to graphicons, however, was identifiable.

**Index Terms**—student, writing, emojis, pragmatics, tweets

## I. INTRODUCTION

Emojis (e.g., the 😊 “Face with Tears of Joy”) have emerged as powerful tools of communication, as is shown by a growing body of emoji literature within various fields (for a review, see Bai et al., 2019). In both international and local contexts, the lion's share of research, however, seems to be taken by fields of computer science and information technology. Less research has thus relied on theories of language, as emojis do not seem to get their rightful recognition from linguists. Theories of pragmatics are particularly applicable to studying emoji functions within online communities and thus merit further investigation. Therefore, this research endeavor was motivated by an informed assumption: The nature of emoji use lends itself to a framework that takes advantage of internet pragmatics.

There seems to be a lack of pragmatically-oriented literature that investigates the use of emojis in non-English speaking online communities (Herring et al., 2013). Additionally, there is a paucity of research studying the pragmatic functions of emojis in Saudi Arabia. This research gap is further illuminated when considering the particular role that emojis play in performing speech acts, representing Saudis' identities, or championing language change.

This study thus aimed to fill such a research gap by exploring the pragmatic functions of emojis in the tweets of a sample of Saudi female EFL students. The focus was on how emojis function to illocute the students' utterances, represent their identities, or foment their linguistic revolution. The research problem is thus as follows:

In the Saudi context, emojis are seen as a peripheral feature of written online communication; they do not seem to elicit a research enterprise on their own. Despite their prevalence in online communities, there is a rarity in research dedicated to how Saudi EFL students use the emojis at their disposal. This study thus sought to fill such a gap by exploring the pragmatic functions of emojis in the tweets of Saudi female EFL students. The study focused on the general pragmatic functions of these emojis and three particular roles: Their roles as illocutionary enactors, identity representatives, and language change ambassadors.

The study thus explored the following questions:

1. What are the pragmatic functions of the emojis used in the English and Arabic tweets of the participants?
2. How do these emojis particularly function as an illocutionary force in the tweets of the participants?
3. How do these emojis function to represent the online identities of the participants?
4. How do the participants use these emojis to bring about language change?

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Emojis as Visual Expressions of One's Self: Visual Identity*

In his wide-ranging seminal work, Goffman (1959) presented an often-cited metaphor of a theatrical performance, in which life events represent the stage on which individuals portray themselves as characters performing to an audience. Goffman's (1959) framework has been utilized in the literature on social media which further highlights its visual and textual affordance in online identity representation. Lee and Pedersen (2018), for example, used Goffman's (1959) framework to analyze the Twitter profile photos of 871 professional athletes (215 female and 656 male). They found that while men athletes were more likely to use logos or action shots, women athletes were more likely than men to use casual shots. On Facebook, Maximova and Lukyanova (2020) have studied the gendered self-representation of 390 Facebook posts (143 by females and 247 by males) about a viral political flash mob in Russia. They have reported a certain asymmetry in the genders' visual self-presentation: Women self-identified more as having a familial role whereas men preferred portraying an occupational one.

In addition, emoji variation has also been associated with certain political agendas and personal values. In the study of Li et al. (2020), for example, it has been pointed out that users who have the rainbow flag emoji in their Twitter bios discuss issues of gender, entertainment, and society whereas those with the American flag emoji discuss more heavy-hitting subjects, such as the police or the USA president.

### B. *Emojis as Ambassadors for Language Change*

In describing the relationship between emojis and language, linguists are in three camps. One of the earliest and most classical groups considered emoticons to be a paralinguistic device. Crystal (2001) further explained that emoticons make up for the lack of prosodic and kinesic features in online texts. This function of emoticons was extended to include emojis, as recent studies have documented how emojis are winning the nonverbal paralinguistic war (e.g., Herring & Dainas, 2017).

The second group considered emojis not as a full-fledged language but as a symbolic form of communication or an emoji code (Evans, 2017). Described in Chomskyan terms, this group has postulated that emojis are more about performance (i.e., their actual use) than competence (i.e., the abstract grammatical structure governing their use) but that they still require a certain "emoji competence" (Danesi, 2017, p. 33). Danesi (2017) has stated that unlike language, emojis do not require phonemic, graphic, grammatical, or lexical knowledge.

A third and contemporary group argued that emojis are akin to gestures. This is led by McCulloch and Gawne (2018) who consider emojis to be digital gestures. More specifically, McCulloch (2019) has argued that emojis are "emblem gestures" (p. 170) evident in the similarities between the two: Both have specific and arbitrary meanings, both are nameable and culturally sensitive, and both tend to follow a rhythmic beat.

### C. *Taxonomies of the Pragmatic Functions of Emojis*

Danesi (2017) stated that the two main pragmatic functions of emojis in his corpus of 323 texts were adding an emotive (mostly positive) tone, and emphasizing phatic aspects of communications. He further explained the second function in light of Jakobson's (1960) theory. Jakobson (1960) classified the communicative functions of language into six categories: (a) "Referential" which is "[oriented] toward the context"; (b) "Emotive" which is "focused on the addresser"; (c) "Conative" which is "[oriented] toward the addressee"; (d) "Phatic" which "[serves] to establish, to prolong, or to discontinue communication"; (e) "Metalingual" which is "focused on the code"; and (f) "Poetic" which is "focus[ed] on the message for its own sake" (pp. 353-356, italics added).

Several computer-mediated discourse analysis studies have supported Danesi's (2017) claims. In a mixed design, Escoufflaire (2020) has analyzed a corpus of French and English Facebook and Twitter posts with 1200 emojis. Using a bottom-up approach, the author has constructed a 'new typology' of emoji functions, three of which were primary: expressive, interpretive, and referential; and five were secondary: relational, politeness, emphatic, structural, and aesthetic.

Other typologies include that of Herring and Dainas (2017) who identified a taxonomy of graphicons (i.e., emoticons, emojis, stickers, GIFs, images, and videos) with six pragmatic functions: (a) "mentions" that "refer to the graphicon itself"; (b) "reaction...that depict an emotional response to the content"; (c) "riffing" that is "a humorous elaboration on, play on, or parody of a previous graphicon or text comment"; (d) "tone modification...that directly modifies the text it accompanies"; (e) "action" that is "used to portray a (typically) physical action"; and (f) "narrative sequence" that is "a series of consecutive graphicons that tells a story" (pp. 2187-2189).

Considering the culturally-sensitive nature of emojis, it is important to survey the literature studying the pragmatic functions of emojis that are based in Arabic-speaking countries. One example is that by Al Rashdi (2015) who analyzed a WhatsApp corpus compiled of one female group and one male group in Oman. She found that emojis serve nine main functions:

Expressing emotions...indicat[ing] approval and disapproval, respon[din]g to expressions of thanks and compliments, conversational opening and closings, creating a sense of celebration, indicat[ing] the fulfillment of a requested task, contextualization cues, substituting for lexical items and indexical signs. (p. 168)

Moreover, Algharabali and Taqi (2018) surveyed 81 females and 82 males Arabic-speaking Kuwaiti students. The respondents indicated that they use emojis because they clarify the meaning of the message, are fun, make the message more powerful, are faster than text, and are common. They then interviewed 10 female students which resulted in more emoji functions as they were used to contradict the meaning of the text (e.g., the 🩵 “Dancer” emoji used in the context of failing a midterm), to express emotions (e.g., the 😭 “Crying Face” emoji in the same context of failing a midterm), and to avoid undesirable conversations or make the desirable ones more relaxed.

#### *D. Emojis in the Linguistic Scene*

**Emojis and Semiotics.** As socio-semiotic resources, emojis offer a number of multimodal functions, as we could substitute: (a) face emojis for words (e.g., the 😬 “Face Without a Mouth” emoji for speechlessness), (b) gesture emojis for words or phrases (e.g., the 👍 “Thumbs Up” emoji for ‘yes’), and (c) container emojis for content (e.g., the 🍺 “Beer Mug” emoji for bars) (Sadia, 2018).

**Emojis and Semantics.** Danesi (2017) stated that much like any other code, emojis have an “intrinsic semantic structure” as they “refer directly to concepts, emotions, and so on either adjunctively, substitutively, or in a mixed fashion” (pp. 60-61). Semantic processing, or simply how meaning comes to mind, has particularly been of broad interest to emoji literature. Cohn et al. (2018), for instance, compared the processing of words, emojis, and logos through a self-paced reading task in which emojis substituted verbs and nouns. In one of their experiments, sentences had three conditions: (a) “no-emoji,” (b) “normal substitutions” in which an emoji substituted a noun/verb (e.g., John loves eating 🍷 every Friday), and (c) “switched substitutions” in which the normally substituted emojis were reversed (e.g., John loves eating ❤️ every Friday) (p. 1525). They found that emojis were generally processed slower than words, but also that sentences were processed more easily in ‘normal’ substitutions than in ‘switched’ substitutions.

**Emojis and Psycholinguistics.** Danesi (2017) suggested that emojis are fundamentally “metaphorical pictures” and thus could be analyzed based on the conceptual metaphor theory (p. 66). Developed by Lakoff (2008), the conceptual metaphor theory proposes that metaphors are more than just rhetorical devices; they are essential to “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 5). For instance, the meaning of the sentence: “I’m a little rusty today” is understood by visualizing the incompetent mind as a rusty machine (p. 28). This comparison creates a conceptual mapping from the “source domain” (i.e., MACHINE) to the “target domain” (i.e., MIND); this mapping is realized in the conceptual metaphor: THE MIND IS A MACHINE (p. 253).

In a Lakoffian fashion, Danesi (2017) maintained that the meaning of emojis is derived from conceptual blends. For example, the sentence: “That linguist is a snake” represents the conceptual metaphor: HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL, but it also maps the source domain of ANIMAL to a specific target domain of PERSONALITY (p. 66). The untrustworthiness of the linguist in question could just as easily be understood with a single emoji, namely the 🐍 “Snake” emoji.

**Emojis and Sociolinguistics.** Most of the work done in emoji sociolinguistics was conducted within an interactionist as opposed to a variationist framework. In other words, studies have focused on the social meaning of emoji use. The role of emojis as “contextualization cues” (Gumperz, 1976, p. 279) was thus established by researchers such as Al Rashdi (2015), who stated that the participants in her study used emojis to modulate text interpretation (e.g., the 😜 “Face with Tongue” emoji was used to frame a joke). Central to Brown and Levinson’s (1987) theory of Politeness, this mitigation of Face-Threatening Acts (FTAs) function was also enacted by emojis in the study of Beißwenger and Pappert (2019). Emojis were thus used as a politeness marker to soften FTAs in social exchanges (e.g., the 🤔 “Thinking Face” emoji was used after a criticizing remark) (Beißwenger & Pappert, 2019). Additionally, many have hypothesized that the use of emojis is also influenced by sociolinguistic variables, such as gender (e.g., Prada et al., 2018) or age (e.g., Escoufflaire, 2020).

In light of what has been mentioned so far, this study is worthwhile for two main reasons. The first is fulfilling a certain niche identified in the literature on the pragmatic functions of emojis in Saudi EFL students’ online communication. Even within the field of internet pragmatics, emojis remain an understudied area of research, especially when considering the study context (Xie et al., 2021). This research thus adds to the effort made to diversify the pragmatic research on social media that used to be English-dominated and US-based (Herring et al., 2013). The second reason lies in the study’s original contribution to the field. The study sheds light on the functions emojis serve in one of the most popular social media platforms in Saudi Arabia, namely Twitter. Furthermore, the study contributes to a growing area of research exploring speech acts within various online contexts and through varying online resources. It also provides an intriguing opportunity to advance our understanding of the role of emojis as identity representatives, on the one hand, and as language change ambassadors, on the other.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### *A. Qualitative Ethnography: A Rationale*

A qualitative ethnographic design was used because the purpose of the study was to describe, explore, and interpret these students’ emoji beliefs and behaviors. This research sought to make sense of the pragmatic functions of emojis by



studying how they are naturally used, rather than by creating a controlled environment in which such functions are manifested. Furthermore, it focused on “the perspective of the research participants” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2018, p. 98).

### B. Participants

The population in this study was ‘Twitter-using’ Saudi female undergraduate and graduate students majoring in English at a Saudi university. The rationale behind limiting the study to those majoring in English was to ensure that those students have familiarized themselves with the target language (and culture). Moreover, the sample only included senior undergraduates (those enrolled in levels 7 and 8) to ensure that their levels of English proficiency are comparable to those of graduate students. Further, the population was limited to female students given the prolific use of emojis among females reported in the literature (e.g., Prada et al., 2018), the importance placed on the representation of online identities for Saudi women (e.g., Altoaimy, 2018), and the segregated nature of Saudi universities. Lastly, restricting the population to Twitter-using students was motivated by the advantageous nature of Twitter as a platform for analysis, but it was also encouraged by Saudi students’ favoritism of Twitter (Alshalawi, 2022).

A convenience sampling technique was used in recruiting the study participants. An obvious advantage of this method is that it frees the researcher from any limitation posed on the number or the nature of the sample (Kumar, 2011). Recruiting those 15 participants (aged between 22-26 years old) was based on certain criteria, including that she had to be an English major, with an active Twitter account tweeting in English and Arabic, and for that account to be public and/or accessible throughout the study.

### C. Data Collection

Two qualitative methods were used: semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations. Including both tools allowed for comparing the participants’ perception of emoji use to their actual uses. As Dirksen et al. (2010) emphasized that the triangulation of data collection methods is meant to “distinguish between ‘what people say they do’ and ‘what people actually do’” (p. 1049).

*Interviews.* Bloomberg and Volpe (2018) stated that in qualitative studies, interviews are “often selected as the primary method for data collection” (p. 317, italics added). The 11 interview questions were made to answer the research questions of the current study. The interviews were conducted online. Further, the interviews were conducted in colloquial Arabic, the participants’ mother tongue, which often evoked colorful local expressions. Moreover, these interviews were then transcribed using MAXQDA Transcription Mode, which allowed us to type out and organize the interview data with ease.

*Observations.* Observations are used when “you are more interested in the behavior than in the perceptions of individuals” (Kumar, 2011, p. 134). Mozdeh was used to import a large number of the participants’ tweets. After excluding retweets, the software imported 14,844 tweets across the participants’ accounts. However, when we narrowed the selection to the year 2021, the number went down to 2,819 tweets. Then, we decided on following a conservative ‘10-100 tweet per participant’ rule which meant including no less than ten tweets and no more than a hundred for each participant. This meant extending the analysis period for some participants and narrowing it for others.

*Reflexive Thematic Analysis.* Thematic analysis is an approach “for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). Such reflexivity involves “locating yourself” by recognizing how your personal experience and social position shape your research (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 14). More specifically, Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021) have described four variations within reflexive thematic analysis that need to be acknowledged. These are easily understood when they are framed as questions that guide your analysis.

The first question is whether you are approaching the analysis more inductively (i.e., starting with the data) or deductively (i.e., starting with theory). This study leaned towards inductivity and yet, as in the case of the second and third research questions, it did have some deductive orientation. The second question asks if the meaning you are after is more semantic (i.e., explicit and surface-level) or latent (i.e., implicit and underground). The current study thus was more descriptive than inferential, but it essentially surveyed the functional meaning expressed. Still, the third question is related to whether the theoretical framework regards meaning as inherent (i.e., realist) or constructed (i.e., relativist). This research took a more constructionist view of the dataset as the meaning-makingness of the emojis was scrutinized. Lastly, the fourth question relates to whether the focus of the study is more on the participants’ perspectives (i.e., experiential) or the topic at hand (i.e., critical). Since the experiences of the participants were prioritized, this research project was more experiential than not.

## IV. FINDINGS

### A. The Pragmatic Functions of Emojis

The themes emerging from the participants’ interviews suggested that Saudi female EFL students use emojis for functions related to the content of their online writing or its form. The content-related pragmatic functions were divided into four major themes, as emojis were used to: (a) express emotions, (b) make meaning, (c) mirror personal beliefs, or (d) indicate familiarity. On the other hand, there appeared to be only two main form-related themes, which were: (a) emojis as decorative tools and (b) emojis as nonverbal cues.

When applied to the participants' tweets, these functions followed a slightly different pattern. Emojis were thus mostly used to express emotions (negative or positive) (N=103), then as decorative tools (N=55), as nonverbal cues (N=27), and to make meaning (N=25), or to mirror personal beliefs (N=13). Therefore, while the function of expressing emotions, for example, was equally high in both perceived and actual use; a function such as emojis as decorative tools appeared much more frequently in the actual use.

#### (a). *Emojis Express Emotions*

The most dominant theme was the use of emojis to express emotions. Almost all of those who were interviewed (93%) reported using emojis to express their emotions. When asked about reasons for using emojis, Mariah stated:

Excerpt (1)

"Because it is easier to express emotion...they make it easier for a person to express their emotions" (Mariah, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

These emotions ranged from joy and love to sadness and irritation. When asked for their most frequent emojis, some participants linked their uses to positive emotions. Contrarily, some participants mentioned negative emotions.

Along the same vein, expressing emotions was the most common function found in the participants' tweets (N=103). Emojis were used to express basic emotions, such as happiness (N=79), sadness (N=22), and anger (N=2). Emotions were mostly conveyed using faces (N=89), for example:

Excerpt (2)

"Me hiding my files before sharing my screen 🤪 [attached picture]" (Shahad, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 21).

But such emotions were also expressed through hearts, for instance:

Excerpt (3)

"@[mention] No, still ❤️" (Dania, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 11).

#### (b). *Emojis Make Meaning*

Next in prevalence was the theme of using emojis as meaning-making tools. Such tools can work to either emphasize the meaning of the message. Although only 25 tweets included emojis with a clear meaning-making function, these functions paralleled the participants' interviews. Participants thus used emojis to reiterate the meaning of the tweet, usually by repeating a lexical item already mentioned, such as:

Excerpt (4)

"Cleaning the house is a workout, no one can convince me otherwise. 🧹🧑" (Entesar, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 13, italics added).

Excerpt (5)

"The vibe for this morning is the happy elephant set 🐘🌈 [attached image]" (Amal, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 43).

Or to contradict the meaning of the tweet to create an ironic effect, such as:

Excerpt (6)

"God bless the section group, [they're] the pinnacle of cooperation 🤝🤝🤝" (Rand, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 10).

#### (c). *Emojis Signal (Un)Familiarity*

Some participants expressed that they use different emojis with different people based on their closeness. Both Narin and Entesar agreed on the status of colored hearts:

Excerpt (7)

"For those who are very close to me I use, for example, the white heart [❤️]...those whom I have a formal relationship with, the red [❤️]...I feel like the red one is formal" (Narin, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

Unfortunately, this theme was impossible to code in the participants' tweets as it required not only knowing what emojis each participant perceived to be 'intimate,' but it also necessitated knowing the participants' close circles on Twitter which we had no way of accessing.

#### (d). *Emojis Mirror Personal Values*

The fourth theme was the use of emojis to reflect personal beliefs, as Dania explained when asked about why people use emojis:

Excerpt (8)

"I guess [people] often express their opinion[s], especially on Twitter I noticed they express opinions...especially in a hashtag or something like that, usually it's about their opinions" (Dania, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

#### (e). *Emojis Decorate Text*

A few participants alluded to their emoji use as being aesthetical, as Hana mentioned:

Excerpt (9)

"I feel like [emojis] decorate the text sometimes" (Hana, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

Yet surprisingly, this theme was much more common in the participants' tweets, as there are 55 instances analyzed where emojis primarily functioned to embellish the tweet, usually following a quote.

(f). *Emojis Substitute Nonverbal Cues*

This theme was also barely present in the participants' interviews but much more common in the participants' tweets. Amal answered when asked about the common functions of emojis in online writing:

Excerpt (10)

"Sometimes to clarify the meaning...because in real life, for example, the tone of voice clarifies the meaning better...facial expressions whereas in writing, emojis complete the meaning" (Amal, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

Interestingly enough, the 27 instances of nonverbal emojis in the participants' tweets covered facial expressions (N=14), kinetic gestures (N=9), and prosodic features (N=4). Examples of each are provided in the excerpts below:

Excerpt (11)

"@[mention] he could do it 😊" (Amal, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 46).

Excerpt (12)

"how my thesis is going 📄 [attached image]" (Entesar, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 74).

Excerpt (13)

"Love can touch us one time and last for a lifetime, and never let go till we're gone. Love was when I loved you, one true time I hold to, in my life we'll always go on. 📄❤️" (Rana, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 53).

(g). *Emojis Express Special Meanings*

In addition to the previously mentioned emoji uses, the participants were asked 'Do you have specific uses or meanings for certain emojis?' to which several overlapping answers emerged. The most agreed-upon 'special' emoji uses were the versatile use of the 🌙 "New Moon Face" emoji (27% of the participants), and the use of the 😭 "Loudly Crying Face" emoji for laughter (20% of the participants).

B. *Emojis as Illocutionary Enactors*

The second research question focused on the function of emojis as an illocutionary force in the tweets of the participants. Turning to the participants' responses to whether they use emojis to express speech acts, all participants agreed that they do, but only two-thirds (66.6%) suggested that they use emojis 'alone.' Moreover, participants who did agree to using emojis alone revealed two main themes: (a) directive emojis (e.g., to ask, request, or order), and (b) expressive emojis (e.g., to agree, apologize, or welcome). These two themes were borrowed from Searle's (1975) taxonomy of illocutionary acts, as these were the only two emerging in the interview transcripts, out of the five categories he suggested (i.e., representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations).

(a). *Directive Emojis*

In terms of directives, participants listed a number of emojis they use for asking. Hana gave an example:

Excerpt (14)

"Like the eyes [emoji] [👁️] they ask where are you? Are you there?" (Hana, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

As for requesting, the use of the pleading face emoji [🙏] took the lion's share, as one-third of the participants (33.3%) admitted to using it for requests.

(b). *Expressive Emojis*

As for expressives, the majority of the participants agreed on using hearts, in particular, to express their gratitude, remorse, greeting, or congratulations. Rand explained:

Excerpt (15)

"I use hearts a lot, and they express many speech acts...like gratitude or apology, and even if I want to congratulate someone who isn't close, I might just reply to their snapshot with hearts" (Rand, Interview Transcript, p. 2).

(c). *Classification of Speech Act Emojis in the Participants' Tweets*

Moving now to the participants' tweets, which seemed to fall into a slightly more complicated pattern. First of all, almost all (90%) emojis with a clear speech act function were used in conjunction with the text of the tweet (as opposed to being stand-alone elements expressing the function themselves). In these 141 instances, the overwhelming majority were used as expressives (N=122), then a few were used as representatives (N=7), commissives (N=7), directives (N=5), and no declarative emojis were found. Expressive emojis in the tweets were the most diverse, as participants used them for praising:

Excerpt (16)

"@[mention]@[mention] Wow you're perfect 😊" (Narin, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 21).

And many other functions (i.e., greeting, welcoming, thanking, apologizing, congratulating, etc.). On the other hand, directive emojis performed a few functions, such as suggesting:

Excerpt (17)

"@[mention] What about perfectly done? 📄" (Ghaida, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 2).

And so did representatives (all enacted agreeing) and commissives (all enacted promising). An example of the use of the same emoji to represent two different functions is the 👍 "Thumbs Up" emoji, as the next excerpt demonstrate:

Excerpt (18)

“@[mention] [I didn’t watch it and I will watch it inshAllah] 🙏” (Zenah, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 101).

### C. Emojis as Identity Representatives

The third research question focused on how these emojis function to represent the online identities of the participants. In this regard, a range of responses was elicited, as the participants were asked ‘Do you use emojis to express yourself or your personality, or to reflect your personal values?’ Since the question was threefold, the answers also varied across three themes (i.e., self, personality, and personal values).

#### (a). Emojis Express Self

For the first and second themes, only a small number of participants indicated that they use emojis to represent themselves or their personality. Ghaida, for example, said:

Excerpt (19)

“On Twitter, I put the coffee cup ☕ as a metaphor for barista[s], even though I wrote barista but maybe to explain it, maybe some people don’t know what a barista is” (Ghaida, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

Although some of the participants’ answers to this question were in line with Goffman’s (1959) concept of expressing a personal front, the analysis of the participants’ Twitter bios was much less promising. Not only did five out of the fifteen participants included no emojis in their bios, but also, three of them had no bios at all. The analysis of the remaining seven bios is still worth mentioning as the emojis majorly presented either a social role (i.e., the student role represented by the 📖 “Books” emoji) (N=3) or an aesthetical role (i.e., Emojis used as a decorative tool to frame a text) (N=3). There is also one instance where the ✂ “Crossed Swords” emoji was used to represent a student’s Saudi identity.

#### (b). Emojis Express Personality

In terms of personality, Narin agreed on using animal emojis for expressing herself:

Excerpt (20)

“For me, I’m a cat person...I love cats, and I have many, so I always use the cat faces because like, they represent me” (Narin, Interview Transcript, p. 8).

However, the majority of the participants denied using emojis as a form of self-expression. Some simply did not prefer to; others provided a couple of reasons, including maturity, privacy, or a general lack of emoji use.

#### (c). Emojis Express Personal Values

In contrast to the first two themes, however, the majority of the participants agreed that their emoji use (or non-use) reflected their values. Perhaps influenced by how the question was phrased (i.e., ‘Do you refrain from using emojis that conflict with your personal values?’), this theme branches into two subthemes. The first is negative, indicating non-use, whereas the second is affirmative, indicating use. That is to say, 80% of the participants expressed that they refrain from using emojis with connotations that are not in line with their values. Hana stated:

Excerpt (21)

“Honestly, there are emojis I feel like I shouldn’t use...our morals don’t allow [using them] our religion doesn’t allow” (Hana, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

On the other hand, only 10% referenced certain emojis that did reflect their personal values, such as their patriotism or religion. Rand gave an example:

Excerpt (22)

“For example, expressing my patriotism using the Saudi flag emoji” (Rand, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

In the participants’ tweets, the negative theme was much more prevalent (or perhaps more readily available) than the affirmative theme. In the 381 tweets included, not a single emoji was found to be conflicted with the participants’ “religious referentiality.” A few instances (N=13) were found where emojis performed an affirmative function, either in the use of ‘Islamic’ emojis (e.g., the 🌙 “Crescent Moon,” the 🕌 “Kabba,” or the ☪️ [Peace Be Upon Him] symbol) (N=6) or in the use of the Saudi flag emoji (N=7):

Excerpt (23)

“[May you get well soon #Mohammed\_bin\_Salman] 🇸🇦 [attached image]” (Ghaida, Tweet Excel Sheet, row 4).

### D. Emojis as Language Change Ambassadors

The fourth research question asked: “How do the participants use these emojis to bring about language change?” Given the underlying assumption that emojis bring about language change, the findings related to this question were less straightforward. That being said, three main themes were identified in relation to this question. These themes include the importance of emoji use, the identifiability of emoji evolution, and the abundance of emoji use.

#### (a). Importance of Emoji Use

Since a certain level of gravitas is expected for emojis to compete against language, the degree of emoji significance was surveyed. Thus, in response to the question: ‘Would you say that emojis are an integral or a peripheral part of

writing online?’ the participants diverged into three groups. The first group (40%) believed that emojis are absolutely integral to online communication, as Inas stated:

Excerpt (24)

“I think [emojis] are an integral part, because the main purpose of these platforms is interaction and communication between people, so I feel like these emoji[s] sometimes express feelings regular speech can’t express” (Inas, Interview Transcript, p. 6).

Another group (27%) expressed that emojis are integral in informal settings, and peripheral (and even unacceptable) in formal settings. One example comes from Wijdan, who stated:

Excerpt (25)

“An integral part with family or friends...but for example...if I were famous and my account was academic, I feel like, no, I won’t use emoji[s]” (Wijdan, Interview Transcript, p. 4).

Lastly, a third group (27%) believed that there is no substitute for language, and thus perceived emojis to be peripheral to them. As Shahad argued that age plays a role in the importance of emojis:

Excerpt (26)

“Young people can’t get their idea across without emojis...emojis influenced their writing styles...[emoji use] is peripheral to me, honestly, I can get my idea across without emojis” (Shahad, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

In contrast, Fajir argued that it is a matter of personal preference:

Excerpt (27)

“I don’t see [emoji use] as an integral part, honestly, sometimes in a discussion, I don’t even use [emojis] like I don’t feel like it, or if the discussion is serious” (Fajir, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

#### (b). Identifiability of Emoji Evolution

The second theme concerns the participants’ ability to identify the evolution of emojis. For the most part, the participants were able to easily pinpoint emoticons as the ‘grandparents’ of emojis. Shahad, for example, mentioned:

Excerpt (28)

“If you remember, earlier [people] used to use smiles, they make them with parentheses” (Shahad, Interview Transcript, p. 5).

Similarly, almost all the participants collectively agreed that the next stage of evolution for emojis includes: stickers, GIFs, and memes. Rana, for example stated:

Excerpt (29)

“Maybe, memes, I feel like they are used a lot, so memes, memes and stickers also, there’s no difference...especially since emojis don’t have facial expressions” (Rana, Interview Transcript, p. 6).

#### (c). Abundance of Emoji Use

The third and final theme relates to the abundance of emoji use in the tweets of the participants. Table 1 shows the distribution of both the number and percentage of emojis in the tweets collected from each participant.

TABLE 1  
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF THE PARTICIPANTS’ TWEETS WITHOUT EMOJIS, WITH EMOJIS, AND WITH ONLY EMOJIS

| Participant Pseudonym | Collected Tweets | Tweets Without Emojis | %     | Tweets With Emojis | %     | Tweets With Only Emojis | %     |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Zenah                 | 139              | 117                   | 84.2% | 22                 | 15.8% | 4                       | 2.9%  |
| Amal                  | 97               | 31                    | 32%   | 66                 | 68%   | 2                       | 2.1%  |
| Entesar               | 92               | 43                    | 46.7% | 49                 | 53.3% | 1                       | 1.1%  |
| Rana                  | 83               | 43                    | 51.8% | 40                 | 48.2% | 2                       | 2.4%  |
| Fajir                 | 78               | 28                    | 35.9% | 50                 | 64.1% | 2                       | 2.6%  |
| Layal                 | 76               | 38                    | 50%   | 38                 | 50%   | 11                      | 14.5% |
| Inas                  | 67               | 47                    | 70.1% | 20                 | 29.9% | 1                       | 1.5%  |
| Ghaida                | 55               | 14                    | 25.5% | 41                 | 74.5% | 3                       | 5.5%  |
| Shahad                | 36               | 34                    | 94.4% | 2                  | 5.6%  | 0                       | 0%    |
| Narin                 | 20               | 5                     | 25%   | 15                 | 75%   | 0                       | 0%    |
| Wijdan                | 17               | 5                     | 29.4% | 12                 | 70.6% | 0                       | 0%    |
| Mariah                | 16               | 12                    | 75%   | 4                  | 25%   | 1                       | 6.3%  |
| Rand                  | 16               | 9                     | 56.3% | 7                  | 43.8% | 0                       | 0%    |
| Dania                 | 11               | 1                     | 9.1%  | 10                 | 91%   | 0                       | 0%    |
| Hana                  | 10               | 5                     | 50%   | 5                  | 50%   | 0                       | 0%    |
| Total                 | 813              | 432                   | 53.1  | 381                | 46.9% | 27                      | 3.3%  |

As Table 1 demonstrates, less than half of the participants’ tweets (46.9%) included emojis, and only 3.3% consisted of emojis only. However, as is easily noticeable in the tabulated data, the quantity of emojis in the participants’ tweets was not distributed equally across the participants, as some skewed the average by under- or over-using emojis ( $M=28.8$ ,

SD=29.3). Nevertheless, the three themes combined could give us a clearer picture of how Saudi female EFL students use emojis in relation to language change.

## V. DISCUSSION

### A. The Pragmatic Functions of Emojis

The first research question explored the general pragmatic functions that emojis fulfill in the tweets of Saudi female EFL students. The current study found that emojis were used for six main functions. Four of which were content-related, namely expressing emotions, making meaning, mirroring personal beliefs, and indicating familiarity; two were form-related, namely decorating the tweet and filling in for nonverbal cues.

#### (a). Emojis Express Emotions

Expressing emotions (both negative and positive) was the most dominant theme both in the participants' perceptions and their actual use. The three most basic emotions expressed were happiness (e.g., the 😊 "Face with Tears of Joy" emoji), sadness (e.g., the 💔 "Broken Heart" emoji), and anger (e.g., the 👟 "Man's Shoe" emoji). This function also ranked high in previous emoji taxonomies, either referred to by the same name (e.g., Al Rashdi, 2015; Algharabali & Taqi, 2018) or labeled as 'reaction' or 'react' (e.g., Herring & Dainas, 2017). The use of emojis for emotional expression is expected since it is, after all, the primary purpose behind the invention of emoticons as suggested by many scholars (e.g., Drouin & Davis, 2009).

Further, the tendency for the emotions expressed to be positive is also consistent with many emoticon and emoji studies (e.g., Danesi, 2017). However, this is contrary to the study by Lu et al. (2016) who found that collectivist societies used emojis less for positive emotions and more for negative emotions compared to individualistic societies. Nevertheless, one interesting finding is that emotive emojis were not always faces, as objects (such as hearts) also performed an emotional function. This seems to support Dresner and Herring's (2010) theory that emotions (expressed by emoticons) are not always mapped to facial expressions.

#### (b). Emojis Make Meaning

In addition to emphasizing or clarifying the meaning of the message they accompany, emojis could also contradict it. Emojis were thus used to stand in for certain words or phrases to further highlight and reinforce the intended meaning of the text (e.g., the 🌧️ "Sweat Droplets" emoji to refer to rain). This function is in accord with studies which suggested that emojis are used to clarify the meaning of (or to substitute) a textual element (e.g., Al Rashdi, 2015; Algharabali & Taqi, 2018). This particular use of emojis is courtesy of their inherent semantic structure: They intrinsically have certain meanings and could thus substitute or repeat neighboring words (Danesi, 2017).

Conversely, emojis were used to contradict the meaning of the message, typically in sarcastic or ironic contexts (e.g., the 🤪 "Nerd Face" emoji to mean 'stupid' or the 🤣 "Rolling in the Floor Laughing" emoji to mean unfunny). This function supports the literature, as not only was sarcasm the main motivator behind adding emoticons to seemingly serious texts (Fahlman, n.d.), but this sarcastic role is also well-documented in the literature on emoticons (e.g., Skovholt et al., 2014) and emojis (e.g., Algharabali & Taqi, 2018). In fact, the same exact happy emoji that was used creatively by one participant in this study to convey the opposite meaning was found in the study of Algharabali and Taqi (2018), which is the 💃 "Dancer" emoji. A possible explanation for this might originate in the Arabic idiom 'Eid came early' (meaning the exact opposite of Christmas came early), as it is used when something unfortunate happens, particularly when you are the one who metaphorically 'brought' it upon yourself. The contrast between Eid (a time of celebrations and joy) and the actual meaning of the idiom has a comical effect that any Arabic speaker recognizes, one that is similarly found in the use of the dancer emoji to represent a mishap.

#### (c). Emojis Signal (Un)Familiarity

Emojis were also used to point out familiarity and carry out informality (e.g., different colored emojis or laughter options for different interlocutors). In terms of familiarity, studies have recognized the role of emojis in expressing closeness, intimacy, and familiarity (e.g., Al Rashdi, 2015). Similarly, much like many forms of online writing, emojis also functioned in the literature to ensure that the conversation is informal and 'relaxed' (e.g., Algharabali & Taqi, 2018; Escoufflaire, 2020). This informal role of emojis seems to be slowly changing, as some scholars have explored the usefulness of emojis in formal educational contexts (e.g., Al-Zou'bi & Shamma, 2021).

#### (d). Emojis Decorate Text

One of the least frequent emoji functions was their use to decorate the text they co-occur with. This was rarely reported in the participants' interviews, but more commonly found in their tweets (e.g., the ✨ "Sparkles" emoji to frame an inspirational quote). Similarly, this function was also only present in a few taxonomies, labeled as 'poetic' in Danesi's (2017) adoption of Jakobson's functions, and 'structurally aesthetic' in Escoufflaire's (2020) framework. Although emojis are quite an attractive resource for aesthetical representation, they seem to be rarely used just as an additional decorative element (which is how this function was coded). In many instances, emojis do not just serve one

function, but many overlapping functions (Danesi, 2017); they are also more ‘given’ (Dresner & Herring, 2010) and therefore more intentional and purposefully used which could explain the scarcity of this function both in this study and in the literature.

#### (e). *Emojis Substitute Nonverbal Cues*

A function of emojis that was ‘given off’ is their use to represent kinetic and prosodic features. Emojis were thus sometimes employed to remedy the lack of facial expressions (e.g., the 😏 “Face with Rolling Eyes” emoji), body gestures (e.g., the 👉 “Backhand Index Pointing Down” emoji), and voice melodic features (e.g., the 🎵 “Musical Score” emoji). This function corroborates the findings of a great deal of the previous work in emoji functions, dating to the early classical framework of emoticons as a paralanguage (e.g., Crystal, 2001) and stretching to recent emoji of emojis as a paralinguistic device (e.g., Herring & Dainas, 2017). This function also made an appearance in many classifications, such as that of Al Rashdi (2015) as ‘contextualization cues’, Escoufflaire (2020) under the ‘interpretive’ function, and in Sadia’s (2018) multimodal framework. Their function as gestures, in particular, was also debated by a group of contemporary scholars (e.g., McCulloch & Gawne, 2018; McCulloch, 2019) as emojis and gestures were found to be of close resemblance to one another. Given the lack of nonverbal cues in online interactions, this function was expected to appear more frequently in the data.

#### B. *Emojis as Illocutionary Enactors*

The second research question focused on the role of emojis as illocutionary acts, particularly placed in Searle’s (1975) taxonomy of speech acts. For the most part, emojis seemed to mitigate (as opposed to enact) speech acts. That is, emojis worked in conjunction with speech acts already uttered in the message itself (e.g., the 🤝 “Handshake” emoji used to strengthen the expressive act of welcoming, or the 👁️ “Eyes” emoji to soften the directive act of asking). This particular element is consistent with some literature on emoticon and emoji ‘acts’ (e.g., Skovholt et al., 2014). The expressiveness of emojis allows them to support such acts with ease, as they are regarded as a modern hedging device.

In terms of the frequencies of emoji acts, expressives were the most common showcasing a wide range of verbs used with the help of emojis (i.e., thanking, apologizing, greeting, welcoming, and condoling). This is in agreement with many previous studies in which expressives were the most common speech acts found in online communities, in general (e.g., Mohamad et al., 2018) and occurred in conjunction with emojis, in particular (e.g., Al Rashdi, 2015).

Directives were next in prevalence and diversity, as emojis were used for verbs such as asking, suggesting, or requesting. This is followed by representative emojis which functioned solely alongside agreeing, and commissive emojis which neighbored promising. In relation to earlier research, these results are mixed. While commissives were indeed the rarest speech act function found in previous studies (e.g., Kazmi et al., 2019), directives and representatives appeared slightly more frequently in other studies (e.g., Beißwenger & Pappert, 2019). This could be attributed to the study setting, as Twitter is a public platform in which the participants presumably interact with strangers, and thus tend to use more expressives and fewer directives.

#### C. *Emojis as Identity Representatives*

Emojis were found to represent the participants’ identity (i.e., self, personality, and personal values) but not to the same level. Although earlier studies found that users actively represented their personal front on Twitter (e.g., Lee & Pedersen, 2018), this was not the case in this study. Not only did two-thirds of the participants not perceive emojis to have a ‘personal front’ role, but also, no less than half included any emojis at all in their Twitter bios. Further, out of the seven who did include an emoji, only three performed a role in line with Goffman’s (1959) theory, namely the student role represented by the 📖 “Books” emoji. This singular use also failed to be consistent with the literature, as Maximova and Lukyanova (2020) reported that it is men, rather than women, who preferred identifying with an occupational role. The reasons for these discrepancies are listed shortly, but one interesting finding related to personality was the participants’ reported use of animal emojis to describe their personalities (e.g., 🐱 “Cat” Person or Peace 🕊️ “Dove”). This further supports Danesi’s (2017) theory of metaphorical emojis, particularly with the conceptual metaphor: HUMAN IS AN ANIMAL.

There are many possible explanations for the participants’ lack of self-representing emoji use on Twitter. Such reasons were provided by the participants themselves and could be summarized as: issues of privacy, appropriateness, and personal preference. To begin with, privacy for Saudi women is a delicate subject given the cultural expectations of Saudi women (Alshalawi, 2022). Emoji use is, after all, culturally-sensitive. The second reason relates to whether it is appropriate for the participants to use emojis for this function since they are not teenagers and are ‘perfectly capable’ of expressing their thoughts using words. This perception of emojis as being a property for teens is consistent with the views of Escoufflaire’s (2020) participants while the perception of emojis as working in opposition (not in addition) to language is also voiced by the ‘aged’ users in Kazmi et al.’s (2019) study. However, this does not mean that age is the main influencing factor in the participants’ non-use as a third reason was simply preference, a reason that reflects the uniqueness and individuality of emoji use.

This uniqueness, however, becomes less relevant when considering the third theme: emojis reflecting personal values. It was found that both the participants’ interviews and tweets reflected a negative use of refraining from picking emojis

that are not in line with their Muslim referentiality (e.g., the Middle Finger emoji), and a positive use of employing emojis that did reflect their Saudi (e.g., the ✂ “Crossed Sword” emoji) and Muslim (e.g., the 🕌 “Kabba” emoji) identities alike. The particular use of the national flag supports earlier studies in which American (conservative) citizens proudly used the US flag emoji in their tweets and Twitter bios (e.g., Li et al., 2020). Similarly, the use of certain ‘Islamic’ emojis also mirrored Stanton’s (2018) study, in which halal emoticons were used to represent Muslims’ identities.

#### D. Emojis as Language Change Ambassadors

Emojis played an active role in language change. Three main themes were identified: the importance, frequency, and identifiability of emoji use. Consistent with the literature, some participants perceived emojis to be essential in online interactions (e.g., Herring & Dainas, 2017); others perceived them to be disposable (Kazmi et al., 2019); and a third group argued that their necessity is contextual (Escoufflaire, 2020). The different levels of importance attributed to emojis are also reflected in the frequency of emoji use, as such use was not equally distributed across the participants’ tweets (i.e., the highest percentage of emoji-per-tweet ratio was 94.4% while the lowest was 9.1%).

What the participants did have in common was the identifiability of the evolution of emojis. When asked about the pre-emoji era, even the younger participants were able to describe emoticons in a way similar to their classical definition (Drouin & Davis, 2009). Some even mentioned pictographic and ideographic writing recognized by Danesi (2017) as an early stage of language evolution. Similarly, in the post-emoji era, participants agreed on various ‘graphicons’ (Herring & Dainas, 2017): stickers, GIFs, and memes. This could point out to a new multimodal stage of emoji evolution in which language plays a larger role as it is often overrepresented within these graphicons.

### VI. CONCLUSION

The participants’ emoji use performed six main functions: (a) expressing positive and negative emotions, (b) making meaning by emphasizing, repeating, or contradicting the content of the message, (c) mirroring personal beliefs, (d) signaling (un)familiarity with the interlocutors, (e) decorating the message, and (f) substituting nonverbal cues of facial expressions, body gestures, and voice tonality. Moreover, emojis hedged different illocutionary acts. Emojis were used to emphasize the meaning of expressives (e.g., apologizing), to soften the meaning of directives (e.g., requesting), and to communicate the meaning of representatives (e.g., agreeing) and commissives (e.g., as promising). Emojis were also used to represent the identity of the students, mostly acting in alignment with their personal values. This alignment represented the students’ religious Muslim beliefs and national Saudi values. Lastly, the function of emojis as language change ambassadors was less straightforward as it was measured by emoji importance, frequency, and recognizability.

The outcomes of this study have important implications for teaching and learning, particularly in EFL education. Emojis have an important part in communication among Saudi female EFL students, thus educators should realize their potential as more than merely supplemental tools in the language acquisition process. By introducing emojis into curriculum design, educators may help students express emotions and transmit meaning more effectively, resulting in a more engaging and relevant learning environment. Furthermore, knowing the pragmatic purposes of emojis may help educators meet students’ requirements for identity representation and emotional expression, which is especially crucial in countries where such emotions might be complex. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need of addressing cultural sensitivities related to emoji use, encouraging teachers to incorporate conversations about digital communication and its influence on linguistic change into their teaching techniques. This technique not only helps students learn languages, but it also prepares them to efficiently traverse current communication environments.

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# Berman's Model of Deforming Tendencies in the English Translation of Mahfouz's Novel *Children of Gabalaawi*

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**Abstract**—This research aims to study Berman's deformation tendencies toward Arabic literary texts in the process of translation into English, using novel translation as a case study. The paper will explain the twelve deforming tendencies and their recurrence in the translation. Then it will present these tendencies sequentially. The task is accomplished through applying the negative analytical model proposed by the French translator and critic Antoine Berman (1985), which he calls "deformation tendencies," to the revised English translation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of Gabalaawi" by the British writer and translator Philip Stewart (1996). The selected examples will be analyzed and discussed to determine the practice of deformation in the analyzed examples. To achieve this subjectively the researchers have selected the first two hundred sentences in the first chapter of the novel. The selected texts were read thoroughly to identify the examples covered by these deformations, and then the sentences were analyzed sequentially and comprehensively. Finally, comparing the examples under study and presenting the proposed translation in accordance with Berman's model, the researchers have found results that support Berman's theory of deformation tendencies. The data selected found nearly 330 cases relating to Berman's model, a large number in 200 sentences.

**Index Terms**—source text, target text, proposed translation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literary translation is the process of translating literary works such as novels, poems, plays, and short stories from one language to another. It is a complex and challenging task that requires not only linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of the cultural context and literary conventions of both the source and target languages. Literary translation is a crucial process that allows readers to access works of literature from different cultures and languages. It promotes intercultural understanding and dialogue and enriches the literary landscape of both the source and target languages.

In this study, the focus will be on studying and analyzing the twelve tendencies and finding out the most frequent and important tendency. The particular focus will be an investigation of the impact of these translational tendencies related to the second "revised" edition of the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of Gebelaawi", translated by Philip Stewart (1996).

Berman's model of translation criticism is a useful tool for analyzing literary translations. However, applying this model to literary translation can be challenging. One of the main challenges is that literary translation is a complex process that involves not only linguistic proficiency but also a deep understanding of the cultural context and literary conventions of both the source and target languages. This means that the translator must be able to capture the nuances of the original text and convey them in a way that is faithful to the author's intent while also making the translation accessible to readers in the target language.

Another difficulty is that literary translation is frequently inspired not just by the dynamics of local forces, but also by the dynamics of a worldwide cultural exchange zone. Both of these circumstances impose limits on the residents of that place, literary translators. This requires the translator to manage the intricate interaction of local and global factors and strike a balance between them.

Furthermore, literary translation is a type of cultural mediation in which actors and processes are involved. It is a type of literary reception and cultural mediation, as well as a type of cultural creation that occurs within a specific milieu at the intersection of two (typically national) literatures and cultures. This means that the translator must be able to operate as a bridge between the two cultures.

Translation has made significant progress due to the development of translation theories. It has become a diverse field that is open to various literary fields such as comparative literature, cultural studies, and literary theories. One of the most important critical approaches in translation, particularly in literature, is Antoine Berman's approach. It is based on an integrated theoretical concept built on translation theory. Berman rejects naturalization and domestication translations that are based on localization strategy.

These deforming forces destroy the source literary text by translating it in a way that makes it convenient in order to convey meaning. These deforming tendencies operate in a systemic way and work through the unconsciousness of the translator, which drives him to practice them because they have a cultural and literary base in the translator's superego. Berman argues that this is the implicit expression of a long tradition, an old heritage of the ethnically centered system for each culture and for each language in terms of being a 'cultured language' (Berman, 2000, p. 49).

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

When it comes to literary translation, there are several problems that translators often encounter, such as translating without changing the original tone of the author: literary translators face the challenge of preserving the author's unique writing style, tone, and voice while ensuring an accurate translation. Translating culturally specific expressions and idioms can be particularly challenging. Translators must find equivalent expressions in the target language that convey the same meaning and cultural nuances. Literary works often contain wordplay, puns, or tongue twisters that are difficult to translate while maintaining their intended effect. Translating dialects and slang can be complex, as these linguistic features are closely tied to specific regions or communities. Finding appropriate equivalents in the target language requires a deep understanding of both languages and cultures. The current study aims to investigate such problems, and Antoine Berman's model of deformation tendencies will be adopted in the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel, "Children of Gebelaawi" (1959) into English by the British translator Philip Stewart (1996).

## III. QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study tries to give answers to the following questions:

- (1) How do Berman's twelve deforming tendencies manifest in the English translation of the Arab Nobel Laureate Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of Gebelaawi" in the light of Antoine Berman's (1985) model?
- (2) How can Berman's deforming tendencies be used to evaluate the quality and ethics of literary translation, especially in relation to Venuti's foreignization and domestication strategies?

## IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Berman's deforming tendencies in literary translation have been widely discussed and analyzed by various scholars. According to Venuti (1995), Berman's theory emphasizes the importance of foreignization in translation, which involves preserving the foreignness of the source text. This approach aims to challenge the dominant norms of target language literature and introduce readers to new cultural perspectives.

Another scholar, Lefevere (1992), argues that Berman's deforming tendencies can be seen as a form of resistance against the hegemony of the target culture. By intentionally deviating from the norms of the target language, translators can expose readers to alternative ways of thinking and challenge their preconceived notions.

In terms of practical application, Munday (2012) suggests that translators should carefully consider the deforming tendencies proposed by Berman and evaluate their potential impact on the target audience. This involves striking a balance between foreignization and domestication, taking into account the expectations and preferences of the target readership.

In her book, "Translation Criticism", Katharina Reiss examines various attempts to distinguish between different types of translation. Literary translation is included as a separate kind by A.V. Fedorov, Otto Kade, J.B. Casagrande, and Georges Munin, among others, but their criteria for doing so remain unclear or appear haphazard (Reiss, 2000, pp. 7–23).

In recent years, a number of general reference works on translation have appeared, shedding insight on what characterizes literary translation. The Dictionary of Translation Studies (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997) has entries for "literal translation," "free translation," and other terms, but not "literary translation." José Lambert considers the definition of 'literary' and the collocation 'literary translation' in the Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies but yet does not reach any conclusive conclusions (Baker, 1998). Only three very general text types—informative, appellative, and expressive—are distinguished in the German Handbook of Translation according to Karl Bühler's 1930s-era taxonomy (Bühler, 1934). Narrative, drama, and poetry are listed under "mainly expressive" materials, along with movies and comic books, but "literary translation" as such is not mentioned (Snell Hornby et al., 1998). There are currently a few reference books that are dedicated solely to English literary translation. They need to differentiate literary translation from "other" aspects of translation, but how? In the two-volume Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English's preface, written by editor Olive Classe in 2000, "literary translation" is typically understood to be distinct from "technical translation" (Classe, 2000, p. 8). The difference made by Gideon Toury between "literary translation" and "translation of literary texts," the latter of which is non-literary and referred to as "informational" (France, 2000, p. 2).

Toury's distinction is based on his belief that literature is characterized by the use of formal devices, which he derives from Yuri Lotman and, further, Roman Jakobson and the Russian Formalist (Toury, 1984, p. 73).

"What is Literature?" Terry (1983, p. 16) makes the case that literature is best described as "a highly valued kind of writing" and then emphasizes the social and ideological conditioning that underlies it. A two-pronged strategy is used in literary theory: while once considered a fixed category ("an institutional label"), the term "literature" has shifted to describe a specific type of event, a "speech act or textual encounter" that sparks certain kinds of engaged attention (Culler, 1997). Literary translation has, however, been drawn to texts that exhibit specific characteristics, including the

foregrounding of language, the interdependence of various levels of linguistic organization, the separation from the practical context of utterance, and the perception of texts as both aesthetic objects and intertextual or self-reflexive constructs (Culler, 1997, p. 28). The correlation between the label and the characteristics means that, when formal characteristics are recognized, institutionally appropriate attention will follow, and vice versa. This is a model that is conceptually sound.

Depending on this theory, a stereotypical literary translation is one that is understood to be a literary text and may even have been intended as such, exhibiting literary features and qualities. Despite this, Culler also points out that in the past 25 years, the distinction of literature has not received much attention; instead, he contends that literature's function in society and politics, as well as its historical and ideological categories, are of interest (1997, p. 36). In general, this has also been the direction of the study of translation, and especially the study of literary translation.

In point of fact, comparative literature, which one might have expected to support translation as an instrument of cultural negotiation and transmission, was especially late to realize the value of translation. As the American Comparative Literature Association, also known as ACLA (Bernheimer, 1995, p. 34) noted. The first report drew a clear distinction between teaching "foreign literature in translation" and comparative literature in its proper sense, emphasizing the need for "some access to all the original texts involved".

According to Bernheimer, reading original works should be the preferred option for students. Translations are acceptable only in rare cases or for languages that are too difficult to access. This emphasis on the original extends beyond students who already understand the language. Bernheimer argues that even for those who don't, experiencing untranslated texts helps them recognize the limitations of their own reading experience (Bernheimer, 1995, p. 35). Additionally, the final ACLA report and Susan Basnett's *Literature: A Critical Introduction* were both published in 1993. According to her, translation studies, gender and postcolonial studies, and cultural studies are the new forces driving literature, which is now effectively dead. She advocated for translation studies to become "the fundamental discipline from now on, with comparative literature as a valued but wholly owned subsidiary subject area" (Basnett, 1993, p. 161) rather than calling for the old animosities toward translation to be lessened. However, contemporary introductions to comparative literature (such as Zima, 1992; Tötösy de Zepernick, 1998) pay attention to translation. The shift in mindset that the ACLA reports indicate was caused by a number of factors, one of which was globalization. Comparative literary studies in the West discovered a world full of highly valuable works in what the 1965 ACLA report could still refer to as "remote languages" (Hans-Georg Gadamer, 1977, p. 98).

Consequently, from the structure of translation the particular problem of making what is alien our own was demonstrated, as Gadamer (1977, p. 19) put it. He stated that "the general problem of making what is alien to us our own is indicated by the structure of translation." George's (1998) work provides an example of how this process actually operates within a single linguistic and cultural tradition. Translation is a factor in all cross-cultural research. Simply from an institutional standpoint, the publication of André Lefevere's *Translating Literature: Its publication, under the auspices of the Modern Language Association of America, "Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature"* Lefevere (1992, p. 30), was significant.

## V. METHODOLOGY

Comparative analysis is used in the current study in order to assess the quality of the translation. The functional text analysis of constituents was used to differentiate between specific characteristics of the studied samples. The following steps are used to collect and analyze information:

1. Accurate understanding of the version of the Arabic text "Children of Gabalaawi" to gain knowledge of the story's narrative, characters, and connections between scenes in the chapter with the general setting, as well as the components of CRs (cultural references) that are used.
2. Distinguishing which parts of the sentence can be presented from the standpoint of translation that are deformed during the process of translation, as well as the potential issues of culture-specific references being transferred to the cultural environment of the target language with one of the deformation tendencies.
3. The selected lexical items are compared to determine the twelve deforming tendencies in the translation.

A parallel methodology is included with the novel's English text. The results of context-oriented data associated with the translation decisions of these tendencies are important in revealing the methods used in the example cases. A "negative analysis" of Berman's hypothesis is used to examine the interpretation, drawing on Venuti's famous classifications of foreignization and domestication. A number of randomly chosen examples are taken from the English translation by the British translator Philip Stewart (1996).

The researchers used three stages of quality analysis to analyze the collected data. The stages are as follows: collecting information, organizing information, then minimizing samples, translating, and processing information.

## VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis shows that all kinds of deforming tendencies are observed in novel translations, albeit with varying frequencies. In the next section, illustrations for the 12 distortion trends will be introduced and examined successively.

1. Rationalisation

In the opinion of Berman (2000, p. 288), the inclination to rationalize influences the syntactic structure (e.g., sentence structure, punctuation, word order, the tendency to generalize and the translation of verbs as nouns). Concerning the tendency to rationalization, in some cases, a change in the syntactic structure of the sentence was detected. The repetition of this notice can be seen as a strong contrast between Arabic and English in the order of words and sentence structure. Nevertheless, if we regard this category as a transformation of sentences with certain series leading to a particular translation deviation, only 19 cases tend to rationalize, which represents 5.7% of the total percentage. An example of rationalization:

ST (Source Text):

(p. 12) ودارى كل منهم- عدا أدهم طبعاً- غضبه لكرامته باحتجائه الصامت على تخطي ادريس، الذي كان تخطياً مضاعفاً لهم.

TT (Target Text): And-all except Adham- silently resented rebuff to Idres which was at the same time a blow to their own honor. (p. 6)

In this extract above, the position of the word “احتجائه” in the center of the extract accentuates the fact that the brothers were actually protesting against their elder brother’s exemption, but the translator Philip Stewart (1996, p. 6) has made a class shift in the translation of this grammatical class (a noun: احتجاج), by rendering it as a verb “resented” in the past tense, which is one of the shifts that cause rationalization according to Berman’s (1985) deforming forces. Actually, in the original text, the position of the word “دارى” makes it an important key word in the sentence. The translator has ignored translating this opening word, which caused distortion of the sentence. The ST expression “غضبه لكرامته + تخطياً مضاعفاً لهم” has also been deleted in the TT above, causing a syntactic and semantic structure distortion, which the interpreter has not taken into consideration. The proposed translation would be:

PT (proposed translation): And each of them\_ except for Adham of course- have remedied his anger for his dignity by protesting silently against Idrees’s exception which was a double exception to them.

## 2. Clarification

This is a situation where the translator makes clear and unambiguous that the author does not want the receiver to understand in the original text. Berman argues that this distortion is unquestionable in the translation operation (2000, p. 289). It was observed in two sentences, which represents a 0.6% percentage, and it provoked the expression of the unsaid or something that was concealed or hidden in a negative way, which causes over-translation and expansion of the TT. The clear proof is as follows:

ST: (p. 7) على اي حال، كان يدعى الجبلوي وباسمه سميت حارتنا

TT: Be that as it may, his name was Gebelaawi or “old man of the jebel” and our alley is named after him. (p. 1)

The expression “الجبلوي” in the target text is what Berman explicates as the exhibition of the hidden. In fact, the interpreter has combined some lexemes into the translation so that it sounds more conceivable to the TT reader. Despite the fact that the nominal expression has not been rendered correctly (deletion of the definite article “the”), the explanation in between the inverted commas “old man of jebel” was totally subjective and was not the author’s orientation, without mentioning that the word “jebel” has no entry in the English dictionary; it is the transliteration of the Arabic word “جبل”. The ST verbal expression (يدعى) has also been omitted, whereas the past tense passive verbal expression (سميت) was rendered in the active (present tense: is named), which caused what Catford calls a grammatical shift. The proposed translation would be:

PT: However, he was called Al-Jabalaawi and our alley was named after him.

## 3. Expansion

As maintained by Berman (2000, p. 290), rationalization and clarity require expansion. He believes that any longer translation than the ST is over-translation, but this expansion is unacceptable; this expansion is called translation inflation. These extensions cause over-translations that do not add anything but, on the contrary, a decrease in clarity. This type of tendency is among the recurrent trends in the dataset of this study; it had 50 cases, 15.1%, extended in this research. While this inclination may cause rationalization or clarification in the translation, it can decrease the significance of the original text and add nothing.

An example of an extension is shown as follows:

ST: (p. 10) حارتنا العجيبة ذات الاحداث العجيبة. كيف وجدت؟ وماذا كان امرها؟ ومن هم اولاد حارتنا؟

TT: “Amazing little alley with your amazing events! How did it all begin? What was it all about? Who were these sons of our alley?” (p. 3)

In this example, the translator has expanded the target text with words that do not exist in the ST, such as little, all, and these, in order to make the translation more conceivable to the TT receiver. This extension may make the TT more “clear,” but it does, in fact, make it more complicated. Deleting these four additional words will not harm the coherence of the TT (Venuti, 2012). Berman (1995) states that clarification decreases the peculiarity of the translation text. The proposed translation is as follows:

PT: Our strange alley with strange events. How did it all begin? And what was its issue? And who are the children of our alley?

## 4. Ennoblement

In the corpus of this research, there are cases that tend to deform due to the tendency to rewrite the original text in a more elegant mode. The use of a more elegant style is destructive to the translation of ST in structure and rhetoric (Berman,

2000, p. 290). The corpus analysis indicated that nine cases (2.7%) were noticed. The example of ennoblement is shown next:

ST: (p. 10) كان مكان حارتنا خلاء. فهو امتداد لصحراء المقطم الذي يربض في الأفق.

TT: Where our alley runs was once desolate. It was an outlying part of Muqattam desert, which now lurks on the horizon. (p. 5)

While the phrase “كان مكان حارتنا” is used in everyday Arabic (not literary), it could be rendered as “the place of our alley was”, but the translator has opted for the literary term “Where our alley runs” as the equivalent for “كان مكان حارتنا”. In fact, this term is rarely used in regular English discourse. The translator appears to have attempted to construct “elegant” lines while using the source text as raw material (Venuti, 2012). The suggested translation would be as below:

PT: The place of our alley was empty. As it is an extension of Al-Muqattam desert that crouches on the horizon.

#### 5. Qualitative impoverishment

This distortion occurs when translators replace phrases and words with their TT equivalents, which damages the structure of meaning because the TT equivalents lack the richness and iconic significance of the original text (Berman, 2000, p. 291). It is observed in 70 sentences, or 21.2% of the corpus. An example of quality degradation is shown below.

ST: (p. 12) وفضلا عن هذا فإدريس الأخ الأكبر هو المرشح الطبيعي للمنصب، فلم يعد أحد منهم يتساءل عما هنالك

TT: However, that may be, Idrees, the eldest was the natural choice for the job; None of them could doubt that. (p. 5)

In this case, the expression “وفضلا عن هذا” has been translated as “however that might be” in the target text, which would mean in back-translation “مهما كان ذلك” while the ST does not include this expression. Similarly, the word “المرشح” has been translated as “choice” and the ST word “المنصب” has been rendered as “job”. Both words are not the closest equivalents to the original. Additionally, the word “choice” is used to indicate any act of selecting one or more options or possibilities, which is simple, while the appropriate equivalence is “candidate” (المرشح). On the other hand, the word “post or position” (المنصب) refers to something that is not concrete; it indicates anyone who is in power and exerts hegemony, and not “the job” (الوظيفة). The proposed rendering would be as follows:

PT: In addition, Idrees the elder brother, is the natural candidate for the position, so none of them would wonder what is there.

#### 6. Quantitative impoverishment

Concerning this category in the body of this study, it appears that the translator has often substituted several synonyms with a single word or that there was a lexical loss during the process of translation. Berman (2000, p. 292) asserts that this point leads to a loss of vocabulary in translation since the translation contains fewer signifiers than the original text. Expansion is one of the methods followed by the translators as compensation for this lexical loss. Lexical loss means that the translator uses fewer kinds of signifiers for the subject than the original text does. There are 17 cases (5.1%). One proof of this distortion is as below:

ST: (p. 11) وجاء الابناء جميعا، ادريس وعباس ورضوان وجليل وأدهم، في جلابيهم الحريرية فوقوا بين يديه وهم من اجلاله لا يكادون ينظرون اليه الا خلسة.

TT: They all came, Idrees, Abbas, Radwan, Jalil and Adham, dressed in silk jellabas. They stood in front of him, so respectful that they hardly dared look at him directly. (p. 5)

The analysis of the translation above revealed that different forms of expression in the original text were transferred to the TT with obscure equivalents. The major expressions that were transformed as “they were” “الابناء”, and the pronoun “هم” in “جلابيهم” has been translated as “in silk jellabas” and not “in their silk jellabas,” which causes a lexical loss in addition to the loss of meaning. The ST element “خلسة” is the best equivalent of the English word “stealthily.” The lexical loss of the words above is very clear and has contributed to the quantitative impoverishment of the TT. The following is the proposed translation of the text:

PT: And all the sons came, Idrees, Abbas, Radwan, Jaleel, Adham, in their silky gallabiyahs, they stood in front of him, and for his solemnity, they hardly looked at him except stealthily.

#### 7. Destruction of rhythms

In the opinion of Berman (2000, p. 292), the rhythm of the original text is distorted when the order of a sentence and punctuation are distorted. Actually, mistranslation may have a significant impact on rhythmic structure (e.g. due to arbitrary modifications of punctuation marks). Throughout this study, 9 cases were observed, or 2.7% of the frequencies. One case of rhythm destruction is presented below.

ST: (p. 10) ولكن مهلا، فأنتي لا اكتب عن نفسي وعن متاعبي، وما اهون متاعبي إذا ما قيس بمتاعب حارتنا

TT: But steady on! I am not here to write about myself and my troubles, which are nothing compared to those of the alley. (p. 3)

In the previous excerpt, there is an intonation of a rhythm type between the lexis of the original text. Nevertheless, the translation of Mahfouz’s literary masterpiece has destroyed the rhythm of the original: while the source extract is only one sentence, the translation has used two independent sentences. In the first punctuation in the original text, there is a comma after the word “مهلا”. However, it has been replaced by an exclamation mark (exclamation point AME), which is a grammatical category used to indicate strong feelings like joy, anger, or surprise. Another deformation of punctuation is committed by the translator by omitting the exclamation mark at the end of the original text. After the word “!حارتنا”, it has been replaced by a full stop (.), which is usually used to refer to the end of a sentence, separating one sentence from

another. This subjective, selective, and arbitrary misuse of intonation and punctuation by the translator has ruined the novel's rhythm. The proposed punctuation should keep to the original, as shown below:

PT: But wait, I do not write about myself and my troubles, and what makes my troubles lesser if they are compared to the troubles of our alley!

#### 8. Destruction of underlying networks of signification

Expressions can affect the meaning and the fundamental systems of text, even if they do not have a significant meaning. Fiction works include undiscovered aspects, a fundamental text where certain expressions are symmetrical and linked; they form all kinds of fundamental networks under the surface of the text. (Berman, 2000, p. 292). During the database of this research, 27 occurrences (8.1%) of violations of the underlying meaning networks were observed. After a long time, some words of a particular term can be reproduced; several types of nouns form a particular network, whether by their combined picture, purpose, or appearance. Indeed, while there are many mentions of rituals or cultural expressions in the original text, the translator has optionally associated them with relevance in the target text. The translator has destroyed the text that contains the web of word obsession by deleting style words in SL text.

ST: (p. 13) فاندفع خطوات حتى كاد يلاصق أدهم، وانتفخ كالديك المزهو ليعلم للأبصار فوارق الحجم واللون والبهاء بينه وبين أخيه

TT: He strode across to Adham till he towered over him, puffed himself up like a cock in a full display, to point up the contrast between himself and his brother. (p. 6)

The word "خطوات", meaning "steps" in English, has been deleted by the translator, causing a distortion in the underlying network of signification. Besides, the mistranslation of the most important key word in the sentence "اندفع", (which has nearly twenty English equivalents, the closest one being "rushed") has been rendered as "strode", which means "خطى". In fact, when an English reader reads the word "strode", it will not have the same impact and signification as the word "rushed". Consequently, the suitable translation of the expression must be rendered:

PT: So, he rushed steps until he almost stuck to Adham, and he buffed up like a proud rooster to announce to the eyes the differences in size, color and magnificence between him and his brother.

Through this new rendering, the TT reader would be mentally engaged with the tension and emotional atmosphere of this situation and would thoroughly perceive the meaning of this competition between brothers as the candidate for the position and its depiction.

#### 9. The Destruction of linguistic patterns

Different translation techniques used by the translator, such as expansion, clarification, and rationalization, destroy the structure and linguistic pattern of the original text, even if the target text is linguistically coherent, resulting in a lack of unity of meaning because the original texts' systematization is breached (Berman, 2000, p. 293). There are 30 cases (9%) of language samples destroyed in the corpus of this study. An example of this distortion trend is as follows:

ST: (p. 8) أليس من الغريب ان يختفي هو في هذا البيت الكبير المغلق وان نعيش نحن في التراب؟

"Was it not strange that he should be hidden away in this great, locked house, while we lived outside in the dust?" (p. 2)

The grammatical structure of the original text was damaged in the preceding case. This notion is reinforced by the fact that in English, the interrogative "" can be used at both the beginning and conclusion of a sentence., and it could be translated in the present tense (is + not + complement) and not the past as it was rendered by the translator, and it would be rendered properly by using the present tense (isn't it strange?). Then, the author of the novel could have used the past tense if there was a need to; secondly, the usage of active and passive voice has been violated in more than one place in the sentence, even though the subject is well-known. Firstly, the active voice verb (يختفي = hides = disappears) has been rendered as "he should be hidden", adding a modal verb and changing the tense of the ST. Secondly, the ST excerpt (نعيش) active present tense construction has been rendered as "we lived" (نحن عشنا), an active past tense construction, by the translator. A carefully conducted textual analysis of the original and its translation demonstrates that the writing of the translation is systematic. The proposed translation would be as follows:

PT: Isn't it strange that he hides in the big, closed house and that we live in the dirt?

#### 10. Destruction of vernacular networks or their exoticization

Berman (2000, p. 294) claims that when there is an attrition or loss, the slang or dialect of the source language is replaced by the dialect of the target language and follows their language pattern. This is one of the least frequent distortions in the corpus of this study. There are 2 cases (0.6%) of slang in the original text or the native language being replaced by the native language in the target text, followed by language structure. In the following, proof of this deformation tendency is presented.

ST: (p. 8): و نظير كل ساع الى الخير تجد عشرة فتوات يلوحون بالنابايت ويدعون الى القتال

TT: "For each person who tries to do good you will find ten strongmen brandishing their cudgels and looking for a fight." (p. 2)

In the above example, the original text has used the vernacular expression (فتوات) the plural form of the singular (فتوه), which is used in old Egypt to refer to those who impose themselves on society and interfere in the details of the daily life of the people. They introduce themselves to the people as their protectors and saviors, but the reality is the opposite. This SL vernacular expression has been rendered in a compound noun (adjective + noun) and has been replaced by the target language standard equivalent. The closest equivalent for the SL vernacular expression "فتوه" is "a bully". This kind of



lifestyle or position has almost disappeared in modern socio-cultural lifestyles. The proposed translation would be as below:

PT: A counterpart of every goodness seeker you will find ten bullies, brandishing clubs and call for a fight.

#### 11. Destruction of expressions and idioms

The replacement of the SL text idioms, cultural-bound expressions and proverbs with target language culture-bound ones will result in the destruction of these idioms and proverbs even if they would not make sense in translation and they would refer to an ethnocentric translation (Berman, 2000, p. 295). There are 15 cases (4.5%) of the destruction of expressions and idioms in the target text. For Berman, replacing SL proverbs and idioms with their equivalents in TL was a kind of discursive destruction of foreign work. Below we can see this distortion trend.

ST: (p. 7): "هو أصل حارتنا، وحارتنا هي أصل مصر أم الدنيا، عاش فيها وحده وهي خلاء خراب، ثم امتلكها بقوة ساعده وبمنزلته عند الوالي"

TT: "From him came our alley, from which came Cairo, mother of the world, he lived here alone when it was desert and mastered it by strength of his arm and by standing with the governor." (p. 1)

In this extract, the idiom has been destroyed. Firstly, the SL expression "أصل" is a noun, and the best equivalent for this noun is the English noun "origin." The translator has replaced it with the verb "created", which has another function and connotation, causing a class shift on the grammatical level and rationalization according to Berman's negative analytic. Secondly, the well-known idiom "مصر أم الدنيا" has been seriously distorted by replacing the name of Egypt with its capital, Cairo. Unfortunately, the translator did not give an explanation, even with a footnote, for why he substituted the names aforementioned. Thirdly, the translator has failed in the rendering of the SL expressions "خلاء خراب" which means "wasteland of ruins." He has rendered it as "desert" "صحراء" and "ساعده" he has rendered it as "his arm" (يده) while the correct rendition would be "his forearm" because the original author already knows how to use lexicons like "صحراء + يد" "but he has never used them. So, this type of distortion has occurred in the TT. The proposed translation is as follows:

PT: He is the origin of our alley, and our alley is the origin of Egypt (mother of the world), he lived in it alone while it was a wasteland of ruins, then he took possession of it with the strength of his forearm and his status with the governor.

#### 12. Effacement of the superimposition of language

Berman (2000, p. 269) indicates that this category refers to the removal or elimination of all trails of the various linguistic patterns that coexist in the original during the process of translation. Novels have a diversity of dialects and languages that are difficult to translate. Regarding this definition, 80 cases (24.24%) were detected in this research. What is next?

ST: (p. 13)

ولكن ادريس كانت تعصف به عواصف الغضب المجنونة فهتف: وهو أصغرنا ايضاً، فدلتني على سبب يرجحني به، إلا ان يكون زماننا زمان الخدم والعبيد.

TT: But Idris was wild with fury. He roared: - He's the youngest of us, too; give me one reason why you should prefer him to me, or is this the age of servants and slaves? (p. 6)

The words "عواصف + تعصف + المجنونة" are lexical items which have a proper lexical equivalent in the target text as "crazy + blow + storms". However, they have been omitted. The lexical item "هتف" has been translated as "roared" which is the depiction of a lion's sound; it is logical to use "ejaculated, yelled, exclaimed" etc. Additionally, the present tense verbal item "يرجحني", which means "he is better off than me", has been rendered as "prefer" which means "يفضل" and a huge amount of information has been effaced. The proposed translation of the text above would be as follows:

PT: But Idrees was ravaged by crazy storms of anger, he yelled: He is the youngest also, so guide me to a reason why he is better off than me? Unless our time is the time of servants and slaves.

As a result, the researchers determined that these deformations happened when the translator translated the text from SL, i.e. Arabic, to TL, i.e. English, by taking into account all of the cases given above for each of the twelve deformation tendencies.

In summary, the study attempted to extract particular instances from the text and tie them to the core notion, namely Berman's concept of deformation model. As a result, each appropriate phrase, expression, and sentence has been chosen and grouped into categories and their subcategories. So, the study examined the meaning and structure of words, phrases, and sentences in the SL and TL. Finally, Table 1 displays the frequencies and percentages for the Berman model's 12 distortion tendencies.

TABLE 1  
PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF THE OCCURRENCES AND PERCENTAGE OF EACH DEFORMATION TENDENCY

| Deforming tendencies                                | cases | Percentage | rank based on occurrences |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|---------------------------|
| Rationalization                                     | 19    | 5.7 %      | 6                         |
| Clarification                                       | 2     | 0.6 %      | 11                        |
| Expansion                                           | 50    | 15.1 %     | 3                         |
| Ennoblement                                         | 9     | 2.7 %      | 9                         |
| Qualitative impoverishment                          | 70    | 21.2 %     | 2                         |
| Quantitative impoverishment                         | 17    | 5.1 %      | 7                         |
| Destruction of rhythms                              | 9     | 2.7 %      | 10                        |
| Destruction of Underlying Networks of signification | 27    | 8.1 %      | 5                         |
| Destruction of linguistic patterns                  | 30    | 9 %        | 4                         |
| Destruction of vernaculars                          | 2     | 0.6 %      | 12                        |
| Destruction of idioms                               | 15    | 4.5 %      | 8                         |
| Effacement of the superimposition of languages      | 80    | 24.24 %    | 1                         |
| Total                                               | 330   | 100 %      |                           |

## VII. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The primary goal of this study was to examine the frequency of distortions in the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of Gebelaawi" by British translator Philip Stewart (1996) using Berman's approach. Furthermore, the study seeks to comprehend how words from the source language are modified to fit the target language by employing distortion biases. This was accomplished by identifying the most common deformation tendencies. Overall data analysis shows that the effacement of the superimposition of languages, qualitative impoverishment, expansion, destruction of linguistic patterning, and destruction of underlying networks of signification are among the most frequently used distortion trends. In addition, data analysis showed that destruction of vernaculars and their exoticization, clarification, destruction of rhythm, ennoblement, destruction of idioms and expressions, quantitative impoverishment, and rationalization are the least likely distortion trends.

The results of this study show that syntactic errors occur in structure, punctuation, rhythm, and so on, in literary translation. It has also been revealed that divergence is less common in novel translations based on this model. In fact, it seems that Berman proposed a model that was precise enough to preserve the form and syntax of the original text in translation. Similar to the present study, the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Children of Gabalaawi" by the American translator Peter Theroux (1981) revealed that qualitative impoverishment is the most recurrent tendency among the twelve deformation tendencies. In the same line, they discovered that one of the most common deformation elements is the effacement of linguistic superimposition. However, there are considerable discrepancies between the two research. For example, while the destruction of vernaculars and their exoticization was the least frequent deformation tendency in the current research, evidence for this deformation tendency is shown; it was one of the least frequent deformation tendencies in the other study. The existing conflicts between the two studies might be related to the nature and genres of the two languages. Furthermore, because the genre of both studies was "literary novel," we naturally expect more rhythmic language than non-literary literature.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This study examines the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's "Children of Gebelaawi" by Philip Stewart (1996) through the lens of Antoine Berman's model of "deforming tendencies," focusing on how cultural nuances are conveyed across languages.

Furthermore, the study sought to discover how words may undergo alterations from the source language (Arabic) to match the target language (English) through the use of deforming tendencies. The data analysis found that, while there were lexical incompatibilities, the translation suffered mostly from the effacement of the superimposition of language and qualitative impoverishment. Berman also appears to provide a model that is overly rigid in terms of retaining the structure and syntax of the source language in the target text. The current study suggests that the translation has preserved the author's genre, cultural, and social perspective in some way. It should be noted that cultural phrases are strongly rooted in Egyptian culture and often have a lengthy history. They are therefore part of the original culture's identity, which should be authentically portrayed in the translation. Because a translation should be viewed as a translation, it cannot replace the original.

The current work adds to translation theory by defining translation as a globally informed and regionally defined sociocultural and linguistic action. The interplay of cultural and translation ideologies, and the ways in which their shifting relationships impact translation practices and theory, holds enormous potential for the future of literary translation as a study subject. Furthermore, to emphasize the significance of transitioning from a linguistic-oriented translation approach to a culture-oriented one when translating various cultural components in Arabic literary works.

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# Racial Injustice Against Blacks in the American Society as Represented in Wright's *Native Son*

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**Abstract**—Racial injustice refers to the unfair treatment of a specific race in a community, which disadvantages one race. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the social consequences of systemic racism and identify the various types of racial injustices experienced by Black people in the 1930s, as depicted in Wright's *Native Son*. Qualitative and descriptive methods, as well as Lucien Goldmann's Genetic Structuralism methods, were used. The results showed various forms of racism, including prejudice, negative stereotypes, segregation, and social isolation. These types of injustice have had a severe impact on African Americans, as seen through the protagonist, Bigger Thomas, who represented the constant state of fear, uncertainty, and frustration inflicted upon Black people. By uncovering the different kinds of racial injustice, this study emphasized the importance of societal reflection and action in eliminating long-standing racial biases and injustices.

**Index Terms**—racial, Black people, structuralism approach

## I. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a compilation of written and unwritten stories, including texts and spoken language (Fadillah et al., 2022). In a written form, literature is categorized as poetry or novel, while in an unwritten or performed form, it is categorized as a theatre (Asriyanti et al., 2022). Broadly defined as artistic literary works created by distinct writers (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019), literature is a vital resource that helps readers and scholars navigate through various genres such as short stories, poems, novels, plays, and songs (Arafah, 2018). Literature is considered the result of writing activity and could trigger an awareness to maintain the connection between humans and nature or the environment (Siwi et al., 2022). An individual's expression shows literature through words, deeds, and writings (Sunyoto et al., 2022). In this context, a writer typically bases literary works on surrounding events, exploring phenomena for inspiration and presenting particular ideas of interest (Arafah et al., 2024). The significance and depth of a literary work can only be fully appreciated by examining it within a cultural context (Arafah et al., 2020). In addition, literature explores personal, cultural, societal, and aesthetic values to comprehend human experiences (Sunardi et al., 2018).

Literary works should not be interpreted solely at face value, as they connect to various elements; hence, readers should investigate thoroughly (Asri et al., 2023). Novels as literary works often reflect facts and are considered a society record

(Abbas et al., 2020). Literature provides more than entertainment; it helps readers understand various phenomena on a deeper level (Abbas et al., 2020). Therefore, literature plays a significant role in society by showing and reflecting human experiences in real life (Arafah et al., 2021). Literary works can generally be categorized into genres such as prose, poetry, and novels (Mutmainnah et al., 2022). Literature has evolved over time, and many academic studies witness the emergence of new literary works and studies (Arafah et al., 2023).

In the academic field, students gain value through the stories they read in literary works. Education is not just a process of acquiring knowledge but also a means of achieving social and personal development (Misnah et al., 2024). Therefore, incorporating cultural aspects into the learning process is crucial to shaping students' behaviour and character (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023; Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). Culture, as a pattern of life recorded in a community, includes traditions and rituals rich in life values (Arifin et al., 2022; Takwa et al., 2024). Cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation enriches each country or region with local wisdom (Hasyim et al., 2020; Takwa et al., 2024). This local wisdom serves as a guideline for good attitudes and behaviour (Takwa et al., 2022). Furthermore, cultural heritage is not only about tradition; it can also include local terms or languages that identify specific objects understood only by the local community (Mofu et al., 2024). Therefore, integrating literary works into the school curriculum helps students preserve local wisdom and shape their character by integrating cultural values (Halil et al., 2024).

The application of literary works in learning should be considered. The advancement of technology affects every aspect of social life, including learning (Suhadi et al., 2022). A few years ago, when the pandemic arose, people were challenged with a new dimension of online learning, where the learning process could take place outside the classroom (Arafah et al., 2023; Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Teachers are now expected to use technological devices to make lessons more engaging (Usman et al., 2024). This technological advancement makes literary works more accessible. The digital age allows students to acquire literary works, such as books, through online and technological-based media (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). At this point, digital media enables individuals to consume information and connect with people worldwide (Arafah et al., 2023; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). Teachers should apply appropriate methods to understand the cultural values in literary works using technological-based media, and students should be highly motivated to gain a positive impact from reading literature (Kaharuddin et al., 2023; Arafah et al., 2024). Despite the changes brought about by technological developments, modernization should maintain the traditional systems of society, such as the norms, culture, and environment (Takwa et al., 2022).

In literature, language plays an essential role, encapsulating cultural reality and serving as a communication tool (Arafah et al., 2023). Writers use complex indicators, such as signs and symbols, to convey messages to readers (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). At this stage, the writer, as the speaker, is expected to communicate as informatively as necessary (Yulianti et al., 2023). Moreover, as an art, literary works rely on figurative language, such as metaphors (Baa et al., 2023). To understand figurative language in literary works, readers should analyze the signs and symbols by identifying their relationship to other signs (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019). In a system of signs and symbols, cultural values should be conveyed effectively to avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations that prevent appropriate comprehension (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a; Iksora et al., 2022). It is also essential to recognize that writers deliver messages both implicitly and explicitly (Kuswanty et al., 2023). Therefore, readers are responsible for interpreting a writer's meaning from their unique perspective. In addition, literary works are often presented in multiple languages, becoming global reading materials, such as English. Therefore, having language-learning aptitude is essential for readers to fully enjoy literature (Karamoy et al., 2024).

The development of literature is shared by readers' responses, which are influenced by various literary theories (Afiah et al., 2022). Literary works cover diverse topics such as economics, religion, politics, science, and society. Literature captures and records people's lives in specific eras and regions (Yudith et al., 2024). Through literature, valuable lessons about human survival and the environment can be discovered (Jusdalyana et al., 2024). Nature is a crucial, inspiring element in literary works (Manugeran et al., 2023). Unfriendly human behaviour has negatively impacted environmental sustainability, yet few people are aware of this (Yudith et al., 2023; Abbas et al., 2024). Thomas and Chasper (2019) argued that race has been a prevalent topic throughout American society's history. Blacks have endured racism and oppression for generations, more than other minority groups (Lavalley & Johnson, 2020). As noted by Oliver (2003, p. 3), numerous African Americans, particularly men, have been unfairly categorized as unintelligent, violent, and threatening offenders. In addition, women were subjected to gender discrimination during that time (Yudith et al., 2024; Arafah et al., 2024).

Racial discrimination, the behavioural manifestation of racism, occurs when power and prejudice intersect (Kirkinis et al., 2021). Racial discrimination includes both racial superiority (racism) and the societal structures and individual actions tied to power and subjugation (Pieterse & Powell, 2016). Mehrotra and Wagner (2019) stated that racial discrimination is associated with physical traits like skin colour, facial features, and hair type, often occurring in geographically isolated, inbred communities. Black people continue to experience discrimination beyond the 1930s. Discrimination remains a pervasive issue. Various racial challenges have happened throughout the history of the United States (Alzyoud & Makharesh, 2023).

The prejudice experienced by African Americans is evident in Wright's novel *Native Son*, which shows black individuals facing prejudice from whites. All individuals are equal and endowed with rights by their Creator (Todd et al., 1972).

This study aimed to investigate racial discrimination against Black individuals in American society as presented in Wright's influential novel, *Native Son*, due to its enduring influence on discussion about race, social justice, and systemic oppression in America. The purpose of this study was not only to examine highly acclaimed literary works but also to engage with the lasting themes that remain relevant in the current social and political contexts. The study team aimed to contribute to the broader conversation on race, equality, and justice in the United States, emphasizing literature as a powerful tool for social critique (Weber, 2012).

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature is inherently connected to history, and genetic structuralism, a theory introduced by Lucien Goldmann (1913-1970), emerged in the mid-20th century as a significant intellectual advancement in literary and cultural studies. Developed in the 1960s in France, this theory was shaped by Goldmann's fusion of Karl Marx's historical materialism and György Lukács's concept of class consciousness, emphasizing the interpretation of cultural works in their socio-historical contexts (Goldmann, 1981). Goldman's (1981, p. 24) book stated that literary works are a vital expression of the writer's creativity and distinctiveness within society.

Swingewood and Laurenson (1972, p. 68) described genetic structuralism as identifying specific structures in a text and connecting them to the writer's vision, historical context, social conditions, groups, and classes. In addition, Goldmann (1981) argued that literature is an organized creation, reflecting historical developments and continual historical evolution. A writer uses fictional characters to represent various societal groups and according to Damayanti et al. (2021), writers and their fictional and social realities are closely intertwined and cannot be separated.

Considering the description of Genetic Structuralism provided above, it is clear that while structuralism focuses solely on the literary text, genetic structuralism incorporates genetic elements like the writer's background and social influences. This theory emphasizes the relationship between a piece of literature and the society in which it was created. According to Endraswara (2003, p. 30), the genetic structuralism method can be outlined as follows:

- a. The examination begins with internal components such as characters, point of view, theme, plot, and setting.
- b. Next, the study is conducted on the writer's background.
- c. Finally, social factors that influence the literary works are analyzed.

Genetic structuralism comprises three components, namely, (1) the inherent aspects of the literary works, (2) the writer's life story, and (3) the societal context.

## III. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive method was used in this study, as it provides a detailed account of all aspects of the study topic (Sugiyono, 2018). Primary data were the main focus of the study and were categorized as the main source. The primary source was Wright's book *Native Son*, and supporting data such as books, theses, journals, and online materials were used to corroborate the results from the primary data (Purwaningsih et al., 2019). The study team collected, analyzed and investigated relevant data from these various sources. The data were then collected by thoroughly reading and comprehending the literary works and taking notes on specific words and sentences. Subsequently, the notes were evaluated using genetic structuralism to uncover racial injustice and explore how discrimination and intolerance impact individuals' lives, such as Bigger Thomas in Wright's *Native Son*.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A thorough analysis of Richard Wright's impactful novel *Native Son* shows a profound exploration of American society in the 1930s, exposing vivid depictions of racial injustice. Significant results have emerged by delving into the book's narrative elements, character interactions, and societal portrayals. These results showed the widespread forms of racial discrimination experienced by Black people, clearly showing the deeply rooted obstacles, prejudices, and inequities of the time. Wright's story served as both a literary exploration and a reflective surface, showing the harsh truths of racial injustice and its profound effects on the African American community during this tumultuous period in American history.

### A. Forms of Racial Injustice Experienced by Black People in American

Several forms of racial injustice are found in the novel *Native Son* by Richard Wright.

#### (a). Racial Discrimination and Dehumanization

Racial discrimination and dehumanization have been long-lasting types of injustice that have afflicted societies for centuries, primarily impacting marginalized groups due to their race or ethnicity. When examining the stories of racial prejudice and dehumanization, it is clear how deeply rooted these problems are in influencing social standards and the daily realities of marginalized groups, as shown in the following:

"Kill 'im!"

"Lynch 'im!"

"That black sonofabitch!" (Wright, 2009, p. 315)

In Wright's novel *Native Son*, the vividly shown conversation illuminates the themes of racial discrimination and

dehumanization. The statements "Kill 'im!", "Lynch 'im!", and "That black sonofabitch!" emphasized the pervasive racial hatred and demeaning beliefs in 1930s America, specifically towards Black people such as Bigger Thomas, the main character. The white characters in the novel held a violent and biased mentality, viewing Bigger only in terms of race. The demand for Bigger's lynching emphasized the widespread danger of extrajudicial violence that Black people experienced during that period. This type of language not only stripped Bigger of humanity by using derogatory terms but also rationalized and facilitated violence against Bigger because of their skin colour.

Another implication may be seen below:

"Kill that black ape!" Two men stretched his arms out as though about to crucify him; they placed a foot on each of his wrists, making them sink deep down in the snow. His eyes closed slowly, and he was swallowed in darkness. (Wright, 2009, p. 315)

The visual of Bigger lying in the snow, encircled by an unfriendly crowd of white faces, represented a lack of strength and defenselessness against systemic racism. The man's extended arms created a crucifixion-esque scene, emphasizing the intentional causing of pain and control over Bigger. Pressing their feet onto Bigger's wrists not only physically restrained but also symbolically strengthened the dominance and authority held by the white community over Black individuals. Referring to Bigger as a "black ape" and commanding to "kill" altogether removed any trace of humanity. It turned Bigger into nothing more than a target of ridicule and aggression, mirroring the widespread racial biases and opinions present in society during that era. The darkness enveloping Bigger's awareness represented the physical and emotional separation caused by racial discrimination.

#### (b). *Negative Stereotype*

In *Native Son*, the widespread negative stereotypes reflected racial injustices present in American society in the 1930s. Wright used offensive language like "nigger" and dehumanizing phrases such as "black ape" to show the demeaning attitudes and prejudiced beliefs of the dominant white culture towards African Americans, as is potentially confirmed below:

".... I'm a little sorry you bothered him. He's here to try to get a new slant on things."

"Well, you see 'em one way, and I see 'em another. To me, a nigger's a nigger."

"But he's sort of a problem boy". (Wright, 2009, p. 198)

The dialogue provided showed the common negative portrayals found in the book. The character's utterance, "To me, a nigger's a nigger," emphasized their strong racial bias. This offensive term stereotypes African Americans in a dehumanizing way, neglecting their uniqueness, intricacy, and humanity. The phrase's dismissive attitude emphasized the widespread belief in society that Black people are inherently inferior and should be subject to discrimination. The comment also emphasized how racial bias was becoming more accepted, with derogatory language being used casually and without hesitation.

Additionally, labeling Bigger Thomas as a "problem boy" continued to reinforce harmful stereotypes that implied Bigger Thomas was fundamentally defective or troubled due to race without taking into account the broader societal inequalities and external influences that impacted Bigger Thomas' life. In general, this dialogue showed how harmful stereotypes played a role in degrading and isolating African Americans in 1930s America, as shown in the novel.

#### (c). *Segregation and Social Isolation*

Examining segregation and social isolation showed how these behaviours had fueled racial discrimination, strengthening divides and widening inequalities in societies. The information provided below shows that:

The white neighbour decided to limit the amount of education his black neighbour could receive; decided to keep him off the police force and out of the local national guards; to segregate him residentially; to Jim Crow him in public places; to restrict his participation in the professions and jobs; and to build up a vast, dense ideology of racial superiority that would justify any act of violence taken against him to defend white dominance; and further, to condition him to hope for little and to receive that little without rebelling. (Wright, 2009, p. 495)

The story emphasized different types of segregation and social exclusion enforced on Black individuals by their white neighbours and society as a whole. Initially, there was a conscious attempt to restrict the educational options for the Black community, hence maintaining economic and social disparities. This limitation goes beyond just education and also included being excluded from positions of power like the police force and local, and national guards, which prevented opportunities for social influence and authority.

Residential segregation was maintained, guaranteeing physical isolation and strengthening economic inequalities. Jim Crow laws were enforced in public areas to promote segregation, limiting access and supporting racial separation. Systematic discrimination in professional opportunities and jobs also hindered the ability to move up and progress economically. Additionally, there was a widespread belief in the superiority of one race, which was used to rationalize using violence against Black people to uphold white power. This thorough system indoctrinated Black people to anticipate minimal outcomes and tolerate their marginalization without pushback, maintaining a pattern of social and economic oppression through organized separation and exclusion.

#### *B. Social Implications of Racial Injustice Faced by Black People in The United States in the 1930s Are Shown in Wright's Native Son*

Bigger's character represented the profound psychological effects of systemic racism and societal oppression on African Americans in 1930s Chicago. In the story, Wright carefully showed how white supremacy forced Black individuals into roles of economic subservience and social inferiority by constantly instilling fear, peril, and insecurity. Bigger's evolution from fear and frustration to violence and desperation was a blunt reflection of the unyielding struggles experienced by African Americans in such oppressive circumstances.

Bigger heard Mr. Dalton mumbles something. He wished Mr Dalton would speak and end this thing. He looked up and saw Mr Dalton staring at the girl. She's making me lose my job! He thought. Goddamn! He knew nothing about unions except that they were considered immoral. Moreover, what did she mean by talking to him this way in front of Mr. Dalton, who, surely, didn't like unions? (Wright, 2009, p. 76)

In the passage above, Bigger's nervousness was evident as Bigger maneuvered through a tense situation with Mr. Dalton and Mr. Dalton's daughter. Wright used Bigger's internal thoughts to emphasize fragility and the danger faced as a Black individual trying to find a job from a wealthy white person. The concern about not getting the job because of the assertiveness of Mr. Dalton's daughter emphasized how race, class, and power dynamics impacted opportunities in society. Wright showed Bigger's internal conflict, showing the psychological impact of living in a society where racial bias controlled potential and hindered dreams.

One particular moment was shown in the following passage, where Bigger underwent a profound and troubling epiphany following a tragic incident,

Thought and feeling were balked in him; there was something he was trying to tell himself, desperately, but could not. Then, convulsively, he sucked his breath in, and huge words formed slowly, ringing in his ears: She is dead. (Wright, 2009, p. 116)

In the critical moment after Mary Dalton's death, he captured Bigger's existential struggle and the permanent implications of the actions. Wright beautifully shows Bigger's inner pain and disbelief when confronted with the reality of what has happened. The phrase "there was something he was trying to tell himself, desperately, but could not" showed Bigger's inner struggle to understand and accept the gravity of the actions. An attempt to excuse or justify what had occurred might arise, but the gravity of the situation prevented clarity or peace of mind.

The statement "She is dead..." signified a turning point in the story, as Bigger confronted the terrible consequences of the actions and the resulting social ramifications. This scene exemplified Wright's investigation into the psychological and moral quandaries confronting African Americans as a result of institutional racism and social oppression.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Richard Wright's *Native Son* deeply examined the various racial injustices Black people faced in 1930s America. By carefully examining the story's narrative, character relationships, and depictions of society, Wright vividly showed the widespread presence of (1) racial discrimination and dehumanization through hurtful words and aggressive behaviour, (2) reinforcement of negative stereotypes, and (3) segregation and social isolation. These unfair actions robbed African Americans of their respect, hindered their access to equal chances, and continued to uphold systemic oppression. Additionally, the social consequences of racial injustice experienced by African Americans in 1930s America were emphasized. Wright used protagonist Bigger Thomas to show how systemic racism and societal oppression caused Black individuals to live in a perpetual state of fear and insecurity.

Wright's *Native Son* served as a strong criticism of a society in which racial discrimination and financial inequality determined the fates of people such as Bigger Thomas. Wright used Bigger's experiences to challenge readers to examine the long-standing history of racial injustice and its profound social consequences, arguing for societal transformation and fairness for marginalized groups.

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# Doing News Coverage Through Scripture: A Critical Analysis of Intertextuality and Metaphors in Aljazeera Media Discourse

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**Abstract**—The current paper is a critical cognitive corpus-based analysis of Aljazeera Arabic news reports that have utilized the Qur'anic scripture in an implicit way to report on political events that took place in Egypt in 2011. While it is well-known in academic research that intertextuality can be determined by metaphors in media discourse (Semino, 2008; Otaif, 2015), the current paper found that intertextuality can also constitute a main discourse metaphor that serves as an effective discursive tool to influence or manufacture the public ideological stance and consent to social events. The findings raise ethical concerns over the use of the Qur'anic scripture in political news discourse and call for further critical research.

**Index Terms**—intertextuality, metaphors, intertextual metaphor, critical discourse analysis, Quran, news discourse

## I. INTRODUCTION

Major world political changes and events are always accompanied by an effective media discourse that facilitates their implementation, mitigates their consequences, or instigates their unfolding scenarios. For example, Brexit was one of the major political events in Britain, which is believed to be the result of a prolonged discourse of anti-immigrants cf. Charteris-Black (2006, 2019). Language in the news and public domains is never neutral, see Conboy (2013), Afrin et al. (2022), and Lahlali (2023); instead, it conveys the socio-political orientations of its producers (Elyas et al., 2023). Given that the micro-level of political discourse is a linguistic one (Chilton, 2004), news discourse producers, writers, or speakers are always keen to grasp the reader's or the consumer's attention (Hoey, 2001, pp. 18-27), especially when it comes to media discourse (Conboy, 2013) where each media channel operates in a competitive market.

In this regard, news outlets have always claimed that their coverage is in adherence to the principle of “objectivity” (Fowler, 1991); nevertheless, academic research, Hart (2007), Al-Hejin (2012), Elewa (2019), and Elyas et al. (2023), has always shown the contrary. One of the main news outlets that received much criticism throughout the last decade is Aljazeera Arabic which was condemned by Arabic elites for instigating the chaos and uprisings in the Middle East between 2010 and 2013 especially the instability that took place in Egypt between 2011 and 2013 and became known as the ‘Egyptian revolution’, see Cherribi (2017). Nevertheless, unlike other news channels in the Arab world, Aljazeera's linguistic discourse has rarely been questioned or analyzed in depth. That is why we see now and then a discourse that thinks that the media coverage of these events was ‘objective’ such as the recent work of Abozaid (2023). Abozaid (2023) believes that these socio-political changes were due but placed no responsibility or blame on the media discourse of Aljazeera that is widely thought to have instigated or at least have partially flamed these changes in Egypt and elsewhere; instead, he further sees such media discourse as a channel of promoting democracy against what he called ‘Mubarak’s tyrant regime’.

Following the school of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995a, 1995b) that believes in the dialectical relationship between media discourse and social reality where media discourse can constitute social reality and is also constituted by social reality, the current study will be a cognitive corpus-based critical discourse analysis of metaphors (Charteris-Black, 2004, 2006, 2019, 2021) and intertextuality in three news reports, that have received prominent positive feedback on YouTube (the online video platform), reporting about the so-called ‘Egyptian revolution against Mubarak’. Since metaphors are macro-level discourse (Charteris-Black, 2004; Chilton, 2004; Semino, 2008, 2020) and can reflect the attitude of the discourse producer (Gibbs, 1994; Lakoff, 1996; Hart, 2007, 2010), the focus of the analysis in this paper will investigate what metaphors are mainly used in Aljazeera’s news discourse.<sup>1</sup>

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Using his *critical linguistics* approach, Fowler (1991) investigated how ideologies and perspectives are embodied in the language of the press. Fowler’s (1991) work pioneered early critical linguistic research in criticizing what he called

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that the data of this paper were collected at the time of the event i.e. in 2011 and was delivered as a 20-minute presentation paper at an international conference (see Otaif, 2012).

the media's 'vaunted objectivity'. His research has shown how the British press uses different linguistic structures such as *nominalization*, *passivization* and *transitivity* to report about the same news events differently where language is used to serve their socio-political perspective and interest. In this vein, recent researchers have pointed out how the socio-political orientations of news producers are imposed to shape news discourse in a biased manner. Al-Hejin (2012), in a corpus-based critical discourse analysis, pointed to how the English BBC journalists impose their socio-political orientations by transforming the content of the interviewees' quotes through translation to make it adhere to the BBC orientalist view of Muslim women as being 'submissive' and 'oppressed'. He has shown how the quotes from the speech of Saudi Muslim women about their religion and hijab were distorted through translation to render realities that were different from the original discourse they gave on the BBC Arabic website.

Similarly, Elewa (2019) conducted a corpus-based critical discourse analysis of the British and American newspapers' translations of quotations from the 'Middle East'. He found that the English news discourse, translating quotations from Arabic into English, was affected by the news producers' socio-cultural perspectives; news journalists tend to produce quotations that adhere to the publishers' sociocultural perspective and/or its target readers, see also Daghigh and Guo (2024). Elyas et al. (2023) conducted a corpus-based critical discourse analysis to study how news headlines of two different newspapers operating from two different socio-cultural contexts framed COVID-19 in the news discourse of *The USA Today* versus the Saudi newspaper *Asharq Alawsat*. They found that the socio-political orientations of the operators of these news outlets were always present in the news discourse even at the time of the pandemic, while the USA Today news discourse blamed China and Trump over the spread of the virus, and the *Asharq Alawsat* news discourse pointed to the loose travel measures that Iran took causing more outbreaks of the virus in the region. Similarly, Lahlali (2023), in a corpus-based critical discourse analysis, found that BBC Arabic and Aljazeera Arabic discourse about the COVID-19 pandemic is shaped by the countries in which these news outlets operate from i.e. United Kingdom versus Qatar. Lahlali (2023) discussed how the news discourse reported in BBC Arabic utilized **metaphors** and **intertextuality** "to rally the Vietnamese people to fight this pandemic in unity in the same manner as their ancestors did during the Vietnam War. Using a national historical war evokes a feeling of belonging and unity" (p. 209). The WAR metaphor<sup>2</sup> and its previous historical scenarios of defeating the invader's army were activated to trigger the public response against the enemy; however, this time, it was COVID-19 instead of the US.

In fact, **intertextuality** (Fairclough, 1992) is one of the most effective and common tools used in news discourse (see Al-Hejin, 2012; Conboy, 2013; Elewa, 2019; Lahlali, 2023); it refers to the use of snatches or quotes from other texts in media discourse. Intertextuality can be explicit or implicit. First, an explicit intertextual practice occurs when journalists usually quote a speech or phrase(s) from another source between two double quotation marks. This practice is common in media discourse and somehow evokes a sense of 'objectivity' in transferring exactly what has been said along with an attribution to its source. Nevertheless, the most challenging practice is that of '*implicit intertextuality*' in which a prominent linguistic phrase(s) or cluster(s)<sup>3</sup> is used implicitly in media reports to make sensational news stories without referring to their original sources.

This feature of media discourse is rarely, if ever, analyzed which, in turn, could be attributed to two reasons. First, it is in many cases subconsciously processed where discourse consumers (readers, listeners and viewers) of media discourse feel their effects but cannot immediately grasp what source they came from unless the discourse receiver possesses critical reading skills which is not the case for most of average news readers (see Hart, 2010). Second, the difficulty of spotting them in public discourse by average readers, listeners and viewers of media discourse, especially when intertextuality has a metaphorical or sophisticated/indirect religious interpretation<sup>4</sup>. For example, religious metaphors were found in speeches made by New Labour and Conservative/Tory politicians in Britain (Charteris-Black, 2004) to influence public electoral decisions. Similarly, Delaney and Spoelstra (2022) documented the use of religious metaphors such as 'savior' and 'sinner' in modern leadership discourse for their strong semantic associations and ability to attract/influence the audience.

Myers et al. (2023) found that the use of religious cues by Christian influencers in their social media posts increased audience engagement positively. Therefore, it is worth stressing here, as will be seen later in the current paper, that intertextuality can sometimes be taken from a religious discourse such as scripture by utilizing metaphors and linguistic chunks/clusters that are common in religious discourse to conceptualize the news event within the 'religious domain'. For example, Omer and Springs (2013) discussed how American Christian politicians such as Jerry Falwell used scripture to justify the war on Iraq: "GOD is pro-war: In a message to the American people, Jerry Falwell uses scripture to justify the war in Iraq, suggesting that the war fulfils the work that God has intended Americans to accomplish" (p. 239). The discussion of religious metaphor and intertextual use of scripture takes us to the concept of *intertextual metaphors* which Gee (2020) defines as the metaphor that is created by intertextuality in discourse (p. 201); *intertextual metaphors* are constructed through reference(s) to a culturally salient text(s) (Zinken, 2003, p. 509) such as the phrase *my savior* in a sentence such as *this medicine is my savior* which constitutes an intertextual metaphor that is derived from the Christian religious discourse and scripture. When it comes to media discourse 'most of what we read in our finest newspapers is metaphoric' (Lakoff, 1996). Since the use of metaphor is an essential feature of public discourse and sometimes a single

<sup>2</sup> See Semino (2020) and Charteris-Black (2021) for discussion of the WAR metaphors.

<sup>3</sup> Cluster refers to well-known linguistic coherent chunks or expressions found in poetry, scripture and/ or the elite discourse.

<sup>4</sup> That is why it requires critical reading and in-depth knowledge from the side of the discourse analyst.

metaphor can constitute a ‘whole discourse’ (Charteris-Black, 2004; Zinken et al., 2008), the current paper explores the metaphors and intertextuality used in Aljazeera discourse and the sources from which they were taken and whether or not they contribute to manufacturing the so-called Aljazeera’s ‘good news story’ about the former Egyptian president Mubarak and the Egyptian uprisings in 2011.

III. METHODOLOGY

The current research is a cognitive corpus-based critical discourse analysis (Charteris-Black, 2004, 2006, 2019, 2021) that combines corpus linguistics (Baker, 2023) and cognitive linguistics in critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995a). Using a corpus-based analysis of the text (discourse) of Aljazeera’s news reports about the former Egyptian president Muhammad Hosni Mubarak and the Egyptian uprisings, the main metaphors and intertextuality used to construct news stories about these events, including the image of people inside them, were critically investigated. Our data came from three of Aljazeera’s news reports that have received prominent positive feedback e.g. ‘strongest’ and ‘wonderful’ reports and spread through what is recently known as the ‘new media’ i.e. social media and its applications such as YouTube. While the first report chosen was released five days before Mubarak stepped down, the second report was released one night before he stepped down. Lastly, the third report appeared the night after his stepping down was publicly announced, see Table 1 below.

TABLE 1  
ALJAZEERA NEWS REPORTS

| Name     | Date of release on TV | Tokens/ words of text | Name of journalist |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Report 1 | 06.02.2011            | 593                   | Fawzi Bushra       |
| Report 2 | 11.02.2011            | 629                   | Fawzi Bushra       |
| Report 3 | 12.02.2011            | 346                   | Fatima Aturaiki    |

The news corpora were transcribed and classified before each file was fed into Wordsmith Tool 8, which is a corpus analysis software. The main methodological approach used was critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995a) which is summarized in the following three steps: 1) identifying the relevant linguistic patterns and examples found in the given discourse, 2) interpreting their nature, and lastly 3) explaining how they act as discourse socio-political practices in public domains. Additionally, the Qur’anic corpus available online at <https://tanzil.net/> was utilized and regularly consulted; it helped the analysis to trace the clusters and phrases that were thought to have a Qur’anic nature i.e., taken by Aljazeera’s reports from the Qur’anic scripture.

On the other hand, the Conceptual Metaphors Theory (CMT) (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), which is a cognitive linguistic theory, tells us how to find the *source* and *target* domain in a sentence like *flood of protestors drowns the regime* (the example is the author’s own) where the target domain, which is *protestors*, is conceptualized in terms of properties from the source domain *flood* to arrive at the conceptual metaphor PROTESTORS ARE A MOVING FLOOD, which evokes the scene and threat of a natural disaster. Unlike the CMT (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the Blending Theory of Metaphors (BT, henceforth) (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) claims that several elements are activated from two separate mental (input) spaces in the mind of the discourse producer and consumers, then projected in the upper circle of the *generic space* (see the diagram in Figure 1 below) before particular elements from each mental space are selected to form the emergent metaphor e.g. FLOOD OF PROTESTORS.

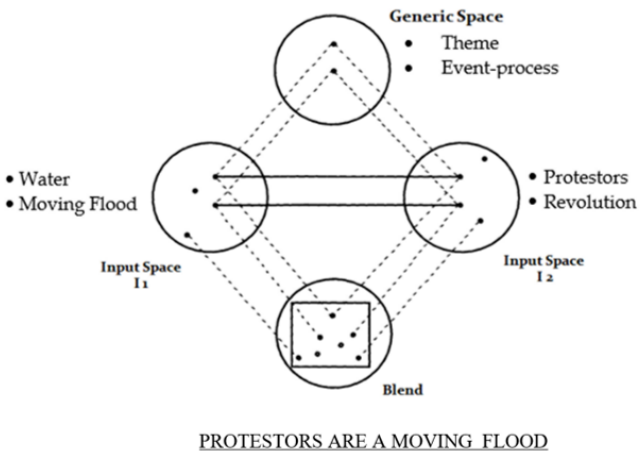


Figure 1. The Basic Diagram for the Blending Process Adapted From (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002) for the Metaphor PROTESTORS ARE A MOVING FLOOD<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The example above is the author’s own.

In this metaphor, protesters are conceptualized as a massive flood power that can demolish an existing regime i.e. as strong as a dangerous disaster to the community depending on further contextual modulation (Evans, 2009) that specifies the exact meaning based on a given discourse. Such cognitive processing of linguistic expressions occurs subconsciously (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999) and at the speed of light (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Similarly, in this study, the main metaphor(s) used by Aljazeera reports were explicated and explained using the BT network.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Metaphors were found pervasive in Aljazeera's news reports; the metaphor of MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON i.e. Muhammad Hosni Mubarak was conceptualized as the dictator pharaoh mentioned in the Holy Qur'an (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 28: 4) has almost dominated Aljazeera reports and evoked several related Qur'anic scenes through intertextual metaphors.

##### **The Story of Pharaoh**

While *pharaoh* is a word used in language to describe the ruler of ancient Egypt (LDCE, 2024), the ruler of modern Egypt is called a president. The Holy Qur'an tells us about one of the ancient Egyptian pharaohs whose name in the Holy Quran is Fira'oon. Fira'oon was an arrogant dictator who never listened to advice but oppressed and killed his community, as the Holy Scriptures say:

Indeed, the Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into factions, oppressing a sector among them, slaughtering their [newborn] sons, and keeping their females alive. Indeed, he was of the corrupters. (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 28: 4)

In fact, Fira'oon was mentioned in the Holy Qur'an 74 times in 67 Ayas/Verses,<sup>6</sup> almost all in negative contexts as a dictator (Holy Qur'an, 2024). To Muslims, especially those in the Arab world, it became a conventional metaphor to describe and call any dictator with Fira'oon i.e. the Pharaoh mentioned in the Holy Quran. In many other places, the Holy Qur'an tells us that Fira'oon was brutal to his people and never listened to the advice told to him by wise people, as will be discussed later in this paper.

##### **Intertextual metaphors**

The first report by Fawzi Bushra was found to use several Qur'anic linguistic clusters and metaphors; nonetheless, it was dominated by the metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON. This was clear at the beginning of Report 1 (Aljazeera Report 1, 2011). As shown in Excerpt 1.1 below, the report used the Qur'anic phrase *قِيلَ أَنْ أَذْنُ لَكُمْ* *gabla an aathan lakom*, which in English means *before I permit you*. This phrase is an exact Qur'anic linguistic cluster uttered by Fira'oon to upbraid and threaten his people as mentioned in three different places in the Qur'anic scripture, in three chapters which are respectively, 7:123, 20:71 and 26:49 (Holy Qur'an, 2024). One of these instances (i.e. 7:123) is given in Excerpt 1.1 below.

##### **Excerpt 1.1:**

تقومون بالثورة قبل أن أذن لكم إنه لمكر مكرتموه في المدينة

**Translation:** *You have revolted before I permit you! Indeed, this is a conspiracy which you conspired at the city.*

(Aljazeera Report 1, 2011)

The linguistic chunk *قِيلَ أَنْ أَذْنُ لَكُمْ* *gabla an aathan lakom*, *iinaho limakr makartumuh fi almadina* which means *before I permit you! Indeed, this is a conspiracy which you conspired at the city* is the exact Qur'anic phrase 7:123 (Holy Qur'an, 2024) and was used in Aljazeera Report 1 (2011) without quotation marks. This is an implicit intertextual practice that utilizes the scripture for media coverage that seems to serve certain political agenda. The socio-political practice used here is an intertextual discourse. It seems to encourage audience engagement by utilizing the Qur'anic scripture through which the 'enemy' is implicitly conceptualized through religious intertextuality and metaphors embodied in the news discourse. This reminds us of Jerry Falwell's uses of the Christian scripture to justify the war in Iraq, suggesting to the American soldiers that the Iraq war was a religious mandate by God (Omer & Springs, 2013).

Another Qur'anic phrase of Fira'oon's speech was found in Excerpt 1.2 below. It is an exact phrase that was taken from the Holy Quran narrating a clear statement uttered by Fira'oon when he was imposing his obedience on his people as the governor of ancient Egypt (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 43:51).

##### **Excerpt 1.2 (Aljazeera Report 1, 2011):**

أليس لي ملك مصر!

**Translation:** *Do not I own the governance of Egypt!*

(Aljazeera Report 1, 2011)

These two clusters in Excerpts 1.1 and 1.2 were used metaphorically to conceptualize Mubarak's speech to the Egyptian people as being that of the tyrant Fira'oon. These two instances belong to the main metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON (Aljazeera Report 1, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> See the Qur'anic corpus (Holy Qur'an, 2024).



In the second report (Aljazeera Report 2, 2011), the Qur'anic scene of an awful end or fate that happened to Fira'oon was evoked metaphorically through a more intensive intertextual practice; the reporter started the reportage with the linguistic cluster given in Excerpt 2.1 below:

**Excerpt 2.1:**

اليوم ننجيك ببدنك لتكون لمن خلف آية

**Translation:** "Today we save you physically to be a sign for those who come after you"

(Aljazeera Report 2, 2011)

This phrase which came at the onset of Report 2, was an exact phrase taken from the Holy Qur'an (see Holy Qur'an, 2024, 10: 94) and was used here to evoke a particular metaphorical reading of the event i.e. that of MUBARAK AS FIRA'OON. This practice is done through intertextuality. In discourse, words or sentences "in the text other than the first in a fragment of discourse will [have] the whole of its interpretation forcibly constrained by the preceding text" (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 46). Therefore, when metaphors such as MUBARAK IS FIRA' OON are placed at the beginning of a text, they can influence the consumption and reading of the remaining discourse. In fact, metaphors at the onset and macro-level of news discourse such as headlines and leads were found to determine the type of intertextuality that could be used or avoided (Semino, 2008, 2020; Otaif, 2015).

In this vein, Fira'oon, as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, was advised by his people to be mindful of God/ Allah and not to torture the children of Israel (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 20:47). However, Fira'oon was stubborn and never listened to the advice of wise people before he was finally drowned along with his companions (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 2:50) as punishment from Allah. Report 2 (Aljazeera Report 2, 2011) used this linguistic cluster (Excerpt 2.1) to suggest that the fate of Mubarak would be similar to the end of Fira'oon. Further linguistic evidence of this metaphorical mapping and linkage between Mubarak and Fira'oon in terms of the bad fate awaiting him was also found in Report 2 as the reporter said (see Excerpt 2.2):

**Excerpt 2.2:**

مصري سبق إليه الشهر الماضي الرئيس التونسي الذي لم يجد من الهرب بداً فنجاً هو الآخر ببذنه، تاركاً أمثلة بأن الشعوب أقوى إن صح منها العزم

**Translation:** *A Fate that, last month, the Tunisian president [Zine El Abidine<sup>7</sup>] preceded to, [he] who found nothing but to escape so that he was also saved physically, leaving an example that the most powerful are nations/ peoples with true determination.*

(Aljazeera Report 2, 2011)

Similarly, Excerpt 2.3 includes a number of other linguistic clusters taken from the Holy Quran.

**Excerpt 2.3:**

وإن مثل مبارك في شعبه كمثل زين العابدين إذ قال له شعبه: أصلح، فأبى أن يكون من المصلحين، ألا بُعداً لمبارك، وبعداً لزين العابدين!! قال الشعبان الثائران.

**Translation:** *Mubarak in his nation was an exact example of Zine El Abidine who was told by his people 'reform' but chose not to be among the reformists. "Far off to Mubark and Far off to Zine El Abidine" said the two revolting nations/ peoples.*

(Aljazeera Report 2, 2011)

First, in Excerpt 2.3, the linguistic cluster *إذ قال له* *eth gal laho*, which means in English *as they said to him* appeared in the Holy Qur'an once, followed by an imperative verb (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 2:131) and has a connotation that is dependent on what comes after it. The following co-text in Excerpt 2.3 also included the verb *فأبى* *fa'aba* which means *but he refused*. The verb *fa'aba* appeared frequently in the Holy Qur'an expressing the stubbornness of the disbelievers and conveying a negative connotation of their strong rejection and disobedience to God's orders. Such a strong negative connotation that comes from the Holy Qur'an may influence the perception of news consumers and trigger their religious emotions and sentiments towards Mubarak as being Fira'oon, the tyrant disbeliever who is disobedient to Allah/ God and cruel to his people.

Further analysis of the text has confirmed this; for example, the phrase *بداً* *boa'dan* in Excerpt 2.3 above is an extremely threatening Qur'anic promise to take someone far away from God's mercy and acceptance; it was mentioned six times in the Holy Qur'an, all with a negative connotation of threatening disbelievers (Qur'an, 2024). Report 2 used this threatening word twice, in the same sentence; one mention was used for the former Tunisian president i.e. Zine El Abidine and the other one was used for the former Egyptian president Mubarak (Excerpt 2.3). This particular usage suggests to the reader that these presidents should be taken away from the mercy and acceptance of God/Allah, and therefore, their peoples (nations) should treat them as such. The examples discussed above exemplify an implicit intertextuality practice based on the conceptual metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON.

Additionally, Excerpt 2.4 included the use of another Qur'anic linguistic cluster:

**Excerpt 2.4:**

قال مبارك: (إنني أعي هذه التطلعات المشروعة للشعب، وأعلم جيداً قدر همومه ومعاناته)، كذلك قال زين العابدين من قبل، أفلا يزال في مدرسة القادة والزمعاً من لم يفهم الدرس بعد على بساطته؟

<sup>7</sup> Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, the former president of Tunisia.

**Translation:** Mubarak said: (I am aware of the legitimate aspirations of the nation/ peoples, and I know well its concerns and sufferings), so said Zine El Abidine before him, is there any other leader in the school of leaders who did not understand this lesson despite its simplicity?

(Aljazeera Report 2, 2011)

The linguistic cluster quoted in Excerpt 2.4 was found to be taken from the Holy Quran (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 2:118); it is the phrase *كذلك قال الذين من قبلهم kthalika gala allathieena min gablihim*. However, the word *allathieena* was substituted with Zine El Abidine to become *kthalika gala Zine El Abidine min gabl* which means *so said Zine El Abidine before him*. This particular linguistic cluster is associated in the Holy Qur'an with hypocritical (unwise) people who neither commit to their promises nor turn them into actions; therefore, it has a negative connotation in the Holy Quran. Therefore, the Qur'anic linguistic clusters found in Excerpt 2.4 (Report 2), similar to Excerpt 2.1 and 2.2, were employed in an implicit intertextual practice to evoke with negative connotations the reading of Mubarak's stepping down as a dictator's hopeless end; exactly, like those dictators and disbelievers in the Holy Quran.

The third and final report in this research is the one made by Aljazeera reporter Fatima Aturaiki (Aljazeera Report 3, 2011) who evoked the comparison between Mubarak and FIRA'OON more explicitly in her report as she referred to the speech of the Friday sermon Imam in Al-Thrir Square and stressed that the Imam mentioned the story of the Prophet Moses and Fira'oon (Aljazeera Report 3, 2011): "*The man [imam] delivered an earth-shattering [Friday] sermon in which he recalled the determination of the Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, in confronting Fira'oon*" (Report 3, Aljazeera, 2011). Interestingly, this quote has also documented the use of other, but similar, interesting metaphors that are in line with the previous findings; these will be discussed a few lines later.

By this, the recurrent metaphorical conceptualization of MUBARAK AS FIRA'OON through mainly implicit intertextual practices in Aljazeera reports was identified, interpreted and explained. Next, subtle cognitive sub-mappings between the source and target domains will be explained (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) using the BT apparatus (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002), see Figure 2.

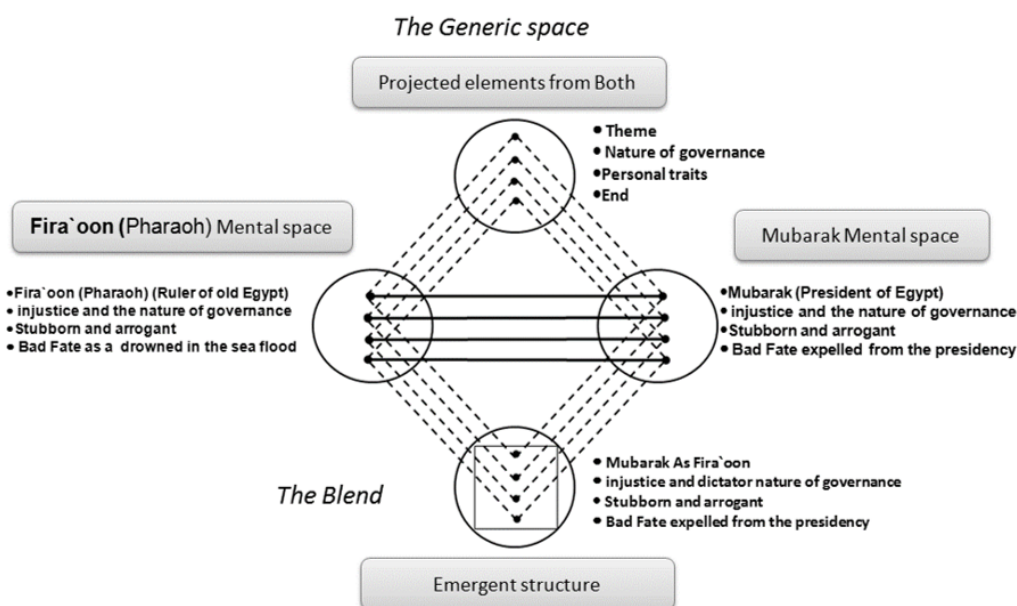


Figure 2. The BT Diagram of the Conceptual Metaphor of MUBARAK AS 'FIRA'OON'

As we can see, the BT diagram above has provided a panorama for the discussed intertextual metaphor MUBARAK IS 'FIRA'OON' that appeared repeatedly in Aljazeera reports. It explains how specific elements are activated from two separate mental spaces in the mind of the discourse producer and consumers and how they get projected in the upper circle of the *generic space* (see the diagram above) before particular elements from each mental space get selected to form the emergent metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON, in milliseconds (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). In Aljazeera reports MUBARAK has been repeatedly conceptualized as FIRA'OON the dictator mentioned in the Holy Qur'an through intertextual practices that perpetuate and propose conceptual similarities of him being *stubborn*, *arrogant*, *unjust* and a *dictator governor of Egypt* who received a bad fate from God i.e. *Mubarak was expelled from the presidency of Egypt* much the same as the Pharaoh Fira'oon was drowned by Allah. The findings here remind us of the findings of previous research on using scripture in media discourse (Omer & Springs, 2013), the use of religious metaphors (Charteris-Black, 2004; Delaney & Spoelstra, 2022) and the use of religious cues to influence and increase the engagement of media viewers (Myers et al., 2023).

This metaphorical panorama was conveyed discursively to viewers through several Qur'anic phrases and clusters quoted by Aljazeera reporters. While Fawzi Bushra in Reports 1 and 2 used several Qur'anic linguistic clusters implicitly as explained above, Fatima Aturaiki, in Report 3, has cognitively evoked the scene or metaphor of MUBARAK AS

FIRA'OON with external intertextual reference to the Friday Imam speech about Moses and Fira'oon (Aljazeera Report 3, 2011). These linguistic practices are ideologically loaded and can reveal Aljazeera's ideological and socio-political stance before Mubarak stepped down, especially since the first report was released on the sixth of February 2011 and the second one was released a day before he stepped down. Similar to Elwa (2019), Elyas et al. (2023) and Daghigh and Guo (2024), the news discourse analyzed in this paper was found to be loaded with the socio-cultural orientations of news outlets and their socio-political agenda, yet this time their 'ideological manipulation' (Daghigh & Guo, 2024) was maintained through the implicit utilization of the Qur'anic scripture.

#### Other metaphors

On the other hand, the representation of the protestors has also been made through various other metaphors, ranging from conceptualizing them as '*massive floods*' to '*flowers*'. First, the conceptual metaphor of PROTESTORS AS FLOOD, discussed earlier in the Methodology section of this paper (see Figure 1), was found in Aljazeera discourse in the linguistic expression *tofān basharī* طوفان بشري (Aljazeera Report 3, 2011) which means *flood of humans* in English. Conceptualizing protestors in such a way is a deliberate linguistic representation that aims to evoke a particular cognitive view of the news events. It either 1) intensifies the news event and its future influence in changing the reality of governance in Egypt, 2) warns that they become an uncontrollable danger or 3) both.<sup>8</sup> Aljazeera journalist Fatima Aturaiki used also other metaphors to highlight the successive massive power of the protestors in "*collapsing and demolishing*' Mubarak's regime in '18 days" (Aljazeera Report 3, 2011); below is a table of the found metaphors in the three reports.

TABLE 2  
METAPHORS FOUND IN ALJAZEERA REPORTS

| No | Metaphor                                  | Aljazeera Reports |
|----|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1  | MUBARAK IS 'FIRA'OON'                     | Reports 1,2 &3    |
| 2  | PROTESTORS ARE A MASSIVE FLOOD            | Report 3          |
| 3  | ANGRY PROTESTORS ARE BOILING WATER        | Report 3          |
| 4  | A FALLING REGIME IS A COLLAPSING BUILDING | Report 3          |
| 5  | THE FRIDAY IMAM'S SPEECH IS AN EARTHQUAKE | Report 3          |
| 6  | EXTREME JOY IS AN EXPLOSION               | Report 3          |
| 7  | A REVOLUTION IS A FLOWER                  | Report 1 & 2      |

The POWER OF NATURE was a recurrent source domain in the metaphors found in Aljazeera reports (Table 2). For example, while *waterpower* was found in metaphors No. 2 and 3, the force-dynamics power of 1) *a collapsing building* was found in No. 4, 2) *an earthquake power* (No. 5), 3) *an explosion power* (No. 6) and lastly, *the natural blossoming power* (No. 7), see Table 2.

The common feature of these metaphors is that they are all pro-uprisings utilizing different forms of power to conceptualize and perpetuate the roles of the parties mentioned in the news event/story within the main intertextual metaphor MUBARAK IS THE DICTATOR FIRA'OON. In fact, Report 3 mentioned the name of Prophet Moses who resisted and confronted the dictator Fira'oon explicitly saying: "*The man [imam] delivered an earth-shattering [Friday] sermon in which he recalled the determination of the Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, in confronting Fira'oon*" (Report 3, Aljazeera, 2011). This quote in the news discourse is an example of how religious metaphors are used discursively and recurrently in Aljazeera media discourse through intertextuality i.e. quoting what fits the political agenda and ideological 'manipulation' (Daghigh & Guo, 2024), or perhaps the ideological orientation of the news outlet.

Similarly, in the second report, journalist Fawzi Bushra conceptualized the revolution as a flower that came out of poor neighborhoods, which is another clear indicator of Aljazeera's ideological and socio-political stance towards the events in Egypt.

In sum, Aljazeera reports have conveyed its ideological and socio-political stance towards the Egyptian state and people through several metaphors such as:

- MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON: Mubarak speaks, governs, and has a similar end or fate to that of Fira'oon.
- A REVOLUTION IS A FLOWER THAT CAME FROM POOR EGYPTIAN NEIGHBOURHOODS, which means that protestors are flowers and positive social actors in comparison to the negative dictator Mubarak as given by the new story (see Aljazeera Report 2, 2011).
- A FALLING REGIME IS A COLLAPSING BUILDING DESTROYED BY A FLOOD OF PROTESTORS (see Aljazeera Report 3, 2011)
- ANGRY PROTESTORS ARE BOILING WATER THAT WILL NOT COOL DOWN UNTIL MUBARAK STEPS DOWN (see Aljazeera Report 3, 2011)
- HAILING IN EXTREME JOY IS AN EXPLOSION i.e. the source domain of explosion is utilized to sensationally describe the massive happiness among Egyptian people after Mubarak stepped down.

Lastly, the findings may trigger the question of how the main intertextual metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON can affect the public point of view and influence social realities. To answer this question, a further examination of the available public reaction to the given discourse was conducted. However, due to the limitations and confines of this study, available sources were explored. The online viewers' comments posted beneath Aljazeera's reports on YouTube were compiled, analyzed, and translated into English. It was found that while most of the commenters were taken by Aljazeera reports

<sup>8</sup> See Charteris-Black (2006) Hart (2007) for similar discussions of the metaphor ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE A MOVING FLOOD.

and had given positive comments like *wonderful* and *great reports*, few others had a different perspective. Therefore, all the categories found (Table 3) will be briefly discussed as they help provide a full understanding of the media discourse practices i.e. its production *by the news outlet* versus its consumption *by the viewers* (See Fairclough, 1995a&b). Below is a random sample of the reader's comments on YouTube.

TABLE 3  
CATEGORIES OF VIEWERS' COMMENTS

| NO | Comment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Report |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1  | بيقطع من آيات القرآن على هواه ويركيها على موقف حسني. حسبي الله ونعم الوكيل فيه وفيكم ايها .....<br>Translation: Cutting Ayas from the Holy Qur'an based on his interest and using them to report on Hussni Mubarak, Oh! My Almighty God Help me on those.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 1      |
| 2  | غلبتو تحريف القرآن، بجد سفالة. مش عارف ازاي الكلام دا يطلع من اخوة عرب ربنا ينتقم منكم.....<br>Translation: Distorting the Holy Qur'an, really shame on you, I do not know how this comes out from Arab brothers like you.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1      |
| 3  | اما بالنسبة للتقرير فهو جدا رائع كيف لا وقد ظهر تاثير من كتبه بالقران وقد ورد ذلك اكثر من مره الى حد ان قال عن الصناديق المزوره بانها كاذبه خاطئه. تحياتي لمصر الثوره ولقناه الجزيره الحره<br>Translation: The report is wonderful; why not especially since the writer is influenced by the Holy Qur'an ..... This was visible more than once, to the extent where the journalist has described the election boxes [with the Quranic phrase] as "lying and sinning [boxes]" [see Holy Quran, 96:16]. Greetings to Revolutionary Egypt and Al Jazeera Al Hurra Channel | 2      |
| 4  | انا اتحفظ على استخدام آيات القران بهذه الطريقة بغض النظر عن موقعي من مبارك.<br>Translation: Regardless of my stance towards Mubarak I have my own reservations over the use of the Qur'anic Ayas.....                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 2      |
| 5  | "إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا أَوْ لَا يُعَدُّ لِفِرْعَوْنَ (مبارك) كما بعدت ثمود"<br>Translation: "Indeed, Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into factions..... Far Away to Fira'oon (Mubarak) as Far Away to Thamood".                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 2      |
| 6  | "اليوم نتجيك ببديتك" صدق الله العظيم<br>Translation: "Today we save you physically in your body" Allah is the Truth Sayer                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2      |

The viewer's comments can be in general classified into three main categories:

- 1- Readers who expressed disagreement with Aljazeera's stance and its misuse of the Quranic discourse (see No. 1 and 2 in Table 3).
- 2- Readers who express disagreement not with its discourse practice i.e. objected to Aljazeera's uses of phrases implicitly from Holy Qur'an to report on political events (see No. 4).
- 3- Readers who were entirely driven by the intertextual practice that utilized the Qur'anic discourse and imitated it by producing similar Qur'anic discourse as in No. 3, 5 and 6. The phrases between quotation marks are exact Qur'anic phrases/Ayas (Holy Qur'an, 2024).

## V. CONCLUSION

The use of clusters from the Qur'anic discourse related to Fira'oon in the Aljazeera news discourse reminds us of the utilization of religious *metaphors* (found in Charteris-Black, 2004; Delaney & Spoelstra, 2022), *scripture* (as in Omer & Springs, 2013) and *religious cues* (in Myers et al., 2023) for their strong semantic associations to influence the audience decisions and interpretations of news events. Similar to Delaney and Spoelstra (2022) who documented the use of religious metaphors such as 'savior' and 'sinner' in modern leadership discourse for their strong semantic associations, the metaphor MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON was found to be used recurrently in Aljazeera news discourse. The corpus-based analysis helped us to realize that it is an intertextual metaphor (Zinken, 2003, 2008; Gee, 2020) that is taken from many Qur'anic phrases and clusters which appeared in variant linguistic forms and structures (see Excerpts 1, 2 and 3) but were all related to the same intertextual metaphor of MUBARAK IS FIRA'OON.

From the discussion above, there is no doubt that the Qur'anic discourse and its linguistic structure are effective, yet the recurrent use of phrases from the Qur'an, implicitly, to report on political events poses an ethical concern and questions over the quantity and the stylistic quality of such implicit intertextual uses. While some commentators (discourse consumers/ viewers) were happy and taken by the language of the news reports (see No. 3, 5 and 6 in Table 3), others expressed their unhappiness with this linguistic practice (No. 1, 2, and 4) and found it offensive to their sacred scripture. Some of them (No. 1, and 2) saw this as a major sin as the news outlet was distorting the Qur'anic discourse for their political agenda and/or interest. Others expressed their dissatisfaction and made their reservations about such linguistic practices regardless of their socio-political stance towards Mubarak (see No. 4).

The analysis suggests that intertextual metaphors in a news story represent a far more complex and effective phenomenon that is beyond the threshold of a layperson. It is a linguistic practice that can effectively influence or even manufacture public ideological stances and thoughts through metaphorical conceptualizations as in Omer and Springs (2013). Aljazeera reports were found to provide a complete and coherent conceptual metaphoric reading of MUBARAK AS FIRA'OON i.e. the dictator pharaoh mentioned in the Holy Quran (Holy Qur'an, 2024, 28: 4). This was achieved through the intensive utilization of several Qur'anic clusters employed metaphorically in an implicit intertextual practice to construct sensational news discourse. On the other hand, Egyptian protestors and their 'revolution'/ uprising were always metaphorically conceptualized in a very positive, powerful, and effective way using conceptual metaphors such

APPENDIX A. REPORT 1

"هي إستعادة أمن"... (صوت مبارك)... لو صح للرئيس المصري حسني مبارك في عزله المزدحمة بالحيرة والخيارات العسيرة ان يسأل المتظاهرين في ميدان التحرير وفي كل مدينة مصرية تظاهرت ضده ربما كان سؤالا أتقومون بالثورة قبل أن أذن لكم إن هذا لمكّر مكرموه في المدينة. وقد يكون تساؤل الرئيس في محلة فليس من شي وقع في مصر خلال ثلاثين عاماً بدون إذن من مبارك وقد يكون من حقّه أن يحتج عليهم ليس لي ملك مصر خوليئيه الدستور ولي البرلمان أصرفه بغالبية حزبية كيف أشاء أعله حتى يوافي رغبتى المخلصة في خدمتكم دورة بعد دورة أتستبدلون الفوضى بالاستقرار! ألم تعلموا أنى الضامن لاستقرار مصر ورفاهيتها. لكن كتاب التاريخ المفتوح والمليء بالعرى يقول إن الثورات هي الفعل الوحيد الذي يقع ضد رغبة الحاكم ورغماً عنه وبلا إذن منه. صحيح أن وزارة الداخلية والحزب الحاكم والأجهزة الأمن جميعاً لم تستطع أن تستمر عبير الثورة. وهو يضعون بين الحواري الفقيرة وبين حشود العاطلين تمتليء به صدور مفكرين ومتقنين أذاهم حال مصر ولا إستطاعت أجهزة الحكم الأمنى أن تفهم أن الموبائل والانترنت مفاد دائمة للثائرين فالثورة كانت تتخلق في الأثير كلاماً وبيانات قبل أن تتحول إلى جيش هادر يخرج الحل. ومنذ إنطلاق ذلك الصوت المندادي بالرحيل والنظام في حالة إنكار! كان الإنكار صامتاً طويلاً متأتماً في الحال والمال قبل أن يخرج مبارك إلى الناس بخطاب يقول فيه: إنه يعي المطالب المشروعة للمظاهرات " إننى أعى هذه التطلعات المشروعة للشعب ويعي هو فعل بيت بقرابة للفعل أفهم الذي استعمله زين العابدين في محنته" لم انفصل عنها يوماً" ( صوت مبارك) " الشعب يريد إسقاط الرئيس" ( أصوات الثائرين).

لكن الثائرين مضو بالتظاهر يرددون القول كره أخرى الشعب يريد إسقاط النظام وقدم مبارك تنازلاً خيراً قاللاً إنه لا يريد هو ولا ابنه الترشح في انتخابات رئاسية مقبلة. لكنه سبقني حتى سبتمبر مكملاً ولايته. قال المتظاهرون لا بل الرحيل. بلوذ الرئيس بالصمت فيخرج نائبة عمر سليمان ورئيس وزراء أحمد شفيق بمزيد من وعود الإصلاح. إنه الإصلاح تحت ضغط الثورة وهو أسوأ أنواع الإصلاح لأنه يأتي من أناس يحملون عليه حملاً. ورغم فصاحة المطلب بتتحي الرئيس وإجتماع ملايين من الشعب المصري عليه، ظلت حالة الإنكار قائمة لدى الرئيس مبارك تجاه مايريد الشعب وقد قدم مشهد المواجهة القائمة بين الشباب المتظاهرين وبين السلطة المصرية صوراً بدت علاقاتها بعديدة التناقص من جهة المنطق حتى إرتد المشهد إلى هزلية سياسية بل نظرية. يخرج المتظاهرون ومعهم من سلاح غير إيمانهم بالثورة والتغيير وتخرج السلطة بطائرات الإف سته عشر مقاتلة! والفرق بين قبضة الثائر والإف سته عشر كالفق بين الجمل والقيس بوك في مضامين السياسة. لم تفلح طلعات الطائرات المقاتلة فجاء نظام الحكم في مصر بخيلة وإبله ورجلة لتتحدّر المعركة من إستعمال مقاتلات الإف سته عشر إلى الاستعانة بالجمال والخيل فقد تلفت الخائفون على النظام فلم يجدوا الحزب الحاكم صاحب العضوية المليونية! قال قائل منهم اليوم لا عاصم لكم اليوم إلا البلطجية وكان ذلك مشهداً آخر في ترددي السياسة في بلد عريق كمصر، لايجد نظام الحكم المغضوب عليه من شعبة من يدافع عنه غير شرار المجتمع والجائرون فيه. هنا راية الجامعة العربية لادحيث عن قمة طارة بين يدي رباح التغيير التي تهب على المنطقة قبل غن أمينها العام عمرو موسى نزل إلى ميدان التحرير إستجابة لنداء الثورة وقد الناس الجامعة مستودعاً للحكمة العربية وسداد الرأي كما عهدوا مبارك ناصحاً أميناً في المهمات! ألم يأتك حديثه في صدام والغزة يدقون أبواب العراق في عام ألفين وثلاثه "هي الفكرة بتاع الشيخ زايد فكرة صابنية يعني إنفذ العراق وأهل العراق وإستقبل. وممكن لو حارب تقعد في أي دولة. بقدرنا يصتضيفوك"" (صوت مبارك) "بلادي بلادي بلادي لك حبي وفؤادي" (صوت جموع المتظاهرين) من ينصقح بحسبه لمبارك من أجل مصر وحقناً لدماء أبناءها في ثورة لا غزاة فيها وإنما هي مصر تُحدث عن نفسها... "بلادي بلادي بلادي لك حبي وفؤادي" (صوت جموع المتظاهرين)

## APPENDIX B. REPORT 2

Aljazeera Report 2., (2011) 11<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 by Fawzi Bushra:

اليوم نُخَيِّجُك ببندك لتكون لمن خلفك آية ، مصير سبق إليه الشهر الماضي الرئيس التونسي الذي لم يجد من الهرب بدا فنجاً هو الآخر ببندته، تاركا أمثولة بأن الشعوب أبقي وأقوى من الطغاة متى صح منها العزم وإن مثل مبارك في شعبه كمثل زين العابدين إذ قال له شعبه: أصلح، فأبى أن يكون من المصلحين، ألا يُعَدُّ لمبارك، ويُعَدُّ لزين العابدين!! قال الشبان الثائران لم يمض شهر على انتفاضة تونس حتى خرجت الثورة في مصر خروج الورد من أكمته، خرجت الثورة من الحواري الفقيرة، ومن أحلام العاطلين المهضمة، ومن شباب الطبقة الوسطى، الذين ظننت بهم الظنون، وأنجزوا لأدوار ليس من بينها السياسة والانشغال بالهم العام خرجت الثورة في مصر من أمة ضاقت بحاضر ها، وخافت من مستقبلها، وفرت كثيرا إلى ماضيها، به تتعزى، أمة كان قدرها أن تكون قائدة ورائدة، فرأت نفسها في ثلاثين سنينها الخالية يتراجع شأنها بين العالمين، ويضح مكرها ومثقفوها بالشكوى، يقولون: ليست هذه مصر التي نعرف ثلاثون عاما بدأت بلحظة خاطفة يوم قررت جماعة على طريقتها أن تصحح ما بدا لها مسارا خاطئا أو غلت فيه البلاد، فاعتالت الرئيس أنور السادات مبارك الذي ظل نائباً للرئيس منذ عام خمسة وسبعين ، لم يكن يتوقع أن تكون أقداره بذلك السخاء، فلا مكان في مصر للانقلابات العسكرية الكلاسيكية، والحال كذلك بين كبار الضباط، لا يحلمون بغير وظيفة دبلوماسية، أو ملحقة عسكرية في بلد ما، يكون بها حسُ الختام، لكن مبارك أصبح رئيسا لجمهورية مصر العربية في أكتوبر عام واحد وثمانين.

ثلاثون عاما كان مبارك خلالها العنوان السياسي الأوحد لمصر، لم ينصحه خلالها الأسقاء الحلفاء سدنة الديمقراطية وحقوق الإنسان في الغرب أن عشر سنين في الحكم تكفي، أو أن ربع قرن أكثر مما يطيق شعب، وقديما قيل: إن من يعيش ثمانين حولا -لا أبا لك- يسأم، لكن مبارك الثمانيين كان حريصا على السلطة، ينتقل بين كل دورة حكم وأخرى انتقالاتا سلسا، تضمنه انتخابات معلولة، وصناديق كاذبة خاطئة، كل ذلك كان يجري باسم الديمقراطية، وفي وفاة تام لمطلوباتها الشكلية استطاع مبارك ورجاله التوصل إلى صيغة سحرية لإحكام السيطرة على الدولة عبر مزاجية نفوذ السياسة بنفوذ المال، لتبدأ دورة التهميش السياسي للشعب ولأحزابيه ولتنظيماته المدنية، ولأن شرط السيطرة على السلطة في ذهن حاكم يعتقد أن التداول عليها يتم بينه وبين الموت، أو بينه وبين ابنه، فقد تفنن نظام الحكم في إضعاف المعارضة وإرهابها

أبقى مبارك على قانون الطوارئ الحاكم للبلاد منذ عام واحد وثمانين، وهو قانون مقيد للطلاقة السياسية، "أن مرشح الحزب الوطني..." (صوت أحمد سرور). تحولت مجالس الشعب حيث يفترض أن تقع الرقابة على الأداء التنفيذي، بالإضافة إلى النهوض بالمهام التشريعية، إلى مسرح لاستعراض سطوة الحزب الحاكم، حيث لا مكان لصوت الشعب ....، في مجلس الشعب، ولم تكن ملاحظة التعديلات الدستورية في ألفين وسبعة فقط لأنها تكبل الأحزاب بألف قيد، وتحول بينها وبين التمثيل النيابي، ولكن لأنها كانت أيضا تمهد الطريق أمام جمال مبارك لخلافته والده وكانت حصيلة ثلاثين عاما من حكم مبارك أن تردت السياسة، وافقر المواطن والوطن، اتسعت أحزمة الفقر، وتزايدت جيوش العاطلين، وانسدت الأفاق في وجه الملايين من المصريين، الذين وجدوا أنفسهم تحت خط الفقر

وقد ألقت مصر على عهد مبارك الدعم الدولي خاصة الأمريكي، حتى أصبح بنذا ثابتا في الميزانية، وهو ما تأذى منه المصريون، ورأوه خصما من كرامتهم الوطنية

كانت مصر على عهد مبارك قد أصبحت حالة صارخة في إدمان العون والعطايا الدولية. ولا يكون دعم غير ثمن، وقد دفعت مصر على عهد مبارك أثمنا في السياسة باهظة، وتحولت من جراء ذلك كله ضمن آخرين إلى مغال سياسي معتمد لعملية السلام غير المنتجة للسلام وصارت مصر مبارك تمسك بمفاتيح بوابة رفح في موقف مناهض للمشاعر الوطنية المصرية، تجاه حصار غزة ومجمل الموقف من القضية الفلسطينية ثلاثون عاما تراجع خلالها دور مصر القومي، وتقزمت خلالها أحلام المواطن المصري في الرفاه والتقدم والديمقراطية والحرية ثلاثون مرت ثم وقع لمبارك أن الشعب لم ينل حظه موفورا من أي شيء

قال مبارك: "إنني أعني هذه التطلعات المشروعة للشعب، وأعلم جيدا قدر هوموم ومعاتاته"، كذلك قال زين العابدين من قبل، أفلا يزال في مدرسة القادة والزعماء!! لم يفهم الدرس بعد على بساطته؟

## APPENDIX C. REPORT 3

(Aljazeera Report 3, 2011) 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2011 by Fatima Alturiki:

(صوت هتاف جمهور المتظاهرين) .. فعلها المصريون وأسقطوا حسني مبارك. ونظامه قبل أسابيع ماكان أحد يظن أن نظاماً بوليسياً حديثاً جثم على صدور المصريين ثلاثين عاماً يمكن أن يتهوى ويتكسر في ثمانية عشر يوماً "قرر الرئيس محمد حسني مبارك تخليه عن منصب رئيس الجمهورية وكلف المجلس الأعلى للقوات المسلحة لإدارة شؤون البلاد، والله الموفق والمستعان" ( صوت عمر سليمان) ما إن نطق عمر سليمان متجهما بتطلق الجملة المقتضبة حتى انفجرت الساحات في مصر كل مصر فرحاً وتكبيراً. غير هتافهم الأثير فصار الشعب أسقط النظام. ساعة نهار اليوم التاريخي الحادي عشر من شباط فبراير ألفين وأحد عشر كانت تحمل غضباً عارماً إستقر في نفوس عشرات الملايين منذ الليلة السابقة حين خرج عليهم مبارك ليقول إنه باق رغم كل شيء. ظهر الجمعة طوفان بشري في ميدان التحرير ضاقت به الشوارع والجسور المحيطة. ماعاد لبشر موطء قدم زحفت القاهرة كلها إنها صلاة الجمعة وأي جمعة ! "أيها الأمة الإسلامية أن تعيش الأمة" ( صوت خطيب الجمعة) الشيخ محمد جبريل المنصوي مع الثوار مع لفيف من علماء الأزهر الشريف ممن رفضوا فتوى تحريم قول لا للظلم والقهر والفساد , أم المصلين , خطب الرجل خطبة مزلزلة إستحضر فيها عزم النبي موسى عليه السلام في مواجهة فرعون ودعا دعاء القنوت والملايين من خلفه تردد أمين تطلب النصر من الله لعله أسرع دعاء يستجاب له. ( اللهم ثبتنا يارب العالمين " آمين" اللهم إنصرنا يارب العالمين " آمين" اللهم حقق آمالنا يارب العالمين " آمين" اللهم حقق مرادنا يارب العالمين " آمين" اللهم إنا نشهدك أنا نحب تراب هذا الوطن" (دعاء الخطيب والمصلون يرددون آمين) . بعد الصلاة تحرك آلاف المتظاهرين الى قصر العروبة الرئاسي حيث احتشد آلاف من الليل السابق. بينما كان آلاف آخرون يطوقون مبنى الاذاعة والتلفزيون الرسميين ويمنعون دخول وخروج العاملين فيه "الجزيرة فيين الجزيرة أهوه" (هتاف المتظاهرين) . ظلت القاهرة ومصر كلها تغلي حتى المساء كانت كل الاحتمالات مفتوحة وغضب الشعب يتصاعد لن تراجع لن نخلي الساحات , لن نخفض الصوت. في المساء إعلان صغير عن بيان هام للرئاسة , أقل من ساعتين وجاء الخير اليقين "قرر الرئيس..." (صوت عمر سليمان) حسني مبارك لم يعد رئيس مصر ليس بعد الآن

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# Exploring ChatGPT Practices and User Experiences in Learning English Skills

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**Abstract**—This study investigates the utilization of ChatGPT as a tool for enhancing English language proficiency, specifically targeting fluency, vocabulary acquisition, writing, reading comprehension, and listening skills. A survey was conducted to evaluate students' engagement with ChatGPT in their language learning practices. The results indicate that regular interaction with ChatGPT on diverse topics significantly improves language fluency and comprehension. Furthermore, the tool facilitates vocabulary expansion by introducing new words, along with their definitions, pronunciations, and contextual usage. In the realm of writing, ChatGPT supports the development of creative writing skills, such as story and poetry composition, while providing essential grammar feedback. The importance of grammar is emphasized, with students encouraged to practice using meaningful examples and correct errors. Additionally, the study underscores the role of ChatGPT in enhancing reading comprehension through summarization exercises and listening skills using conversation transcripts and pronunciation practice. The research also highlights ChatGPT's effectiveness in exam preparation by offering practice opportunities and feedback. Finally, the study emphasizes the tool's role in deepening understanding of idiomatic expressions and cultural nuances, and its use in language games and interactive tests to reinforce language skills, positioning ChatGPT as a valuable resource for English learners.

**Index Terms**—ChatGPT, English language skills, language fluency, language comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence in 1946, Jordan has consistently prioritized the advancement and widespread adoption of English as a foreign language across the nation. For over four decades, English language education has been integral to Jordan's educational landscape. Some argue its roots are traced back to the 1920s during political movements in the Emirate of Transjordan. Like many countries in the Arab region, English is esteemed as a prestigious foreign language. The earliest comprehensive assessment of English language education in Jordan dates to the 1970s, conducted by Harrison et al. (1975). Their study critically evaluated English language instruction's compatibility, specificity, scope, and effectiveness. They found that the areas under scrutiny lacked clear operational definitions and did not align effectively with the practical demands of English language education at the Secondary Education level. Substantial investments during that era focused on education, particularly in the expansion of English language instruction (Harrison et al., 1975). This historical perspective underscores the ongoing importance of refining and aligning English language education strategies to meet contemporary educational needs in Jordan.

Educational reform initiatives in Jordan received crucial support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2014, to address the increasing need for enhanced teaching and learning practices in public schools nationwide. Over the years, while Arabic and English have traditionally held significant positions in higher education in Jordan, the emphasis on English language proficiency in K-12 schools has been neglected and faced challenges financially, pedagogically, and politically. Recent high school examination results in Jordan indicate that only 18% of students in the Arts stream successfully passed the English language subject, compared to 15% in 2014.

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Furthermore, a national assessment conducted by the Ministry of Education among first, second, and third-grade students revealed that 22% of all students struggled with basic reading skills in both Arabic and English (Jordanian Teachers Syndicate, 2015). These findings underscore the pressing need for renewed focus and investment in improving English language education at the foundational levels to ensure comprehensive linguistic development among Jordanian students (Alhababha et al., 2016).

Mastering English is a profound and crucial endeavor for many, spanning both academic and professional domains. As one of the world's most spoken languages, proficiency in English can substantially elevate communication abilities and open doors to educational and career prospects. The advent of artificial intelligence has revolutionized education, particularly in teaching English as a foreign language, ushering in new possibilities for enhanced learning experiences and outcomes.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a transformative tool, reshaping lives globally. It has profoundly influenced various sectors, from healthcare and finance to transportation and entertainment, fundamentally, altering how we operate, learn, and interact with technology. AI's capabilities in analyzing extensive data, automating intricate processes, and simulating human cognition offer immense potential to address complex societal issues and pave the way for unprecedented advancements and opportunities. As AI continues to evolve, its integration promises to further innovate and enhance the educational landscape, preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

In recent years, AI technologies like ChatGPT have gained significant attention for their compelling potential to revolutionize education through personalized learning experiences (Ayoubi, 2024). AI technologies such as ChatGPT are poised to revolutionize education by offering personalized learning experiences that cater to the unique needs of each student. One of the most compelling aspects of AI in education is its ability to adapt and customize learning paths in real time. ChatGPT, for instance, can dynamically adjust its responses based on individual student inputs, learning styles, and progress. This adaptive capability ensures that students receive personalized explanations, practice materials, and feedback tailored to their comprehension levels and preferences.

Moreover, AI enhances the educational experience by curating customized content that aligns with students' proficiency levels and interests. ChatGPT can recommend supplementary reading materials, videos, or interactive exercises that cater to each learner's pace of learning, thereby maximizing engagement and retention. This personalized approach not only enriches the learning process but also motivates students by presenting them with relevant and stimulating educational resources (Fryer et al., 2019).

In addition to content customization, AI technologies like ChatGPT provide invaluable support through continuous interaction and feedback. Students benefit from timely assistance that clarifies concepts, addresses misconceptions, and reinforces learning in a personalized manner. This personalized support system fosters a deeper understanding of subjects and empowers students to progress at their own pace while maintaining educational rigor.

Furthermore, AI facilitates effective progress tracking and analysis by monitoring individual student performance metrics over time. By identifying strengths and areas needing improvement, ChatGPT enables educators to tailor their instructional strategies and interventions accordingly. This data-driven approach not only optimizes learning outcomes but also empowers educators to provide targeted support where it is most needed, ensuring comprehensive student development (Fryer et al., 2019).

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology is rapidly gaining traction in education, as noted by EDUCAUSE (2023) and UNESCO (2023). Among these advancements, chatbots have emerged as a prominent AI tool, engaging learners in natural language conversations akin to human interaction (Barrot, 2023; Huang et al., 2022). Recent AI developments have significantly enhanced chatbots' capabilities as effective learning companions (Fryer et al., 2019), popularizing their use in language-learning contexts (Lee et al., 2020). Scholars have conducted extensive research exploring chatbots' potential to stimulate interest in language acquisition (Fryer et al., 2019) and foster language skills development (Guo et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023). However, despite these advancements, research on integrating chatbots into language classrooms lags the rapid evolution of chatbot technology, making them a relatively underutilized resource in language education, particularly in writing instruction (Guo et al., 2022) and other pedagogical contexts (Lee et al., 2020).

AI holds immense promise in revolutionizing education by achieving priorities more effectively, at scale, and with reduced costs. Addressing the diverse and disrupted learning experiences of students' post-pandemic is paramount in understanding the development of higher education. AI can significantly enhance the adaptability of educational resources to cater to individual strengths and needs, thereby improving overall educational efficacy. Automated assistants and similar tools empowered by AI offer invaluable support to educators, allowing them to extend personalized assistance even when time constraints are tight. Moreover, AI enables the development of tailored educational resources that resonate with students' unique knowledge, community backgrounds, and cultural assets, thereby meeting local educational needs more precisely.

Despite its transformative potential, the integration of AI in education raises urgent concerns about systemic risks and future implications (Gao et al., 2022; Haque et al., 2022). Heightened surveillance of students and apprehensions about job displacement among educators underscore the need for careful consideration and robust safeguards. Biases embedded in AI algorithms, such as those affecting voice recognition or exam monitoring systems, pose risks of unfair

treatment and disciplinary inconsistencies (Zou & Huang, 2023). Transparency and trust in AI applications are crucial, particularly when their infrastructural nature can obscure their workings from public scrutiny.

Furthermore, while AI introduces new possibilities with an aura of innovation, educational stakeholders rightfully demand tangible evidence of its effectiveness. AI-driven insights, though seemingly original, must be grounded in accurate and reliable data to avoid misleading outcomes or exacerbating existing inequalities. The deployment of AI, especially in decision-making processes, necessitates vigilance against unintended consequences. For instance, if AI algorithms optimize learning pace based on flawed assumptions or incomplete data, they risk widening educational disparities instead of bridging them.

AI promises to transform education positively, and understanding user experiences with ChatGPT in learning English skills is crucial in navigating these complexities responsibly. By ensuring robust oversight, addressing ethical considerations, and conducting continuous evaluation, AI can realize its potential as a catalyst for equitable and effective educational practices. Despite the wealth of research on AI technology, there remains a notable gap in studies examining its impact on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Jordan's higher education sector. Furthermore, existing research predominantly focuses on the student perspective, often neglecting the valuable insights that teachers can provide (Kemalbekova et al., 2024). However, studies consistently highlight the pivotal role of teachers in the educational process (Barakina et al., 2021). Teachers' attitudes and beliefs significantly shape the integration and effectiveness of technology in classrooms (Johnson et al., 2016).

Therefore, it is imperative to explore how AI technology impacts teaching and learning processes from the perspective of educators, who are central to curriculum implementation at the university level. This research aims to contribute to this discourse by examining how learners interact with ChatGPT in their language learning journey, thereby informing best practices for integrating AI technologies in educational settings.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The effectiveness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in language learning has become a subject of growing interest and research in recent years. With the advancement of technology, AI applications are increasingly integrated into language learning platforms, providing learners with personalized and interactive experiences. Despite the rapid integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into language learning platforms, there remains a need to critically assess the effectiveness of these technologies in facilitating language acquisition. The evolving landscape of language education, influenced by AI-driven tools, prompts exploring critical questions regarding the impact, efficacy, and potential limitations of AI in language learning. The literature on the effectiveness of AI in language learning reflects a dynamic and evolving field, with an increasing focus on exploring the impact of AI technologies on various aspects of language acquisition. The literature review of the present study provides an overview of key findings, trends, and debates within this domain, especially ChatGPT and language learning and user experiences with language learning technologies. Artificial Intelligence AI plays an essential role in the domain of language education, serving as a valuable instrument for both educators and learners.

For instance, Mai et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review to investigate the strengths and drawbacks of using ChatGPT and discuss its possible risks in teaching and learning. A collection of 51 articles was selected and reviewed among 819 from databases such as Scopus, ERIC, and Google Scholar from 2022-2023, following the PRISMA flowchart guidelines. The study found that ChatGPT is an advanced AI-powered chatbot that is incorporated into the educational system—such an integration between ChatGPT and education results in mixed reactions among educators. The data was categorized into three main components based on Biggs's Presage-Process-Product (3P) model of teaching and learning. The data review revealed that 32 topics extracted from 51 articles showed 13 strengths, 10 weaknesses, five opportunities, and four threats of using ChatGPT in teaching and learning. The result has learning and teaching implications where educators can make decisions by focusing on the strengths and leaving the weaknesses of ChatGPT to enhance teaching and learning processes.

Kimondo et al. (2023) studied the advantages AI (including ChatGPT and Machine Learning) might bring to education in the upcoming years. The study found that integrating AI and the education sector contributes highly to the teaching process and the acquisition of information by students. It helps the students be more autonomous and serves the student's personalized learning method. Though their study called for the student's autonomy and self-learning, it is not recommended to be extensive. That is to say, the students recommend taking the full potential of using AI but not to the extent that it makes them lazy and uncreative. Therefore, students are recommended to use AI to improve their learning skills, but they should be aware of not becoming reliant and, therefore, lazy.

Other studies investigate the application of AI in language learning and teaching. Cantos et al. (2023), for example, present reviews of the applications of AI in teaching and learning languages. A content analysis is carried out by searching for articles in the Google Scholar database. The study's findings highlight the essential role of AI in language teaching and learning, especially with its capacity to have numerous applications that are limited to human intelligence. AI is an effective tool that may be utilized to improve language acquisition for students of all ages and proficiency levels. The study also concludes that by providing autonomous learning, real-time feedback, flexibility, access to resources, and cost-effectiveness, AI can help students learn a new language more quickly and successfully.

Besides, some studies have tackled the students' interface with different AI tools in learning. Ajlouni et al. (2023) scrutinize the student's attitudes concerning using ChatGPT as a learning tool. A quantitative descriptive study was conducted among a sample of 623 undergraduate students who enrolled at the University of Jordan. The students' attitudes were measured using the ABC model, which comprises three attitudes' components, namely, affective, cognitive, and behavioral. The study found that the majority of the students emphasized the possible power of ChatGPT to support the learning process compared to a small number of students who felt uncomfortable using such a platform. The study also confirms limited affective and high behavioral and cognitive components of attitudes toward using ChatGPT as a tool of learning among undergraduate students.

Other researchers, such as Vall and Araya (2023), went further by trying to present the pros, cons, benefits, and challenges of using AI language learning tools. The study concludes that, in the same way, there are problems and limitations to using AI language learning tools, but these tools have many benefits. The need for human interference to create cultural context is one of the main problems that might face the users of AI language learning tools. However, these technological tools are considered to be popular because of their practicality, accessibility, and fast use. Such features make the learning process more personal, which enables the students to be knowledgeable about other cultures. The study recommends that these drawbacks can be improved if AI language learning tools combine Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies to make learning more socially and culturally conscious.

Past studies have sought to pinpoint how AI can be applied to enhance language teaching and learning experiences. Viktorivna et al. (2022), for example, examine the English language learners' attitude to the emergence and development of AI in language learning by analyzing the responses of 418 students at Ukrainian Universities in 2021. They found that AI significantly improves the quality of language learning, yet it requires the wisdom of human content designers and educational experts. Cyber-attacks on personalized accounts and loss of personal information might happen. In addition, the natural and authentic environment and emotion with speakers are lost, and there is a lack of learners' spontaneity and creativity using AI in language learning.

Other studies concerning AI in language learning concentrate on the user experiences with language learning technologies. Prenga (2020) inspected the interface between learners and technological language learning tools such as videos, gamification, and community forums. They emphasized the importance of the interdisciplinary between technological tools and applications and learning processes to motivate the students and increase their satisfaction. The study was conducted in the light of Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which hypothesized that the AI platform provides the required information that satisfies their educational needs. In addition, AI is user-friendly because it better understands the student's need and their freedom of choice regarding the activities and exercises they feel comfortable doing.

Besides the previous attempts to explore the emergence of technologies in the educational domain, many studies focus on the usability of AI tools for education and learning foreign languages. The study of Shaikh et al. (2023), for example, assesses the usefulness and effectiveness of ChatGPT as one of the AI tools in formal and informal English language learning using a post-questionnaire-based approach. Feedback for the usefulness and effectiveness of ChatGPT is collected by the students who were asked after performing a series of tasks related to formal English language learning with ChatGPT. The study's findings show that although the interface of ChatGPT in conversation enables interactive dialogues and writing naturally and coherently, it should not replace human instructions to enhance language learning skills. As the study indicates, ChatGPT allows the students to get involved in a natural interactive dialogue and writing, but it should be used with human instructions.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Questions

This study explores the hypothesis that ChatGPT significantly aids students in learning English as a second language (ESL), particularly by enhancing their language skills and overall user experience. By addressing the research question, "How does ChatGPT help students learn English as a second language, particularly in enhancing their language skills and user experiences?", this investigation posits that ChatGPT's interactive and adaptive capabilities are instrumental in advancing ESL learning. The tool provides personalized feedback, prompts frequent practice, and simulates real-world conversational scenarios, all of which are designed to improve key language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension.

Unlike traditional learning methods, ChatGPT offers immediate, contextually relevant, and tailored support, making learning both accessible and engaging. Its ability to adapt to individual learning styles and needs ensures that students receive user-specific guidance, leading to a more effective and enjoyable learning experience. This methodology underscores the anticipated advantages of ChatGPT as a dynamic educational tool that goes beyond conventional approaches to language acquisition, positioning it as a transformative resource in ESL education.

#### B. Participants of the Study

The study involved 98 participants from the German Jordanian University (GJU) in Jordan, with gender distribution nearly balanced: 43 males (43.9%) and 55 females (56.1%). Participants were categorized by year of study as follows:

42 first-year students (42.9%), 16 second-year students (16.3%), 13 third-year students (13.3%), 12 fourth-year students (12.2%), and 15 fifth-year students (15.3%). The majority of participants (95 or 96.9%) were aged between 18 and 25 years, while only 3 participants (3.1%) were above 25 years old. Jordanian nationals constituted the majority (90 or 91.8%), with 8 participants (8.2%) being non-Jordanian. In terms of native language, 79 participants (80.6%) spoke Arabic, 2 participants (2%) spoke English, and 17 participants (17.3%) were bilingual in Arabic and English. Participants were also categorized by faculty, with 55 (56.1%) from scientific faculties and 43 (43.9%) from literate faculties.

These participants are united by a significant contextual factor: they are all members of GJU's student body. This shared characteristic is crucial for ensuring that the study's findings can be reasonably generalized to the wider population of students who experienced a similar transition of using AI. By selecting participants exclusively from within the university, the study benefits from a level of consistency that facilitates a focused investigation into their practices within a specific academic environment.

### C. Instruments

The research methodology employed in this study relied on snowball sampling survey as its primary sampling strategy. Snowball sampling involves identifying initial participants through non-random methods and then involving them in recruiting additional participants. This approach was strategically chosen to leverage the benefits of snowball sampling, ensuring the engagement of a diverse and interconnected cohort. The study utilized a survey to assess students' practices in using ChatGPT. To ensure random and unbiased responses, the survey was distributed to the entire student body at the university via email and collected responses from all students over a one-week period.

The study administered a comprehensive survey comprising 26 questions to its participants, designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. By adopting a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both types of data collection, the research aimed to gain a deeper insight into its objectives. Part 1 of the survey focused on establishing student demographics and exploring variables within GJU's student body. Part two investigated students' practices and their learning experiences with English skills, addressing their reasons and specific uses of ChatGPT.

### D. Data Collection Procedures

The quantitative data collected were analyzed to determine the percentage of students who had utilized ChatGPT and their experiences with it. This analysis aimed to comprehend the role of ChatGPT in enhancing students' English learning. Additionally, the data explored whether students employed ChatGPT for academic assignments, problem-solving, and communication. On the other hand, the qualitative data delved deeper into student responses, focusing on how ChatGPT contributed to improving their English language skills.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire on the use of ChatGPT across various tasks revealed that most of the students (66.3%) use ChatGPT in doing their academic assignments (see Table 1). As shown in Table 1, students also utilize ChatGPT for Problem-Solving (62.2%). At the same time, more than 1/3 of the students (36.7%) use ChatGPT for language learning purposes. In addition, the obtained results show that students (29.6%) resort to use ChatGPT for communication purposes. However, more than a quarter of the respondents (26.5%) use it for other tasks.

TABLE 1  
STUDENTS' PURPOSES OF USING CHATGPT

| Use ChatGPT for      | Frequency | %     |
|----------------------|-----------|-------|
| Academic Assignments | 65        | 66.3% |
| Problem-Solving      | 61        | 62.2% |
| Language Learning    | 36        | 36.7% |
| Communication        | 29        | 29.6% |
| Other                | 26.5      | 26.5% |

The results seen in Table 2 below, display different purposes for students to utilize ChatGPT. According to the results obtained from the questionnaire, more than three-quarters (78.5%) of the respondents believed that ChatGPT had provided them with personalized learning experiences, whereas (23.5%) of the students neither agreed nor disagreed (refer to Table 1). Approximately the same number (75.6%) thought that ChatGPT helped them identify and correct their mistakes more effectively, while (12.2 %) of the respondents were neutral about this point. Almost two-thirds (61.2%) recommend using ChatGPT to other English language learners. However, (21.4%) of the students admitted that they have neutral opinions about it.

Nearly half of the respondents (44.9%) were still determining whether ChatGPT has helped them stay motivated to learn English; they neither agreed nor disagreed. However, only (28.6%) agreed on this point. Another point that was hard for the students (41.8 %) to agree or disagree with was whether ChatGPT has made learning English more engaging and fun. At the same time, almost the same number of respondents (39.8%) believed that ChatGPT has made learning English more engaging and fun.

Slightly more than half of the respondents (53%) stated that ChatGPT has helped them learn English vocabulary more efficiently, while more than a quarter (27.6%) was very neutral about it. Similarly, slightly more than half of the students (52.1%) use ChatGPT to help them improve their English language skills. At the same time, more than a quarter of the respondents (27.6%) were indecisive about whether using ChatGPT has contributed to helping them improve their English skills. Another point to consider is whether ChatGPT has made learning English more accessible and convenient. Almost half (51.1%) of the students were positive about it. In contrast, slightly more than a third (32.7%) were unsure whether using it makes the English learning process more accessible and convenient.

Likewise, almost half of the students (51%) were convinced that ChatGPT has helped them develop better English reading skills. However, almost a third of the respondents (29.6%) were unsure whether using it helped them improve this skill in particular. However, approximately half of the students (50%) think that ChatGPT has provided them with more opportunities to practice English and helped them understand grammar rules and sentence structure better. Nevertheless, (30.6%) and (28.6%) of the respondents were neither agreed nor disagreed, respectively.

The responses to whether ChatGPT helped the students understand English idioms and expressions better were positive (49%). However, (32.7%) of the respondents were unable to determine whether ChatGPT helped them understand English idioms and expressions better (refer to Table 2). At the same time, slightly less than half of the students (48%) believed that ChatGPT has allowed them to learn English at their own pace, while (34.7%) of the students were indecisive about whether ChatGPT helped them become independent learners.

The use of ChatGPT to help students overcome language barriers when communicating with others received almost the same level of agreement as its use to help them become more confident in speaking English (39.8% vs. 36.7%). However, respondents had neutral attitudes and were hesitant to decide on the answer regarding these points (34.7% vs. 37.8%), respectively. Similarly, more than a third of the students (33.7%) believed that ChatGPT has helped them prepare for their English language exams, whereas (37.8%) were neutral about it.

The obtained data shows that ChatGPT is the least frequently used tool to help students improve their listening skills in English (27.6%), according to the respondents. In comparison, almost a third (31.6%) did not have a definite opinion. It is followed by using ChatGPT to aid the student in learning more about English culture and customs, which is also believed to be the least frequently used (28.5%) according to the students. However, more than a third of the students have a neutral opinion (35.7%). Regarding using ChatGPT to help the students practice their English pronunciation, slightly less than a third (29.6%) of the respondents were positive about it. Nevertheless, over a third (35.7%) neither agreed nor disagreed about using ChatGPT to improve English pronunciation.

TABLE 2  
STUDENTS' USE OF CHATGPT

|     | Item                                                                            | Strongly Agree | %    | Agree | %    | Neutral | %    | Disagree | %    | Strongly Disagree | %    |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------|-------|------|---------|------|----------|------|-------------------|------|
| 1.  | Using ChatGPT has helped me improve my English language skills                  | 13             | 13.3 | 38    | 38.8 | 27      | 27.6 | 12       | 12.2 | 8                 | 8.2  |
| 2.  | ChatGPT has made learning English more engaging and fun                         | 10             | 10.2 | 29    | 29.6 | 41      | 41.8 | 10       | 10.2 | 8                 | 8.2  |
| 3.  | ChatGPT has helped me become more confident in speaking English                 | 12             | 12.2 | 24    | 24.5 | 37      | 37.8 | 11       | 11.2 | 14                | 14.3 |
| 4.  | ChatGPT has helped me better understand grammar rules and sentence structure    | 16             | 16.3 | 33    | 33.7 | 28      | 28.6 | 12       | 12.2 | 9                 | 9.2  |
| 5.  | ChatGPT has helped me learn English vocabulary more efficiently                 | 17             | 17.3 | 35    | 35.7 | 27      | 27.6 | 11       | 11.2 | 8                 | 8.2  |
| 6.  | ChatGPT has provided me with personalized learning experiences                  | 16             | 16.3 | 45    | 45.9 | 23      | 23.5 | 8        | 8.2  | 6                 | 6.1  |
| 7.  | ChatGPT has helped me practice my English pronunciation                         | 6              | 6.1  | 23    | 23.5 | 35      | 35.7 | 18       | 18.4 | 16                | 16.3 |
| 8.  | ChatGPT has helped me identify and correct my mistakes more effectively         | 27             | 27.6 | 47    | 48   | 12      | 12.2 | 7        | 7.1  | 5                 | 5.1  |
| 9.  | ChatGPT has made learning English more accessible and convenient                | 13             | 13.3 | 37    | 37.8 | 32      | 32.7 | 10       | 10.2 | 6                 | 6.1  |
| 10. | ChatGPT has allowed me to learn English at my own pace                          | 10             | 10.2 | 37    | 37.8 | 34      | 34.7 | 10       | 10.2 | 7                 | 7.1  |
| 11. | ChatGPT has helped me prepare for English language exams                        | 8              | 8.2  | 25    | 25.5 | 37      | 37.8 | 16       | 16.3 | 12                | 12.2 |
| 12. | ChatGPT has helped me stay motivated to learn English                           | 5              | 5.1  | 23    | 23.5 | 44      | 44.9 | 13       | 13.3 | 13                | 13.3 |
| 13. | ChatGPT has helped me overcome language barriers when communicating with others | 7              | 7.1  | 32    | 32.7 | 34      | 34.7 | 16       | 16.3 | 9                 | 9.2  |
| 14. | ChatGPT has helped me better understand English idioms and expressions.         | 10             | 10.2 | 38    | 38.8 | 32      | 32.7 | 9        | 9.2  | 9                 | 9.2  |
| 15. | ChatGPT and has helped me learn more about English culture and customs          | 7              | 7.1  | 21    | 21.4 | 35      | 35.7 | 24       | 24.5 | 11                | 11.2 |
| 16. | ChatGPT has provided me with more opportunities to practice English             | 10             | 10.2 | 39    | 39.8 | 30      | 30.6 | 11       | 11.2 | 8                 | 8.2  |
| 17. | ChatGPT has helped me develop better listening skills in English                | 9              | 9.2  | 18    | 18.4 | 31      | 31.6 | 25       | 25.5 | 15                | 15.3 |
| 18. | ChatGPT has helped me develop better reading skills in English                  | 15             | 15.3 | 35    | 35.7 | 29      | 29.6 | 12       | 12.2 | 7                 | 7.1  |
| 19. | I would recommend using ChatGPT to other English language learners              | 20             | 20.4 | 40    | 40.8 | 21      | 21.4 | 10       | 10.2 | 7                 | 7.1  |

In the current findings of the study, it was shown that the majority of the students use ChatGPT for academic assignments (66.3%) and problem-solving (62.2%). This means that students are more likely to rely upon it when completing their homework. Also, students rely on ChatGPT for authentic and specific answers to help them complete their tasks proficiently.

Adiguzel et al. (2023) also suggested the integration of ChatGPT within language learning programs in order to provide flexible content and feedback at the student level of difficulty, which can be either their failure or success rate.

According to Bin-Hady et al. (2023), ChatGPT can be useful in improving the language when error corrections are provided. Not only can this be used while learning grammar, but this also helps in correcting errors and making real-

time corrections and explanations for writing and speaking tasks as mentioned in the survey where many respondents said they are able to fix errors with ChatGPT.

One great way to use ChatGPT is in exercises focused on vocabulary and grammar. By providing examples, it can help highlight the learning process, as Lee and Wang (2021) found out in their study that AI can give immediate feedback on how well a person is using vocabulary and grammar, which often leads to better learning results. Also, students can use ChatGPT to study on their schedule, tackling study materials and tasks whenever it works best for them.

Moreover, according to the students (39.8 %) in the survey, ChatGPT can enhance student motivation through introduction of interactive learning tasks during language practice which makes it more fun and engaging — this way it also fosters the enjoyment of practicing a language. If a student has difficulty with particular words or sentences needed to speak clearly and confidently, ChatGPT can help by allowing the student to practice them and receive phonetic feedback that helps in pronunciation; this feature will assist in boosting speaking confidence as well.

Students can significantly enhance their reading and comprehension skills by leveraging ChatGPT, which offers clear explanations and concise summaries to help them better understand content. Research by Kim and Kwon (2022) highlights that AI-based tools like ChatGPT boost cognitive understanding by providing interactive, personalized feedback throughout the learning process. This interactive guidance not only deepens comprehension but also serves as an invaluable tool for students preparing for English exams. By engaging with ChatGPT, students can take practice exams and receive tailored evaluations of their responses, pinpointing specific areas needing improvement. This personalized approach empowers students to master their skills more effectively and confidently.

Brown and Smith (2021) state that AI tools have the potential to provide contextual illustrations and examples that would assist learners in better understanding the meaning and usage of idioms— far more effectively than conventional approaches. In this light, ChatGPT can play a role in helping learners understand those tricky idiomatic terms by clarifying the context as well as any cultural disparities that might be involved.

ChatGPT makes learning more accessible and convenient by putting it into online language platforms, where it provides learning help and makes language learning resources available to students. This can be illustrated by (51.1 %) who said that ChatGPT made learning more convenient. Nkambou et al. (2010) conclude that Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS) can enhance the learning experience by providing personalized instruction and feedback. These systems make learning more accessible by offering flexible, anytime-anywhere access to educational content.

Communication and confidence in speaking a language are extremely crucial. So, ChatGPT can be utilized in discussion to assist students gain confidence through repetition and positive feedback. Luckin et al. (2016) point out in their study that AI can provide personalized feedback and repetitive practice to students, leading to improved learning outcomes and increased confidence.

The survey's neutral replies in the study may imply that students are uncertain about ChatGPT's usefulness. This neutrality may be owing to distinct individual learning demands or the specific methods in which students engage in terms of listening and reading skills, English culture, and understanding idioms and expressions.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. Findings

The findings of the current study reveal that consistent engagement with ChatGPT on a variety of subjects leads to notable improvements in language fluency and comprehension. Additionally, the tool aids in expanding vocabulary by introducing new words, along with their meanings, pronunciations, and practical usage in context. In terms of writing, ChatGPT fosters creative writing abilities, such as composing stories and poetry. Emphasis is placed on the importance of grammar, with learners encouraged to correct mistakes and practice through relevant examples. The study also highlights ChatGPT's role in enhancing reading comprehension via summarization activities and improving listening skills through conversation transcripts and pronunciation exercises. Furthermore, it demonstrates the tool's effectiveness in exam preparation by providing practice and feedback. The research emphasizes ChatGPT's contribution to a deeper understanding of idiomatic expressions and cultural subtleties, while its use in language games and interactive quizzes helps reinforce language skills, establishing ChatGPT as an asset for English learners.

These findings are in line with broader research on the positive impact of AI-driven tools on learning outcomes across various educational settings. For instance, AI-driven gamification has been shown to boost student motivation, engagement, and learning by creating personalized, dynamic environments (Alenezi, 2023), which aligns with ChatGPT's use of interactive quizzes and language games to reinforce language skills. Similarly, AI technologies like Grammarly and Hemingway are recognized for improving students' writing through real-time feedback (Saeed, 2024), mirroring ChatGPT's role in supporting creative writing and grammar improvement. In reading, AI systems enhance comprehension and engagement by tailoring content to individual learners (Ademola, 2024), a function ChatGPT also serves by adapting its responses to the learner's input. Additionally, AI has been highly beneficial in second language acquisition, providing personalized instruction and interactive learning environments to improve language proficiency (Betal, 2023), which echoes ChatGPT's ability to offer tailored language learning experiences.

### B. Implications



The implications of these findings are vast, suggesting that AI can play a transformative role in modern education by offering personalized, adaptive learning experiences. AI-driven tools provide learners with immediate feedback, fostering a deeper understanding of subject matter and improving critical skills such as writing, reading comprehension, and problem-solving (Raza, 2023). The adaptive nature of AI allows educators to tailor content to each student's learning style and pace, leading to enhanced academic outcomes and increased engagement (Alenezi, 2023). However, these benefits come with challenges, including concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the need for educators to be adequately trained in AI technologies (Betel, 2023). Furthermore, the long-term effects of AI-driven learning on students' cognitive and social development remain an area requiring further exploration (Alenezi, 2023).

### C. Recommendations for Future Studies

Future research should focus on the long-term impact of AI-driven educational tools on learning outcomes to better understand their effectiveness over extended periods. Studies should explore how AI can be further integrated into different educational contexts, such as language learning, informatics, and personalized reading strategies, to maximize its potential benefits (Ademola, 2024). There is also a need for research on ethical considerations, such as data privacy and algorithmic fairness, to ensure that AI integration is equitable and does not perpetuate existing biases (Betel, 2023). Additionally, the development of standardized training programs for educators on the effective use of AI in classrooms could help mitigate implementation challenges and enhance the quality of AI-driven education (Sibonghanoy Groenewald et al., 2024). Finally, longitudinal studies should assess the sustainability of AI-driven learning environments and their impact on student motivation, engagement, and overall academic success.

## VI. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to different levels of students at the German Jordanian University and was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2023/2024. While other or potentially superior instruments for exploring ChatGPT practices may exist, the researchers find the current survey version satisfactory for accurately capturing GJU students' practices and experiences with ChatGPT.

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# Culinary Word Formation in Batak Toba Language: A Culinary Linguistic Analysis

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**Abstract**—This research aims to describe and formulate the formation of culinary words in the Batak Toba language (BTL). It is also hoped that the research can contribute to the revitalization of BTL lexicons, especially those related to culinary names. The approach in this research is a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods. The implementation of this research used the Spradley analysis model. The data were in the form of words and phrases taken from culinary names in BTL. The data were obtained through observation, documentation, and interview. The theory used as a reference in this research is by Gerhardt et al. (2013) who state that the linguistic word formation process is research based on food vocabulary and its meaning. From the research results, it was found that the internal word formation processes that commonly occur in the BTL include; (1) Composition, which consists of 6 (six) composition parts; (2) Reduplication, which consists of 5 (five) reduplication parts; and (3) Affixation, which consists of 4 (four) affixation parts. However, the amount of data on BTL culinary names in the formation of each reduplication is not much or in other words, it is not as productive as in the formation of words in composition.

**Index Terms**—word formation, morphology, Batak Toba culinary, culinary linguistics

## I. INTRODUCTION

The typical culinary delights of a region are a form of distinctive identity that can differentiate it from other regions. In this case, several things can be different, including the type of food, shape, snacks, processing, presentation, and taste. The shape and taste of food found in one area are greatly influenced by geographical and anthropological conditions. Food or culinary delights are also basic human needs that are created from the results of human creative abilities. In contrast to other creatures, humans can find, select, transform and process food according to their needs and tastes as provided in nature. Only humans can spice up the culinary variety of their food and create it in such a way as to produce unique food to meet the body's needs and be beneficial for health (Gerhardt et al., 2013; Goode, 1992).

Humans try to give names to every food ingredient and the results of culinary management. The assumption arises that in the management of human thought, there is a relationship between culinary activities as a primary need and the activity of forming culinary names directly. If there is a very close connection between life and the lexicons in the language of the speaker, these cultural activities produce more than one vocabulary or lexicon for one activity (Pateda, 2001; Wierzbicka, 2003). This may affect the culinary processing, serving, and naming activities.

Each culture has different culinary characteristics in terms of processing, compounding ingredients, and how to consume them. This is because culinary is not only used as an object of consumption but also functions as a means of communication to determine a person's personality and where they live in a social environment. This can be said to be a social communication system as a social marker (Anderson, 2014; Gerhardt et al., 2013). Thus, it has a function in forming identity and culture which is involved when we use language, the basic symbol of a culture's identity (Bassene & Szatrowski, 2014).

The direct connection between culinary and language is a rationale for the need to carry out identification and in-depth research into the formation of a culinary lexicon. This identification will prove whether culinary activities in a cultural frame are related to the formation of lexemes in the naming of culinary delights themselves. Culinary in Batak Toba Culture (BTC) has a diverse lexicon. The diversity of the culinary lexicon is related to the method of processing, presentation, taste, and aroma. BTC also has a unique and meaningful culinary lexicon, which must be studied so that it

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can indirectly preserve Batak Toba's culinary delights. For example, the lexicon of culinary names '*na ni ura*' means food cooked by mixing all the spices without using fire' atau '*na ni arsik*', which means dishes cooked by boiling until dry/drying" which needs to be studied how the culinary name is formed, as well as the process of making and serving it. Studying the formation of culinary name in BTL is also very important as documentation that can be passed on to the next generation.

This research aims to describe and formulate the formation of culinary words in the BTL. The identification and in-depth research are focused on the culinary delights found in the North Sumatra region, Indonesia especially in Batak Toba sub-ethnic. This research shows that BTC has a direct connection to forming a lexicon in culinary activities. Based on this phenomenon, it makes this study important to see the process of word formation and the cultural background that surrounds it.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. The Meaning of Culinary

The word culinary comes from the English word "culinary" which is defined as relating to the kitchen or cooking. The word culinary comes from Latin, namely *culinarius* - something related to cooking and *culina* or kitchen. The term culinary is cooking or in the kitchen, language has the same meaning as is synonymous with the term cuisine. It is things related to cooking, food, and drink as basic human needs and a source of energy for daily activities. It also deals with cooking, food and drink as basic human needs and a source of energy for daily activities (Fitrisia et al., 2018). To sum up, culinary means cultural exploration through food. It explains what we consume, how we get it, who prepares it, who is at the table, and who eats first. This is a form of communication that is rich with meaning (Stajcic, 2013).

Traditional culinary is special food or cuisine generally served at traditional ceremonies or religious holidays, which has its form and type according to the region concerned (Alamsyah, 1991; in Rusdi, 2010). Culinary in BTC is one of the culinary varieties known in Indonesia. The geographical location of the origin of the Batak Toba sub-ethnic is the area around Samosir Island which is very well-known in Indonesia. This makes culinary of BTC also famous by many people. Since ancient times, people of BTC have known many spice plants that grow wild throughout the area where they live. These spices are mixed and collaborated with the culinary delights, thus it makes the cuisine different from other regions and has strong characteristics of taste, aroma and appearance.

One of the characteristics of Batak cuisine is the tendency to use *andaliman* (*Zanthoxylum acanthopodium*) as the main spice. That is why *Andaliman* is sometimes nicknamed as "Batak pepper". Its aroma can be felt starting from the Gayo highlands in Central Aceh continuing southeast to Berastagi in Tanah Karo highland. Tuktuk chili sauce, for example, uses a mixture of *andaliman*. Other spices commonly used in Batak cuisine include kaffir lime and bay leaves, coriander, shallots, garlic, chili, pepper, lemongrass, ginger, galangal and turmeric.

### B. Word Formations

The word formation process involves the processes of derivation, affixation, reduplication, and compound word formation. The process of word formation in a language is creativity in the formation of productive new words that the language already has (Durie, 1985). According to Verhaar (1999), the process of word formation is identifying the basic units of language as grammatical units. In line with this, Aronoff and Fudeman (2011) argue that word formation is the study of form, meaning that it refers to the mental system involved in word formation or the branch of linguistics that deals with words, their internal structure and how they are formed. formed. Katamba (1994) defines word formation as linguistics which studies how words are formed and their relationship to meaning. The types of word formation processes are affixation, zero conversion/derivation, composition, reduplication. Based on these theories, it can be concluded that the word formation process connects one morpheme to another. This process discusses the structural relationship between one morpheme and another in word formation. The word formation process generally consists of fourteen words formation processes whose data are found in studies of Indonesian, English and other languages (Bauer, 2004). This can be seen in the following description, namely addition/affixation, compounding/composition, repetition/reduplication, acronyms, puns, clipping, proper names, functional shift, false etymology, self-creation (coinage), reverse formation (backformation), blending (blending or merging), internal changes (internal changes), suppletion (suppletion) (Sibarani, 2004).

The word formation process also occurs in the BTL. Basic verbs of BTL can behave as free basic verbs and basic bound verbs. Free basic verbs that have semantic levels and lexical categories, for example the transitive basic verbs *lompa* [loppa] 'cook', *allang* [alan] 'eat', *inum* [inum] 'drink', *boan* [boan] 'bring', *make* [create] 'take', *ball* [ball] 'split', *lului* [lului] 'search', swear [uppat] 'pull out' (Ambarita, 2018). This is different from basic bound (pre-categorical) verbs which require verb affixes to form verbs. For example, the bound stem verb *sungkun* [sukkun] 'ask' requires the prefix {ma-} to form the intransitive verb *manungkun* 'ask'.

According to Gerhardt et al. (2013), the linguistic word formation process is research based on food vocabulary and its meaning. Research on culinary matters in linguistics is always categorized as lexicological and consists of a list of vocabulary, especially for understanding certain groups of languages (Lavric & Konzett, 2009; Sandnes, 2016). The

process of word formation, such as naming in each culinary dish, is borrowing words and collecting words (including toponymy and epinomy).

### C. Word Categories

The formation of word classes in Indonesian is groups of words in language units according to the categories of form, function and meaning in the grammatical system. To compose good and correct sentences according to standard sentence patterns, language users must first know the types and functions of word classes so that mistakes do not occur. According to the Indonesian Standard Language, word classes are divided into 10 groups, namely (1) Verbs are words/groups of words used to describe/trigger a behavior, legality, event, existence, experience, condition, and relationship between two objects; (2) Nouns are words or groups of words that give rise to a name; (3) Pronouns are words that are used as nouns or noun phrases; (4) *Numeralia* are words (phrases) that indicate numbers or quantities; number words; (5) Adjectives or adjectives are words used to describe, limit, characterize and add meaning to nouns or pronouns; (6) Adverbs are words that are used to limit and provide more information about a verb, another adverb, or the whole sentence; (7) interrogative is a category which in the interrogative sentence functions to replace something the speaker wants to know or confirms what the speaker already knows; (8) Demonstrative is a category that functions to show something inside or outside the discourse; (9) *Articula* is explained as a category that accompanies basic nouns, deverbal nouns, pronouns and passive verbs in exocentric constructions which are in the nominal category; (10) Prepositions, explained as categories that are located in front of other categories (especially nouns) (Kridalaksana, 2005; Widjono, 2008).

In contrast to traditional works which treat word classes as the core of language management, in modern linguistics word qualification or word categorization is only considered as one area of language management, parallel to other aspects which must receive balanced treatment, if we describe language management adequately. Language management or grammar has the following components: (1) Grammatical structure which shows how the grammatical structure of a language is so that we can see the construction and constituency of grammatical elements originating from lexemes, in addition to the syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships between them. (2) A grammatical system that shows how grammatical elements behave as units organized as a hierarchy from the smallest, namely morphemes, to the largest, namely discourse. (3) Grammatical categories or grammatical classifications that show how grammatical units with various characteristics behave as more abstract units in larger grammatical units. (4) The grammatical function shows how the parts of the grammatical units in a larger unit behave in an interdependent relationship with each other, so that concepts such as modification, subject, predicate, object, complement, and information, theme and rheme are obtained. (5) The grammatical role shows how grammar is used as an expression of a semantic configuration that combines concepts so that language becomes a meaningful communication tool (Goddard, 2011; Leech, 2003).

## III. METHOD

This research applies a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods. This research explored, discovered, revealed and explained culinary language and preserve culinary names in BTL, as well as local wisdom in culinary naming in the BTC. According to Creswell (2007), qualitative data is in the form of words rather than numbers and these words are taken and analyzed based on the results of observations, interviews, documents and artifacts, because it is to understand the context or setting of the participants or informants in studying a problem or issue. The approach also used in this research is the ethnic approach. The ethnography method presents a cultural picture based on the participants' views (Creswell, 2007). This approach is useful for knowing the meaning values obtained through the unified view of language speech. This research was carried out using the Spradley analysis model, which is also known as the ethnographic analysis model developed by Spradley (2007). The ethnographic research model is the reference for this research and starts from the process of collecting data directly from native speakers including cultural elements. The data were in the form of words and phrases taken from culinary names in BTL. The data were obtained through observation, documentation, and interview.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of word formation found in culinary naming in BTL is discussed as the followings. Internal word formation processes that commonly occur in BTL include: Composition. In the Composition section, it includes studies of (1) Noun + Noun Composition, (2) Noun + Adjective Composition, (3) Noun + Verb Composition, (4) Noun + Verb + Adjective Composition, (5) Noun + Verb + Noun Composition, (6) Verb + Noun Composition, then Reduplication and Affixation.

### A. Composition

Composition is the process of combining base with base (usually in the form of roots or affixes) to accommodate a 'concept' that is not yet contained in a word (Chaer, 2008). In line with this, according to Katamba (1994), what is meant by the process of compounding or composition is the event of joining two or more basic morphemes in a coherent manner and giving rise to a relatively new meaning. The results of this process are called compound words. Based on the results of the data that has been collected, the composition structure of Toba Batak language culinary

names consists of (1) noun + noun, (2) noun + adjective, (3) noun + verb, (4) noun + verb + adjective, (5) noun + verb + noun, and (6) verb + noun.

(a). *Noun + Noun Composition*

The formation of words by combining two nouns (nouns) is called noun-noun composition in linguistics and is the form of composition that most often appears in culinary linguistics (Jabonillo, 2016). This is a form of lexical composition that is common in many languages and involves combining two nouns to form a new noun with a more specific or specialized meaning. In general, it is found in dishes that come from plant or animal ingredients. Here are some examples of culinary names in BTL whose word formation is based on composition:

- (1) *dekke jahir* → *dekke (N) + jahir (N)* → FN  
 'ikan' 'jahir' (tilapia fish)
- (2) *lapet gadong* → *lapet (N) + gadong (N)* → FN  
 'lapet' 'ubi' (cassava lepet)

Some examples of culinary names of BTL above have an N + N structure. Data (1) *dekke jahir* has an N + N structure, namely the core noun (*dekke*) and modifier noun (*jahir*), and has the grammatical meaning of the type of ingredient. The first noun states the component meaning of the main object and the second noun has the meaning of the type object. Data (2) *lapet gadong* has an N + N structure, namely the core noun (*lapet*) and noun modifier (*gadong*). In this data, the first N is the component of the processed object and the second N states the meaning component of the original object.

Then in data (3) *sop jagal manuk* which consists of the structure N + N + N, with the following explanation, the first N is the core noun and has a meaning component of processed/man-made objects, the second and third N are the supporting nouns. In this case, the second N has a material object meaning component and the third N has a type object meaning component. (4) *saksang jagal horbo* and (5) *saksang jagal lembu*, also have a noun phrase (FN) construction consisting of several words (N + N + N). The first noun is the core noun and the next is the supporting noun. In data (5) the core noun is *saksang* and the supporting nouns are *jagal* and *horbo*. In data (6), the core noun is *saksang*, and the supporting noun is *jagal lembu*. Data (5) and (6) have a 'type' arranged when the first N has an object meaning component and the second and third N have a specific object meaning component or type of material.

- (3) *sop jagal manuk* → *sop (N) jagal (N) + manuk (N)* → FN  
 'sup daging ayam' (chicken soup)
- (4) *saksang jagal horbo* → *saksang (N) + jagal (N) + horbo (N)* → FN  
 'daging kerbau cincang' (minced buffalo meat)
- (5) *saksang jagal lembu* → *saksang (N) + jagal (N) + lembu (N)* → FN  
 'daging lembu cincang' (minced cow meat)

(b). *Noun + Adjective Composition*

Next is a composition analysis consisting of Noun (N) + Adjective (A). This composition is a combination of noun and adjective lexemes which form a new noun phrase. Some examples of culinary names in BTL that have the N + A construction are as follows:

- (6) *indahan las* → *indahan (N) + las (A)* → FN  
 'nasi' 'panas' (hot rice)
- (7) *æk sitiotio* → *æk (N) + sitiotio (A)* → FN  
 'air' 'jernih' (clear water)

The culinary data above has an N + A structure which has a functional relationship between the noun as the core (*indahan*) and the adjective as the object (*na las*). This construct has the grammatical meaning of 'temperature' which is composed of N which has an object meaning component and A which has a temperature meaning component. Data (6) also has an N + A structure consisting of a noun as the core (*æk*) and an adjective as a substitute (*sitiotio*). The data consists of N which has an object meaning component and A has a form component. These two words have one constituent, namely the Noun Phrase which is composed of two words as direct forming elements. The uniqueness of data (7) is that *æk sitiotio* 'clear water' (white water) comes from the adjective 'tio' which means 'clean', but has changed the form of the word to become a reduplicated word, namely 'tio-tio' whose meaning strengthens the basic meaning (clean clear).

(c). *Noun + Verb Composition*

The next composition is the Noun + Verb composition, the results of this composition form a new noun. This combination can be used to describe actions or activities related to the object or concept referred to. The following are several examples of Toba Batak language culinary names that have the N + V construction:

(8) *tolor robus* → *tolor (N) + robus (V)* → FN  
'telur' 'rebus' (boiled egg)

(9) *gadong goreng* → *gadong (N) + goreng (V)* → FN  
'ubi' 'goreng' (fried cassava)

The data above have an N + V structure which also has a functional relationship between the noun as the core and the verb as the subordinate 'which is in...'. This meaning is formed from the first noun as a component of the object and the second component is expressed as an action or treatment of the object. The explanation of the data above is as follows, namely; data (8) *tolor robus* has an N + V structure consisting of *tolor* as the core and *robus* (verb) as the object. So, data (9) has the grammatical meaning of 'boiled egg'. Furthermore, there is the formation of a unique name in BTL, which also has an N + V structure. In this case, the noun is the core component and V is the delimiter, where the verb experiences the addition of the prefix (*nani-*) so that the grammatical meaning becomes 'which in ...'. The following is a description of the data:

(10) *Dekke mas naniarsik* → *Dekke (N) + mas (N) + naniarsik (V)* → FN  
'ikan' 'mas' 'yang dimasak dengan bumbu sampai kering'  
(fish' 'carp' 'cooked with spices until dry')

(11) *Dekke mas naniura* → *Dekke (N) + mas (N) + naniura (V)* → FN  
'ikan' 'mas' 'yang disiram asam dan bumbu rempah lainnya sampai matang'  
(fish' 'carp' 'doused in tamarind and other spices until cooked')

(12) *Manuk nanigotaan* → *Manuk (N) + nanigotaan (V)* → FN  
'ayam' 'yang dimasak dengan campuran darahnya'  
(chicken' 'cooked with its blood mixed in')

In the formation of culinary names in BTL, it also has an N + V structure, apart from the use of the prefix (*nani-*) in verbs in forming culinary names, there is also another uniqueness, namely the prefix (*nati-*) which has the same meaning as the prefix (*nani-*) namely 'which in...'. However, the prefix (*nati-*) is formed from the process of nasalization of verbs that begin with the letter 't'. The following is a description of the data below:

(13) *Gulamo natinutung* → *Gulamo (N) + natinutung (V)* → FN  
'ikan asin' 'yang dibakar'  
(burnt salted fish)

Data (13) *Gulamo natinutung* has an N + V structure which is formed from the functional relationship between the noun as the core (*gulamo*) and the supporting verb (*natinutung*). The verb (*natinutung*) is formed from the basic verb (*tutung*) which means 'burn', then undergoes a nasalization process when it meets the prefix (*nati-*) so that it becomes the verb (*natinutung*) which means 'to burn'. The noun phrase *gulamo natinutung* as a whole means 'grilled salted fish'. Apart from the two prefixes that have been described along with the examples above, there is another unique thing in the formation of culinary names in BTL. After the use of the prefixes (*nani-*) and (*nati-*) in verbs in forming culinary names in the Batak Toba language, there is also the prefix (*napi-*) which has the same meaning as the prefixes (*nani-*) and (*nati-*), namely 'which in...'. However, in the use of the prefix (*napi-*) it is formed from the nasalization process of verbs that start with the letter 'p'. The following is a description in the data below:

(14) *Jagal napinanggang* → *Jagal (N) + napinanggang (V)* → FN  
'daging' 'yang dipanggang'  
(grilled meat)

Data (14) *jalag napinanggang* has an N + V structure which is formed from the functional relationship between the noun as the core component (*jalag*) and the supporting verb (*napinanggang*). The verb (*napinanggang*) is formed from the basic verb (*panggang*) which also has the meaning 'roasted', then undergoes a nasalization process when it meets the prefix (*napi-*) so that it becomes the verb (*napinanggang*) which has the meaning 'roasted'. So, the full noun phrase *jalag napinanggang* means 'grilled meat'.



- (15) *Manuk napinadar* → *Manuk (N) + napinadar (V) → FN*  
 'ayam' 'yang dipanggang dan dibumbu bercampur darahnya'  
 ('chicken' 'cooked with its blood mixed in')

Data (15) *manuk napinadar* has an N + V structure which is formed from the functional relationship between the noun as the core component (*manuk*) and the subordinate verb (*napinadar*). The verb (*napinadar*) is formed from the basic verb (*padar*) which also has the meaning 'roasted and mixed with spices mixed with blood', then undergoes a nasalization process when it meets the prefix (*napi-*) so that it becomes a verb (*napinadar*), so that the noun phrase *manuk napinadar* in its entirety it means 'chicken meat that is grilled and then eaten with spices mixed with the chicken's blood'.

(d). *Noun + Verb + Adjective Composition*

In the composition Noun + Verb + Adjective, these words are often used to describe objects or concepts, as well as describe actions or processes that occur with the object and provide additional properties or qualifications. The composition N + V + Adjective forms a noun phrase (FN) based on its core components and this pattern provides more detailed and in-depth information about a particular object or concept by combining three different linguistic elements. More clearly, below is a description of several culinary names in BTL whose word formation process is based on the Noun + Verb + Adjective construction;

- (16) *Jagal bibi nanigoreng siak* → *jalag (N)+bibi (N)+nanigoreng (V)+siak (A) → FN*  
 'daging' 'bebek' 'yang digoreng' 'pedas'  
 ('spicy' deep-fried 'duck' meat)

Data (16) *jalag bibi nanigoreng siak* has the structure N + V + A. The noun phrase *jalag bibi* is the core, while the verb *nanigoreng* has an attachment to the adjective word *siak*. So the process of forming the word produces the meaning 'duck meat fried with spices to produce a spicy taste'.

- (17) *Dekke mas nanigoreng koring* → *dekke (N)+mas (N)+nanigoreng (V)+koring (A) → FN*  
 'ikan' 'mas' 'yang digoreng' 'kering'  
 ('fish' 'goldfish' 'fried' 'dried')

Data (17) *Dekke mas nanigoreng koring* has the structure N + V + A. The noun phrase *dekke mas* is the core, while the verb *nanigoreng* is attached to the adjective word *koring*. So the process of word formation produces the meaning 'carp fried until very fragile'.

(e). *Noun + Verb + Noun Composition*

The combination pattern N + V + N then results in the construction of a noun phrase. The following is some data on culinary names that have this pattern in the Toba Batak language:

- (18) *Manuk lompa bumbu tolu* → *Manuk (N)+ lompa (V)+ bumbu (N) + tolu (Num)*  
 'ayam' 'dimasak' 'bumbu' 'tiga'  
 (chicken cooked in triple seasoning)

Data (18) *manuk lompa bumbu tolu*, consists of the first noun (N), namely *manuk* as the core, and has a component meaning object and as V (*lompa*) has a component meaning the action 'cook', while the third element, namely N (*bumbu*) has components of the meaning of material objects. Meanwhile, the word *tolu* is a numeralia, which means 'three', which is to emphasize the word spice, that the spices used for cooking consist of only three kinds (chilies, onions, tomatoes). This can be seen in the diagram above, so the overall meaning of the noun phrase is 'chicken cooked with only three types of spices (chilies, onions, tomatoes)'.

(f). *Verb + Noun Composition*

Culinary name in the BTL has a V + N structure. It also has the grammatical meaning of 'ingredient' which is composed if the first element is in the verb category which also has the meaning of action and the second element is in the noun category which has the component meaning of ingredients. Here are some examples of culinary names in BTL that has the structure of V + N.

- (19) *Tumis kol* → *tumis (V) + kol (N) → FV*  
 'tumis' 'sayur kol'  
 (stir-fried cabbage)

- (20) *Tumis jipang* → *tumis* (V) + *jipang* (N) → FV  
       'tumis' 'sayur jipang'  
       (stir-fried jeepang vegetables)

From data 19 and 20, it can be seen that those culinary names have a verb as the core and a noun as the supporting element and have one constituent, namely a verb phrase which is composed of two words as direct formers.

### B. Reduplication

This process shows the repetition of grammatical units, either in whole or in part, whether with phoneme variations or not (Chaer, 2008). In the formation of culinary names in BTL, there is also a reduplication process. Those processes are explained as the followings.

#### (a). Whole Reduplication

The process of reduplication throughout is a form of repetition of the basic word, without any changes in phonemes and does not combine with the process of adding affixes. This process can be seen from the data description below:

- (21) *ombus – ombus* → 'ombus – ombus'  
       [ombus]V + [Red]V                      [ombus-ombus] N

Data (21) *ombus-ombus* is a type of snack that is prepared from rice/glutinous flour then mixed with grated coconut or can be mixed with palm sugar according to taste, then wrapped in banana leaves in a cone shape then steamed until cooked, and served while still hot. In BTL, the verb *ombus* means blow, this is the basis for naming the *ombus-ombus* snack because usually the snack is served while it is still hot or just cooked, so you have to eat it while blowing.

- (22) *pohul – pohul* → 'pohul – pohul'  
       [pohul]V + [Red]V                      [pohul-pohul] N

Data (22) *pohul-pohul* is also a type of snack that is prepared from rice flour, finely chopped palm sugar, grated coconut and a little water, then all the ingredients are stirred until evenly mixed. Then the *pohul* are formed by squeezing them so that their shape follows the silhouette of a fist, namely the shape of the first of the maker's fingers. This is what underlies the name *pohul-pohul*, which in BTL, the verb *pohul* means to grasp or clench.

#### (b). Partial Reduplication

The form of partial reduplication is a form of repetition of the basic word, but it is not repeated in its entirety, only certain syllables or parts of the word are repeated. Almost all of the basic forms of repetition in this group are complex forms. The data description of culinary names in BTL can be seen as below:

- (23) *Aek sitio-tio* → *Aek* (N) 'sitio-tio' (A)  
       'air' 'jernih'                      {[aek] [sitio-tio]}N  
       (clear water)

In data (23), *aek sitio-tio*, the adjective *sitio-tio* is a repetition of the basic form only *tio* whose meaning is clear/clean, and describes its form. Then the rephrasing *sitio-tio* is to emphasize that the noun *aek* 'water' is really clean and clear.

#### (c). Dwilingga Reduplication (Copy Voice)

In the data, there is also reduplication of *dwilingga* copy sounds and more precisely vowel changes, described in the data below:

- (24) *sambal attar – ittir* → 'sambal' (N) + 'attar – ittir'  
       'sambal' 'rasa yang membuat                      {[attar] + [ittir]}A  
       lidah bergetar'

Data (24) *sambal attar-ittir* consists of the noun *sambal* which means a type of processed spice that can be combined with various types of dishes to add to the taste of the food. Then, there is the adjective *attar-ittir* which is a reduplication of sound changes whose meaning states 'the taste that makes tongue vibrates'.

#### (d). Pseudo Reduplication

This type of reduplication generally has a basic word, but there are also forms of repeat words that do not have a basic word form or can be said to have no clear basic word form, which are generally referred to as pseudo-rewords. In line with this explanation, there are several examples of culinary name data in BTL are included in pseudo reduplication, as follows:

- (25) *dolung – dolung* → [dolung-dolung] N

Data (43) *dolung - dolung* is a type of round cake filled with palm sugar and wrapped in bamboo leaves. In terms of word formation, *dolung - dolung* is a noun and is a pseudo-word because the word *dolung* does not have its own meaning.

(26) *Inggir – inggir* → [inggir – inggir] N

Data (26) *Inggir – inggir* is a type of concoction made from herbal plants believed by BTC can be consumed to treat various diseases. In terms of word formation, *inggir - inggir* is a noun and is a pseudo-word because the word *inggir* has no meaning.

(e). *Reduplication That Changes Meaning*

Reduplication based on meaning is a model that changes the meaning of words. In this case, the word intended is intended to show the existence of similarity or identity for both subject and object. The following is a description of culinary name data in the Toba Batak language which is classified as reduplication, changing meaning:

(27) *tungir – tungir* → [tungir – tungir] N

Data (27) *tungir - tungir* is a rare type of fruit typical in BTC whose shape resembles a fat mite. The word *tungir* in Indonesian means 'mite animal'. This is what underlies the change in the meaning of *tungir* (mite) to reduplication of *tungir - tungir* which means the name of the fruit because of its shape.

C. *Affixation*

Affixes are bound grammatical units that are added to the basic form (word root) to form new words. Affixes are bound morphemes that cannot stand alone and must be added to the base form. In Toba Batak grammar, affixation is divided into; (a) *Prefix*, namely; *mar-*, *mang-*, *ni-*, *si-*, *pang-*, *par-*, *tar-*, *hu-*, *por-*, *nati-*, and *nani-*; (b) *Infixes* (insertions), namely: *-um-*, *-in-*, *-ar-*, and *-al-*; (c) *Suffixes* (endings), namely: *-hon*, *-an*, *-on*, *-i*, *-kan*, *-hon*; (d) *Confixes* (Prefixes and Suffixes) namely *par-...-an*, *pang-...-an*, *tar-...-an*, *hu-...-hon*, and others (Samin, 1988).

(a). *Prefix ni-*

In Batak Toba culinary, the prefix "ni-" in the Toba Batak language mainly functions to form passive verbs, nouns, and in some cases adjectives, with the accompanying grammatical meaning.

(28) *bulung [ni- + gadong]* → *bulung nigadong* (daun ubi)

(29) *ae [ni- + bulung] bangun-bangun* → *ae nibulung bangun-bangun*  
(air perasan daun bangun-bangun)

(b). *Infix -in-*

(30) *gulamo na [tutung + -in-]* → *gulamo natinutung* (ikan asin yang dibakar)

(31) *jagal na [panggang + -in-]* → *jagal na pinanggang* (daging yang dipanggang)

(c). *Prefix mar-*

In Toba Batak culinary, the prefix "mar-" mainly functions to form active verbs, express work/profession, and express the use of something in the Toba Batak language, with the accompanying grammatical meaning.

(32) *Lapet na [mar- + gula] mera* → *Lapet na margula mera* (Lapet yang bergula merah)

(33) *Lapet na [mar- + kalapa]* → *Lapet na markalapa* (Lapet yang berkelapa)

(d). *Prefix si-*

In Batak Toba culinary, the prefix "si-" in the Toba Batak language functions to express one/single, designate, form nouns, express events/circumstances, and express tools/places. Its use is very broad and varies according to the context of the sentence.

(34) *[si- + torop]* → *sitorop* (buah rambe)

(e). *Suffix -i*

In Batak Toba culinary, the suffix "-i" in the Toba Batak language functions to form transitive, benefactive, locative verbs, nouns and directional adjectives. Its meaning really depends on the context in which it is used in the sentence.

(35) sambal [gambir + -i] → sambal gambiri (sambal kemiri)

(f). *Confix ni- + -an*

(36) jagal na [ni + gota + an] → jagal na nigotaan  
(daging yang dimasak dengan campuran darah hewan)

(g). *Confix -in- + -an*

(37) [tombu + -in- + -an] → tinombuan (masakan campuran sayur yang ditumis/rebus)

## V. CONCLUSION

Word formation patterns were found in Toba Batak culinary names, namely six composition patterns including Noun + Noun, Noun + Adjective Composition, Noun + Verb Composition, Noun + Verb + Adjective Composition, Noun + Verb + Noun Composition, Verb + Noun Composition, then Reduplication and Affixation. Based on the conclusion, further studies are suggested to explore how culinary words are formed in other Batak languages (e.g., Batak Karo, Batak Mandailing) and compare them with Batak Toba. This can provide insights into linguistic similarities and differences across related languages. The other studies can investigate the sociolinguistic factors that influence the use and preservation of Batak Toba culinary terms, especially in younger generations or urban areas. This could also include attitudes toward traditional versus modern culinary vocabulary. Then, the other possibilities are to examine how language contact with Indonesian and other regional languages affects the formation of Batak Toba culinary words. This study could focus on loanwords and code-switching in culinary contexts. In relation to culinary lexicon in Batak Toba in media and literature, further study can analyze how Batak Toba culinary vocabulary is represented in local media, literature, and social media platforms, and investigate its role in cultural identity and modern communication.

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# The Influence of Technology-Enhanced Feedback on Saudi Female EFL Learners' Writing Gains

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**Abstract**—The current study examined the influence of online peer feedback on the writing ability and self-efficacy of female learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Saudi Arabia. The participants were 78 learners divided into two experimental groups and one control group. The experimental groups used Google Docs to complete their writing assignments and exchange comments, whereas the control group received traditional teacher feedback. Pre-test and post-test self-efficacy ratings were collected on a scale of 1 to 5. The results yielded that the experimental groups improved significantly in self-efficacy compared to their counterparts in the control group. Based on these findings, using Google Docs for peer feedback is likely to assist in improving writing skills and substantially boost writing confidence. The present study thus contributes to the existing body of literature and to the field of EFL education by emphasizing the potential benefits of peer feedback through digital tools and platforms.

**Index Terms**—EFL writing, Google Docs, online writing, peer feedback, self-efficacy

## I. INTRODUCTION

Writing skills are a vital part of every stage of formal education, giving students the opportunity to express themselves creatively while gaining confidence and sharpening their ability to engage in critical thinking (Lee, 2017). However, compared to native speakers of the language, students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) often find it difficult to acquire strong writing skills in English without more help and overt correction. For this reason, correcting errors is essential to the learning process, as learners will always make mistakes while using new language, and correcting these mistakes is one of the critical duties of teachers (Pawlak, 2014).

The method used for error correction can greatly affect how students perceive and learn from their errors. Recent studies have focused on the value of peer feedback in language learning, particularly when it comes to writing (e.g., Fan & Xu, 2020; López-Pellisa et al., 2021; Tian & Zhou, 2020). Peer feedback entails students evaluating each other's drafts and providing comments on them (Storch, 2019), which can promote deeper comprehension and improve critical thinking skills (Afify, 2019). Brookhart (2008) noted that peer feedback could facilitate learning and increase learner motivation. In contrast to more traditional teacher-centric feedback, this strategy encourages students to work together. Nevertheless, teachers still play a vital role in the classroom, as students can be more easily motivated in various ways when they have the opportunity to engage in pleasant interaction with their teachers (Wood, 2017). For these reasons, and as universities tend to emphasize the significance of student-centered education, the teacher is viewed as a learning facilitator who encourages learners' participation.

Given the lack of research in this area in Saudi Arabia and the growing importance of EFL writing in that context, the present study investigated how online peer feedback could be utilized to enhance Saudi female EFL students' writing skills and self-efficacy. This study adds to the growing area of research examining how educators can use new digital platforms and applications, by focusing on Saudi female EFL students, who tend to learn English using a more traditional teacher-centric approach (Almohaimeed & Alnasser, 2022). The study provides valuable insights into how platforms such as Google Docs can effectively integrate peer feedback into EFL writing courses, potentially influencing future curriculum design and teaching methods.

By investigating the impact of peer feedback on self-efficacy, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how students' confidence and motivation in language learning is influenced by instructional methods. Such research is especially important for understanding EFL students, as their self-confidence can have a significant effect on their learning (Rubio, 2021). Furthermore, the results could be used as a foundation for further studies on the longer-term effects of using peer feedback through digital platforms on this and other demographic groups.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Theoretical Background

Sociocultural theory has had a substantial influence on second language (L2) education. Despite the multifaceted views on current sociocultural theory, they all draw on Vygotsky's (1978) idea that the development of cognition is socially situated and that learning is a process of internalizing social and cultural patterns in a particular society. From that perspective, learners' interaction in L2 classrooms is viewed as a social practice within the academic context

(Storch, 2013). In particular, L2 writing is considered a type of “social act that involves a complex dialogic and distributed process of intervention and knowledge transformation, mediated by cultural and historical artefacts” (Slavkov, 2015, p. 81).

Sociocultural theory has been recognized as providing an important theoretical lens on peer feedback of L2 writing (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Nelson & Murphy, 1992; Zhao, 2018). In peer feedback activities, social interaction plays an essential role in cognitive development via the zone of proximal development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), the novice’s interactions with an expert or with slightly more experienced peers is likely to contribute to the novice’s cognitive development. In these interactions, the expert’s role extends to providing opportunities for the novice to carry out progressively more difficult tasks, an approach known as scaffolding. Wood et al. (1976) defined scaffolding as instructional support provided by experts to help the novice perform increasingly complex tasks without assistance.

In peer feedback, learners with equal or slightly more capabilities can scaffold other students’ learning within the ZPD by offering comments and suggestions. De Guerrero and Villamil (2000) showed that even students with the same proficiency level facilitated each other’s learning through peer feedback activities. Consequently, feedback can also be constructive and lead to L2 improvement when performed by peers (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017).

### *B. EFL Writing and Online Peer Feedback*

Ferris (2003) highlighted the fact that EFL learners need feedback on their writing to acquire the language efficiently. Several researchers have investigated how different types of feedback impact EFL writing skills. Traditional teacher feedback consists of teachers’ corrective information on the learners’ written tasks (Cheng et al., 2021). However, peer feedback has introduced new vitality into this process, owing to its collaborative approach (Alshuraidah & Storch, 2019).

The idea that students may serve as valuable resources for another student’s education forms the basis of this learning dynamic. Sackstein (2017) noted that peer feedback in the classroom empowers students as learners and does more than merely help them become better writers. Since they are active participants in the learning process rather than simply passive receivers of information, peer feedback promotes students’ autonomy and encourages them to be more active learners. However, such practices need to be implemented in an engaging environment to maximize learning motivation. Digital applications and online platforms (e.g., Google Docs) can be used for this purpose (Alharbi, 2019; Lee & Hassell, 2021).

Online tools have increasingly been used for learning due to the emergence of learner-centric education and because they offer more options for creating and delivering material (Roberts, 2006). These tools can engage learners and help tailor the learning experience more to the individual student (Tathahira, 2020). This can be seen in terms of peer feedback on EFL writing. Such technology provides new opportunities for L2 learners to collaborate and co-construct knowledge through interaction. For example, Ebadi and Rahimi (2017) demonstrated that Google Docs can facilitate new forms of peer interaction through its user-friendly editing tools.

A number of studies have emphasized the potential of Google Docs for facilitating peer feedback (e.g., Alharbi, 2019; Bradley & Thouësnny, 2017; Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017; Farahian & Noori, 2023; Hoang & Hoang, 2022). For instance, Ebadi and Rahimi (2017) conducted a mixed-methods study to examine its impact on EFL university students’ academic writing skills in Iran. The study revealed significant improvements, particularly in long-term grammatical accuracy. Furthermore, learners had a positive attitude toward using Google Docs in peer feedback activities and found it quite helpful. According to learner responses, Bradley and Thouësnny (2017) reported that peer feedback using Google Docs generally focused on global areas (i.e., content and organization) and local areas (i.e., structure and language problems). They also found that “resolved” was the most frequent response in writing tasks, indicating students’ acceptance of their peers’ comments. In a qualitative study, Alharbi (2019) explored the potential of Google Docs to facilitate collaborative revisions and peer feedback on EFL writing in a Saudi university. Google Docs was perceived as useful as it allowed learners to edit each other’s drafts and provide constructive feedback. Furthermore, students expressed positive views about Google Docs and its ability to enhance their writing and collaborative work.

Vengadasalam (2021) found that online peer feedback not only changed how people wrote but also how they thought. For example, online discussions can allow students to engage in more critical thinking (Afify, 2019). Tathahira (2020) reported that when L2 learners interacted in online activities, in addition to promoting critical thinking, it also increased their self-efficacy to make judgements while writing. In the same vein, learners participating in online peer feedback tend to apply higher-order thinking, including analysis, evaluation, and problem solving (Kaya & Yaprak, 2020). For EFL learners, Google Docs can create a more participatory and engaging environment than traditional feedback methods, as they actively participate in the learning process in addition to receiving feedback. Such interaction is vital to language learning because it pushes students to consider their work in the light of criticism and forces them to go through different cognitive processes. In addition, this type of feedback tends to be faster and more detailed. As a result, Alharbi and Alqefari (2021) claimed that more and more people were using such tools to give feedback on written material.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Participants

The sample consisted of 78 first-year university students. All participants were women of around the same age attending an EFL writing course at the same Saudi public university. The author randomly assigned the participants to one of the two experimental groups or to the control group, with 26 assigned to each group. The sample was thus homogenous in terms of age, gender, nationality, and academic level.

### B. Data Collection

All participants were given a pre-test before the experiment began and then a post-test 10 weeks later to determine if their writing skills or self-efficacy had changed. These tests mimicked the format and content of normal writing tests given to EFL students. The scoring rubric used was a modified version of the ESL Composition Profile from Jacobs et al. (1981) to assess students' pre- and post-tests. The profile covers different aspects of writing, namely content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. Two raters who volunteered to assess the pre- and post-tests received intensive training on how to employ the rating scale. Alongside the writing tests, self-efficacy surveys were utilized to measure students' confidence in their writing abilities. These surveys were administered both before and after the intervention.

In the experimental groups, Google Docs was used as the primary platform for collaborative writing, editing, and exchanging feedback in real time. These participants were first trained for three hours to ensure they would be able to use Google Docs during their peer feedback activities. Afterward, they were paired in groups of two, ensuring that each student had the opportunity to give and receive feedback. This process was conducted once every week for 10 weeks. Throughout the study, the participants in the experimental groups swapped roles (giving vs. receiving feedback) and peers (who they were paired with). Figure 1 shows a screenshot of a chat screen in which students exchanged feedback. During the same 10-week period, the students assigned to the control group did not engage in peer feedback or use Google Docs or similar tools. Instead, they were given traditional, teacher-centric feedback on their writing.

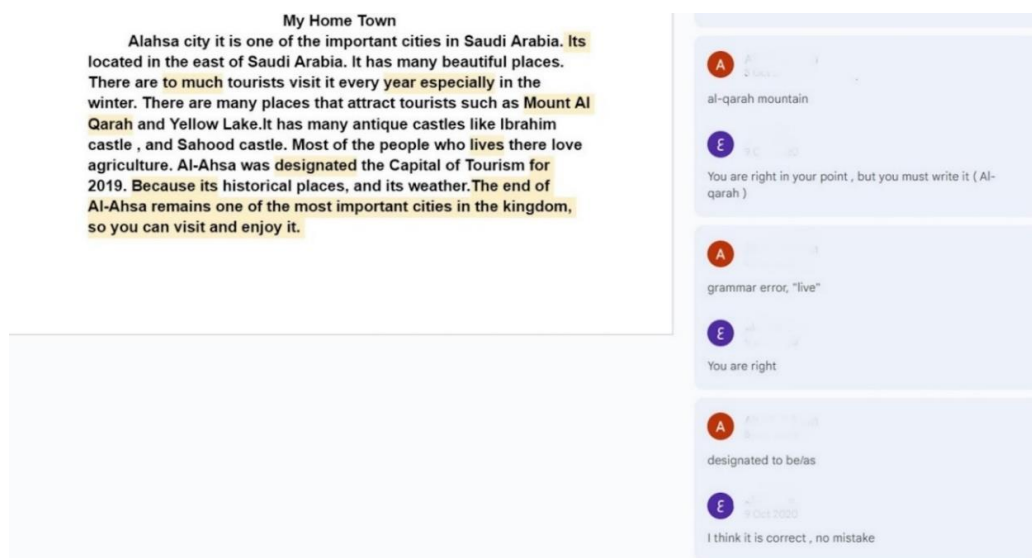


Figure 1. Example of Peer Feedback Exchange on Google Docs

### C. Data Analysis

The data analysis involved comparing the pre-test and post-test scores in terms of writing skill and self-efficacy. To assess the importance of the observed variations between the groups, statistical methods were used and the mean scores of the two experimental groups were calculated and compared with those of the control group. The purpose of the analysis was to determine whether peer feedback through Google Docs was more effective than traditional instructor feedback at improving students' writing and self-efficacy.

## IV. FINDINGS

This section presents a detailed analysis of the data collected from the pre-tests and post-tests administered to the experimental groups and control group. The analysis includes comparisons of writing ability across a range of characteristics and student attitudes about writing.

As shown in Table 1, the experimental groups' mean proficiency score before the experiment was 60, and the control group's mean score was 58. Since these scores were similar, the author could reasonably expect that post-experiment differences between groups were likely caused by the intervention. All groups showed a notable increase in their post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores. However, both experimental groups had a larger mean increase of 15 points compared to the 10-point increase of the control group. This 5-point rise over the control group suggested that peer feedback may be a more useful teaching strategy for writing skills than traditional instructor feedback.



TABLE 1  
OVERALL WRITING PROFICIENCY SCORES

| Group                        | Pre-Test Average<br>(out of 100) | Post-Test Average<br>(out of 100) | Change in Score |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Experimental (Peer Feedback) | 60                               | 75                                | +15             |
| Control (Teacher Feedback)   | 58                               | 68                                | +10             |

There are a few possible reasons for the experimental groups' greater improvement. Students may have found peer critique more relatable or considered it to be more relevant, thereby increasing their engagement and driving them to do better. Additionally, it could promote a more cooperative learning atmosphere where students gain knowledge from both giving and receiving comments on each other's work. These results suggested that peer feedback could be an effective way to improve EFL writing skills by helping students see their writing from different perspectives.

#### A. Improvement in Writing Ability

Compared to the control group, which showed an 11% improvement in content, the experimental groups demonstrated greater improvement (18%). Peer interactions appeared particularly beneficial for this component of writing, which deals with the writer's knowledge of the topic. This difference could have been due to students gaining a deeper understanding of the topic from exchanging feedback in Google Docs, where they encouraged each other to write relevant content.

In terms of the organization of their writing, the experimental groups showed a mean improvement rate of 17%, well above the 9% of the control group. Thus, peer feedback appeared to have a significant positive effect on the participants' ability to organize their ideas clearly. This could have been due to the experimental groups getting immediate feedback regarding this issue in Google Docs. While more significant progress was made by the experimental groups in terms of coherence and organization, they demonstrated improvement in all areas.

The experimental groups showed approximately 15% gain in vocabulary, whereas the control group showed a 10% gain. This result suggested that students were motivated to focus more on word choice and usage through peer criticism. The collaborative nature of Google Docs could have created an atmosphere where students felt more at ease trying out new words and receiving constructive criticism on their word selection.

As shown in Table 2, the experimental groups' grammar improved by 12%, while the control group improved by 8%. This difference may also be explained by the peer feedback process, in which students checked each other's work for grammatical mistakes and thus might have paid greater attention to them. The tools in Google Docs that encourage interaction might have simplified the process of finding, understanding, and addressing these errors.

The mean point increases for specific areas (content, organization, vocabulary, grammar) are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
SCORES FOR SPECIFIC WRITING SKILLS

| Skill Area   | Experimental Improvement | Control Improvement |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Content      | +18%                     | +11%                |
| Organization | +17%                     | +9%                 |
| Vocabulary   | +15%                     | +10%                |
| Grammar      | +12%                     | +8%                 |

#### B. Improvement in Self-Efficacy

In addition, this study examined how peer feedback affected the self-efficacy of participating EFL students. These results are presented in Table 3, with ratings on a scale of 1 to 5.

TABLE 3  
STUDENT SELF-EFFICACY RATINGS

| Group                        | Pre-Test Self-Efficacy | Post-Test Self-Efficacy | Change in Rating |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Experimental (Peer Feedback) | 2.5                    | 3.8                     | +1.3             |
| Control (Teacher Feedback)   | 2.4                    | 3.1                     | +0.7             |

On the pre-tests, all three groups had similar scores for self-efficacy (approximately 2.4–2.5). Those scores made it possible to compare how the different forms of feedback would affect different groups. Ten weeks later, all groups showed higher self-efficacy scores on the post-test, but the experimental groups had a larger increase (2.5–3.8) than the control group (2.4–3.1). This indicated that peer feedback via Google Docs was more effective at building participants' confidence in their ability to write in English.

#### C. Perceived Usefulness of Feedback

This study also examined to what extent participants perceived the feedback they received to be useful, as detailed in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
PERCEIVED USEFULNESS OF FEEDBACK

| Feedback Type       | Very Useful | Somewhat Useful |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Peer (Experimental) | 67%         | 33%             |
| Teacher (Control)   | 47%         | 53%             |

Two-thirds of students in the experimental groups considered the feedback to be “very useful” while the rest considered it “somewhat useful.” Such a high usefulness rating could be due to several aspects of Google Docs and the peer feedback students engaged in. Perhaps the most obvious factor was the sense of cooperation facilitated by that platform, which enabled participants to quickly and easily show what they had written to their peer, get feedback, and engage in a dialogue about it. In turn, that interaction likely caused the participants to view the feedback activities as more engaging. Another factor to consider is that the participants might have been able to give more pertinent advice to each other in the peer feedback by connecting it to their shared experiences and to the problems they had as EFL writers. In this way, the peer feedback might have been seen as more targeted to their personal learning needs.

The participants in the control group rated the teacher feedback less highly, with slightly over half reporting that it was “somewhat useful” (53%) and the rest saying it was “very useful” (47%), as shown in Table 4. The lower rating could be partly due to this type of feedback being less instantaneous than peer feedback via Google Docs. Another factor could have been participants viewing feedback from teachers as more distant than feedback from their peers. This could have affected how students took in and valued the feedback given. This result may also be the consequence of a lack of peer engagement, as the feedback process may not have included relevant and collaborative aspects that could improve learning.

#### D. Incorporating Feedback Into Revisions

Table 5 presents data on how often students incorporated the feedback they received into their subsequent revisions. A much larger proportion of the experimental groups (70%) than the control group (55%) reported that they “often” incorporated the feedback they received into subsequent drafts when revising their writing.

TABLE 5  
FREQUENCY OF INCORPORATING FEEDBACK INTO REVISIONS

| Feedback Type       | Often | Sometimes |
|---------------------|-------|-----------|
| Peer (Experimental) | 70%   | 25%       |
| Teacher (Control)   | 55%   | 35%       |

This finding indicated that peer feedback was perceived as better, more engaging, or easier to incorporate than teacher feedback. Another potential factor is that participants may have seen peer feedback as more applicable to them because it was given by other EFL writers facing similar difficulties.

## V. DISCUSSION

Peer review through Google Docs appeared to improve the perceived writing skills and self-efficacy of Saudi female EFL students. In terms of writing skills, this result was consistent with Ebadi and Rahimi’s (2017) study, which found that the writing abilities of students’ who utilized Google Docs for peer feedback improved significantly compared to those who engaged in face-to-face peer feedback. A potential reason behind this result is the real-time collaboration that Google Docs facilitates, in addition to enabling users to exchange ideas with more people (Alharbi, 2019). Similarly, Tathahira (2020) found that such tools could improve the language learning experience and encourage critical thinking, while Afify (2019) noted that they could help students better understand the material. In this study, the participants’ engagement in such feedback activities provided ample opportunities for exposure to various perspectives and styles of writing. This, in turn, could have had a positive impact on their writing skills and thinking. The participants’ progress in specific writing domains, such as content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar may be attributed to the collaborative nature of the feedback process.

This study advances the literature by applying theory to actual EFL writing classes. According to previous research, peer feedback offers a special kind of instruction where students may gain knowledge on different aspects of writing by receiving comments on their writing and giving comments on others’ writing (Bradley & Thoušny, 2017). Similarly, the findings of the present study suggested that feedback activities in Google Docs helped the participants improve their writing skills. In this way, the findings support using similar tools in EFL classes, in agreement with previous calls for using such tools in a student-centered context (Alharbi, 2019).

Consistent with previous studies, this study reported higher self-efficacy by the experimental groups, noting that peer feedback could boost students’ confidence and their writing skills (Sackstein, 2017). This indicated that peer feedback allowed students to be active learners, resulting in greater self-esteem and a stronger motivation to learn. It is likely that Google Docs provided opportunities for more relevant feedback, and this contributed to the increase in the self-efficacy scores in the experimental groups compared to the control group. This finding corroborates previous studies which reported that when performed in certain ways, peer feedback on writing may be more helpful than teacher feedback (Ebadi & Rahimi, 2017). This is especially the case when peer feedback is aided by digital technology. A key

component of the study was the peer feedback process using Google Docs. The results suggested that the use of this tool enhanced the effectiveness and efficiency of the feedback process (cf. Alharbi & Alqefari, 2021). This agreed with Vengadasalam's (2021) and Tathahira's (2020) suggestion that digital tools could encourage more critical thinking on the part of students while facilitating a more learner-centered approach to education. As such, the findings support the literature claiming that this and similar tools could offer more satisfactory feedback on EFL writing.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The current study investigated how peer feedback through Google Docs could influence Saudi female EFL learners' perceived writing skills and self-efficacy. The results demonstrated that the experimental groups outperformed the control group in terms of perceived content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. Far more participants in the experimental groups found the feedback they received to be "very useful" than the control group, suggesting they perceived that type of feedback to be highly relevant and engaging. These same participants also showed a much higher rise in self-efficacy scores after the experiment compared to the control group, a result suggesting the value of this strategy when it comes to boosting EFL writers' self-confidence.

The results also indicated that providing EFL learners with the opportunity to utilize Google Docs (or similar tools) for peer feedback activities is likely to make them accept and incorporate peer comments, which can eventually lead to greater writing proficiency and confidence. While the limitations of the study made it impossible to generalize the findings beyond the sample, the results still demonstrated that incorporating collaborative platforms like Google Docs could offer considerable benefits to EFL learners. This study also expands the current literature on learner self-efficacy and peer feedback in language learning. Furthermore, the empirical data that the study collected could be used to improve language learning and teaching and for further research, as outlined below.

## VII. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, educational institutions and teachers could leverage digital tools like Google Docs to make EFL writing classes more learner-centric, interactive, engaging, and effective. The study also recommends using peer review to complement traditional teacher-based reviews of students' work. In addition, the results of the present study could encourage curriculum designers and policymakers to consider these tools in the formation of education policy and the curriculum.

The current study could serve as a foundation for future research on technology-enhanced L2 writing. For example, future research could explore the long-term effects of online peer feedback on EFL learners' writing skills and self-efficacy. Since the participants in this study were largely homogenous in terms of proficiency level, age, gender, and nationality, future research could incorporate a more diverse sample to increase the generalizability of the findings. For instance, studies could seek to replicate the results of this study in other countries or contexts. Future studies could also use different data collection methods, such as interviews, to collect qualitative data that would complement the quantitative results of this study. While the current findings are promising, more experimental studies are needed to identify and assess the most effective aspects of peer feedback and thereby inform teaching and curriculum development.

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# Analysis of Arabic Translations of English Implied Conditional Sentences: Difficulties and Implications

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**Abstract**—English implied conditionals pose a challenge when translated into Arabic for syntactic and semantic reasons. This study therefore aims to identify some potential problems when translating conditional sentences without the conditional marker ‘if’ or any other conditional marker. To accomplish this goal, thirty Arab students from Yarmouk University were requested to translate a list of inferred conditional structures into their target language (TL) equivalents. The study demonstrates that Arabic conditionals do not accurately convey the syntactic and semantic characteristics of English conditionals that are presented without the conditional particle “if”. It also demonstrates that the implicit conditionals cannot be fully translated into non-conditional forms. The study concludes with a discussion of the study’s implications for class from a pedagogical perspective.

**Index Terms**—conditional clause, restrictive modifiers, syntactic features, semantic features, implied condition

## I. INTRODUCTION

Conditional expressed differently in different languages. Because Arabic contains numerous conditional indicators that establish the meaning of conditional sentences, English, for instance, expresses conditionals differently from Arabic. In order to properly translate a conditional sentence, the translator must first determine which structures indicate a condition and then translate those elements into their comparable structures in the target language. It is doubtful that the syntactic and semantic aspects will be translated correctly into their target equivalents if they are not completely realized.

A conditional sentence consists of two clauses, namely ‘if clause’ and ‘main clause’. The first clause is used to introduce and specify the condition, and the second is used to provide the result or consequence of the condition (Khalil, 2010; Kumakiri, 2013). A large number of English conditionals are introduced by the subordinate particle ‘if’ which expresses a direct relationship between the two clauses. This relationship can be expressed in different types of conditions. Quirk et al. (1985, pp. 1092–97) point out four types of conditional sentences:

- (a) The zero conditional represents facts and certainties, such as if I have a headache, I take an aspirin.
- (b) The first conditional expresses a hypothetical situation, the truth of which is unverified, such as ‘If you study hard, you will pass the exam’.
- (c) The second conditional describes less probable situations and refers to imaginary events such as: If I had money, I would buy a yacht.
- (d) The third conditional refers to contrary-to-fact past events, such as if I had listened to my teacher’s advice, I would not have failed the test.

In the constructions above, conditionals are indicated by the use of if clauses. These constructions have been widely tackled in grammar books. However, not much research has been conducted on implied conditionals and their syntactic and semantic features, especially in English and Arabic. Since the syntactic system determines the production of well-formed sentences, the translation of implied conditionals is seen as a challenge for a translator who lacks the basic skills of their syntactic and semantic knowledge or receives no sufficient knowledge of various conditional structures. English conditional sentences pose a challenge because there are different possible meanings of conditional sentences (Norris, 2003; Ramirez, 2005). Similarly, Nekoueizdah and Bahrani (2013) point out that meanings, forms, and time-tense relationships cause the major obstacles in conditional sentences for nonnative speakers of English. Because the translator must recognize different syntactic structures as conditionals before correctly translating them into their TL conditional equivalents, the task may be more difficult when “if” is not present. For instance, even though the word “if” is not used directly, a translator needs to understand that a statement like “should you have a headache, take an aspirin” conveys the meaning of “if”. To be able to set the proper TL equivalent structure, he must also be able to identify the sort of conditional, such as zero conditional (take an aspirin if you have a headache), to be able to set the appropriate TL equivalent structure. Notably, Leech (1982) argues that “word order links (e.g., syntax) represent the transmission of meaning, so knowledge of grammar is a core issue in translation” (p. 3).

In this respect, Thakur (1997) observes that “the syntactic relationship between words in a sentence depends highly on word order and word-class membership” (p. 88). Therefore, forming the words in sentences that do not have ‘if’ or any equivalent conjunction makes the creation of conditional sentences possible. Commenting on this topic, Swan (2000) explains that “placing the verb operator such as were, should, and had before the subject instead of ‘if’ in conditionals occurs in the formal style of English” (p. 261).

Knowledge of grammar not only concerns the surface structure of sentences, but also the deep or implicit structure. People tend to say something in a more economical way to avoid wasting unnecessary time or words. As a matter of fact, concise language is more efficient and effective in communicating a message. People therefore use alternatives to the conditional clause to give readers or listeners different options and meanings for conditionals to get their points across more effectively. Schueler (2008) provides an array of English structures in which implied conditionals are possible, such as noun phrases, prepositional phrases, coordinating conjunctions, restrictive modifiers (restrictive adjectives and restrictive relative clauses), and participles, to mention a few. So, sentences of implied condition do not have any evident conditional clause. The conditional clause is usually preoccupied by another word or phrase, such as a noun or noun phrase, an adjective, or a relative clause. Judging from the main clause, one may assume that anyone who has basic knowledge of conditional sentences has no difficulty taking these nouns and phrases as signs of a conditional sense.

## II. ARABIC CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

Arabic conditionals contain two correlative clauses preceded by a conditional particle. The particle signifies the semantic relation of one clause to another. Unlike English, where the sequence of the verb forms determines the type of condition, Arabic depends on the various markers to specify the type of condition and its semantic implication (Ryding, 2005). Wright (1986) explains “that in Arabic there are more than 16 conditional particles, but the basic conditional particles usually used are *itha*, *inn*, and *law*” (p. 12). Although these conditional particles are roughly equivalent to ‘if’, they have syntactic and semantic differences in Arabic, as shown below:

(A) Particle (*inn*) is the most conditional particle, which originally refers to condition. It introduces one perfect form in the two clauses, or one of them might utilize perfect or imperfect. According to Wright (1986), “the time reference of this particle regardless of the form of the verb is confined to the future” (p. 13). He holds that *inn* introduces a doubted event whose occurrence may or may not be guaranteed. i.e., its function is similar to “if”, which denotes type one in English. Thus, the verb (perfect or imperfect) that *inn* selects in either clause makes no difference in its future reference since the particle, not the tense, is what determines the type of condition in Arabic.

(B) Particle *ithaa* is often followed by the perfect and denotes conditionality whenever the context of the result condition is contingent on the condition. Unlike *inn*, which denotes a type of condition whose realization is skeptical, *ithaa* refers to a type of condition whose realization is certain. Al Jurjani (1983) “treats *ithaa* as a temporal device that denotes the certainty of the action about which the speaker has no doubt and therefore lies beyond the scope of conditionality” (p. 118). In other words, *ithaa* denotes zero conditional. In a similar vein, al Galayni (1980) explains that *ithaa* expresses an occurrence of the conditional clause about which the speaker has no doubts. In this sense, the main clause is not conditioned by the if clause. He further contends that the particle per se determines the type of condition and its semantic function rather than the form of the verb. To elucidate the point further, consider,

1. *inn* tadrus tanjah If you study, you will pass.
2. *itha* darasta najahta if you study, you pass.

The speaker in (a) is skeptical about the realization of the event. The main clause (passing the exam) is conditioned by the conditional clause (studying) that is possible to occur in the future. As for (b), the condition (the addressee’s studying) is certain as a general rule. There is no doubt about its future occurrence. In this case, (b) denotes a zero conditional clause, while (a) denotes type one condition. The two particles therefore cannot be used interchangeably.

As for the third marker (*law*), it is used in an unfulfilled condition. Ibn Aqil (2011) observes that this marker expresses conditionality that fails to come about in the past or one that is contrary to fact. This conditional marker is often used to express unreal conditional sentences. Although Arabic typically employs the verb in the perfect tense both semantically and structurally, this particle may select the imperfect tense in certain contexts with a past reference. But the impossible situation, according to Ryding (2005), is expressed by the perfect tense.

Unlike English, where condition type is determined by the sequence of verb forms, Arabic condition type is determined by the conditional marker. Therefore, the three conditional markers (*inn*, *ithaa*, and *law*) differ semantically and structurally because the particle determines the type of condition in Arabic. As regards verbs, Frosch and Byrne (2012) mention that English often employs certain verbs such as were, had, and should in conditional sentences to replace if, while Arabic does not employ such verbs. They also mention that the verbs used in English conditional structures agree in tense, whereas in Arabic such agreement is not required.

This background knowledge of conditional markers and their functions in Arabic is essential for rendering English conditionals appropriately into Arabic.

## III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Implied conditional sentences have not been adequately tackled in the literature from a translational point of view. There is, therefore, a lacuna in the literature in this field of research, specifically in English and Arabic. This study came to bridge the gap in the literature and elucidate difficulties in translating implied conditionals from English into Arabic. By identifying the specific syntactic structures that students fail to grasp as conditionals, the study may have practical implications for curriculum development and reconsideration of teaching grammar as an integral part of the English language to promote students' potential of learning implicit structures. For example, incompetent students who fail to understand conditional sentences as conditionals and fail to translate them as such may require instruction that is different from the approach that only enables students to acquire the basic skills and facts of a subject. The study highlights the significance of implicit language learning as it allows learners to comprehend the message beyond the literal words used and enhances accuracy in comprehension. It also inspires further research to address this issue in a wider context, offer practical solutions, and consider other possibilities for promoting professional understanding of implicit structures.

#### IV. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A group of 30 translation students (3<sup>rd</sup> year) at Yarmouk University in Jordan were randomly selected to translate 20 English implied conditional sentences into their TL equivalents through a self-administered questionnaire. The group was randomly selected to avoid human bias and represent the population of the sample better. The participants were exposed to English language teaching in the first two years of their major. During this period, they were taught English courses, including grammar.

As for the conditional sentences presented on the questionnaire, each sentence represents a certain structure that implies a conditional sense. In these structures, the conditional clause is occupied by another word or phrase, such as a noun or noun phrase, a relative clause, or an adjective. The items on the self-administered questionnaire have been collected from various books of grammar. These structures fall under various grammatical categories, such as coordinating conjunctions, participial clauses, restrictive modifiers, prepositional clauses, and structures utilizing *were* and *had*. The items (implied conditional sentences to be translated) were chosen equally to exemplify these categories. The inclusion of such various structures helps gain a better picture of the participants' basic knowledge of each conditional structure, as well as their ability to render them appropriately into their Arabic conditional equivalents. See table two.

The items on the questionnaire were arranged randomly to avoid any kind of order bias, the bias that generates from the order of conditional types of sentences. This technique of randomization is used to overcome order bias and withhold students from thinking in a certain direction, which will, in turn, remove discrepancies in the method of collecting data and eliminate bias.

The study does not intend to confirm a specific hypothesis. Rather, it looks for theoretical claims that can be made based on the analysis of the corpus. The authors adopt corpus-driven analysis to avoid being affected by human bias. They intend to derive the results from the analysis of a corpus rather than from an individual opinion. The study therefore confirms no preconceptions or advocates assumptions about the corpus.

To reduce the impact of subjectivity, numerical values have been provided. The quantitative information makes it easy to perform calculations, comparisons, and statistical analyses. The use of numbers is important to establish the significance of the study, document what is known about the problem, and describe the sample. Readers will not lose interest in reading such work, and the numbers provide an adequate summary of the results.

#### V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' responses to the various syntactic structures provided on the questionnaire have been reordered according to their respective categories (see Table 1 below). This technique allows one to look for specific evidence to support some emerging themes. The organization of the responses according to their grammatical categories will guarantee that the analysis flows in a logical way and the order makes sense.

TABLE 1  
STUDENTS' CONDITIONAL TRANSLATIONS

| Type of sentence | Coordinate conjunctions                                            | Frequencies of conditional translations | Percentages of conditional translations | Appropriate conditional translations |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1                | Tell the truth, and you will be saved.                             | 4                                       | 13%                                     | 6%                                   |
| 2                | The patient would have passed away, but the nurse had come quickly | 26                                      | 86%                                     | 86%                                  |
| 3                | Educate yourself, otherwise, you will be ignorant.                 | 5                                       | 16%                                     | -                                    |
| 4                | Visit us, or we shall be hard to satisfy.                          |                                         | 13%                                     | -                                    |
|                  | <b>Participial clauses</b>                                         |                                         |                                         |                                      |
| 5                | Deprived of food, we cannot survive.                               | 14                                      | 13%                                     | -                                    |
| 6                | Not having enough money, we cannot pay for dinner.                 | 6                                       | 20%                                     | -                                    |
| 7                | You need to work hard to succeed.                                  | 5                                       | 16%                                     | -                                    |
| 8                | Drinking too much coffee is harmful.                               | 4                                       | 13%                                     |                                      |
|                  | <b>Prepositional phrase</b>                                        |                                         |                                         |                                      |
| 9                | Without participation, we cannot pass the exam                     | 8                                       | 26%                                     | -                                    |
| 10               | I would have failed the exam without Rosa.                         | 6                                       | 20%                                     | 10%                                  |
| 11               | Under different circumstances, I would have accepted the offer.    | 6                                       | 20%                                     | -                                    |
| 12               | In case of fire, do not use lifts.                                 | 5                                       | 16%                                     | -                                    |
|                  | <b>Restrictive modifiers</b>                                       |                                         |                                         |                                      |
| 13               | A strong man controls himself.                                     | -                                       | -                                       | -                                    |
| 14               | A student who comes late will be punished.                         | -                                       | -                                       | -                                    |
| 15               | Students who do not learn time management do poorly in college.    | -                                       | -                                       | -                                    |
| 16               | An experienced teacher would have tackled the issue differently.   | -                                       | -                                       | -                                    |
|                  | <b>Introductory were, had</b>                                      |                                         |                                         |                                      |
| 17               | Were this my hotel, I would be ashamed.                            | 30                                      | 100%                                    | 100%                                 |
| 18               | Were it not for the construction works, the road would be open.    | 30                                      | 100%                                    | 100%                                 |
| 19               | Had the hotel not been awful, I would have enjoyed myself.         | 30                                      | 100%                                    | 100%                                 |
| 20               | Had Sally decided not to attend the meeting, I would have come.    | 30                                      | 100%                                    | 100%                                 |

#### A. Conditional Translation

A close look at Table 1 indicates that, in most cases, students are not aware that such constructions imply a conditional sense. They may not be able to judge from the main clause that nouns or noun phrases, relative clauses, prepositional phrases, and forms of participial clauses are signs of a conditional clause. This is evident in their translations of category one, category two, category three, and category four. The highest conditional translation is evidently shown in the third category, with number 9 gaining 26%.

The fifth category is at variance with the other four categories, as 100% of the students think that introductory 'were' and 'had' imply a conditional sense and translate them as such, while the lowest percentage of students (zero percent) think that the fourth category (restrictive modifiers) implies no conditional sense at all. In other words, not a single student is aware that restrictive clauses in the fourth category imply a conditional sense. The translations within this category indicate that all students focus on the primary function of the modifiers, neglecting the condition implied.

It might be interesting to observe that, despite the fact that the highest percentage of students are aware that a conditional sense is implied in every single structure in the fifth category, such awareness is probably impacted by the fact that the conditional clause is almost obvious. For example, sentences 19 and 20 are translated appropriately into their Arabic conditional equivalents, while 16 is not, though all of the three express impossible conditions. The presence of had + past participle in 19 and 20 might explain why implied conditional clauses are easy to detect and hence more accessible by all students as opposed to 16 where the conditional clause is almost omitted altogether.

This observation might be true since the available evidence across the categories seems to verify it. Sentence 10, which falls into the category of prepositional phrase, is translated correctly into its Arabic equivalent only by 10% of the students, which means only 3 students out of six were able to translate it appropriately into its Arabic conditional sense. The omission of 'if' and the conditional clause altogether possibly set up an obstacle for students to notice the conditionality of such structures to a high degree. Unlike sentence 10, where only 10% of the students translated it appropriately into its Arabic conditional equivalent, sentence 2 in the first category was translated appropriately into its conditional equivalent by 86% of the students, though both sentences express type 3 conditional.



This kind of comparison again shows that students are more likely to translate an implied conditional sentence appropriately into its Arabic equivalent when the conditional clause is not entirely omitted. The rendering of sentence 2 into its correct Arabic equivalent cannot be attributed to chance, given that 86% of the students got it right. The reason this type of structure is plain to see as an implied conditional and easily translatable feeds into the fact that only 'if' in the conditional clause is implied and the syntax of the structure is almost in order. This fact is also said of 19 and 20, where the conditional clause is almost preserved except for 'if'. This is not the case when it comes to 11 and 16, though both structures express type 3 conditionals, where the majority of students fail to grasp the conditionality of these two sentences because the conditional clause is implied and requires reordering to be retrieved. However, the order of the two clauses, as findings show, has no influence on how sentences are perceived as implied conditionals. For example, in sentence 2, the main clause precedes the implied if-clause, while in 19 and 20, the implied if - clause precedes the main clause. This position has no significant influence on students' ability to perceive such structures that express type 3 conditions as implied conditionals.

As Table 1 shows, zero and type 1 conditionals expressed in various implied conditional structures pose a serious challenge for students to perceive as conditional sentences. This is evident in the first, second, and third categories, and to a higher degree in the fourth category, where none has understood the restrictive modifiers as implied conditional sentences. The conditional clause in these categories is not as salient as in type 2 and 3 conditional structures, i.e., 17, 18, 19, 20, and 2. Also, these latter sentences, unlike other structures, indicate that the syntax of the conditional clause is almost in order.

The slight differences in students' responses to zero and first type conditions across the categories are not statistically significant. Students' perceptions of zero and first type conditions differ only by a small percentage. The majority of the students are unaware that such structures imply a conditional sense and that they need to be translated as such. In light of the students' responses, it is obvious that students are in general not typically taught the variants of implied conditionals because they failed to perceive them as conditionals.

Even the low percentage of the students who managed to perceive the implied conditionality of the structures given on the self-questionnaire have difficulty differentiating between various types of conditions in translation. They are unable to distinguish between the most frequently used particles in Arabic, i.e., "*inn*", "*ithaa*", and "*law*", which are roughly equivalent to 'if'. Their use of these conditional markers makes no functional distinction in translation between zero conditional, first type conditional, impossible conditional, or counter-to-fact statements. As a matter of fact, the participants used these conditionals as though they were synonymous.

The semantic and syntactic difference between *inn*, and *ithaa* has received a lot of attention by many scholars (Alsharaswneh, 2006; Aaswad, 2005). They explain precisely the function of each particle. They observe that *inn* expresses an open possible condition followed either by perfect or imperfect, while *ithaa* is often followed by the perfect and expresses certainty. In other words, *ithaa* refers to what is certain to happen and *inn* to what is uncertain. Although no more than 26% of the students were able to detect a conditional sense across the first four categories, their translations indicate indistinctive applications of such markers. These markers are used interchangeably. For example, sentences 1, 3, and 9 are translated into *inn/ithaa taqul alhaqiqah satanju*, *inn/ithaa tuthaqqif nafasaka lan takuna jahilan*, and *inn/itha lam nusharik lan nnanjaha*, respectively, as if students believe that the two markers have the same function, or else they are not sure of any semantic or syntactic differences between them. In other cases, students use *law* and *ithaa* interchangeably with real conditional sentences, as in 8 and 12 *law/ithaa tashrub gahwa kathiran tadurka*, *ithaa/law kana hunaka hariqun*, and *fala tastakhdim al masaa'id*, respectively. The use of *ithaa* in conjunction with *law* in real conditions indicates that students are not aware that *ithaa* and *law* are semantically and syntactically different.

The use of one particle in conjunction with another different particle indicates students lack the semantic and syntactic skills to use either marker successfully in Arabic. Khalil (2010) states that "situations that are contrary to the fact in the past are denoted by *law* (if) and are followed by a perfect verb in both clauses, condition and main" (p. 287). This statement shows that the use of *ithaa* and *law* interchangeably in students' translations is a serious mistake caused by the lack of adequate knowledge of conditionals in Arabic. Also, the use of *inn* and *ithaa* interchangeably is an indication that they have not received enough practice in Arabic conditional markers. In support of the distinction between these conditional markers, Azis (1989) observes that "*inn* expresses the speaker's skepticism about the realization of the event, while *law* refers to unreal actions in the present. As for *ithaa*, it expresses certainty and is often followed by the perfect" (p. 224).

While students in general misuse the common Arabic conditionals, there is another conditional marker (*law la*) that they applied correctly in 2 and, to a lesser degree, in 10: *law la gudumu almumaridah la matal maridu*, *law la Rosa larasabtu fil imtihaan*. This particle complex, meaning "if it had not been for". It is a negative form of *law* (if. not). Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) observe that "*law la* (if not) should be followed by a nominal in condition and a verbal in main clause" (p. 141). Students' responses to sentences 2 and 10 indicate their use of the complex particle *law la* in the conditional clause and the emphatic *lam* (I) in the main clause. This is an appropriate use in line with the Arabic rules of grammar, "which stipulate that the main clause is frequently but not necessarily introduced by the emphatic *lam*" (Al Aswad, 2005, p. 74). Again, what accounts for more appropriate conditional translations (86% for 2) as opposed to 10% for sentence 10 is the fact that the conditional clause in 2 is almost explicit and in order. Both sentences express the third conditional type. This provides further evidence that what accounts for detecting and then translating an implied

conditional sentence appropriately into Arabic is in general not the type of condition but rather how clearly the conditional clause is stated.

### B. Non-Conditional Translation

Just as students have difficulty translating English implied conditionals into Arabic, their non-conditional translations, though greatly outnumbering conditional translations, are not entirely free from mistakes. This defect in their translation is due to poor grammatical knowledge.

As Table 2 shows, a considerable number of participants are aware that English structures shown in the first category involve coordinate conjunctions, but their translation of such conjunctions using one single equivalent 'aw' without considering the context is a big mistake. This shows in their translations of sentences 1, 3, and 4 in the first category. This behavior has led to inadequate translations expressed in awkward Arabic structures. For example, the Arabic translation of 1 *qul alhaqiqa aw satanju*, literally, tell the truth or you will be saved, makes no sense because the two ideas are not logically connected. A more adequate translation of the sentence could be *qul algaigah liky tanju*, tell the truth in order to be saved. Although the translations of 3, and 4 make sense, they can be better translated by replacing *aw* with *wa illa* (otherwise), which is more appropriate to contrast ideas.

TABLE 2  
STUDENTS' NON-CONDITIONAL TRANSLATIONS

| Type of sentence | Coordinate conjunctions                                            | Frequency of non-conditional translations | Percentage of non-conditional translations | Appropriate non-conditional translation |
|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1                | Tell the truth, and you will be saved.                             | 26                                        | 86%                                        | 77%                                     |
| 2                | The patient would have passed away, but the nurse had come quickly | 4                                         | 13%                                        | 13%                                     |
| 3                | Educate yourself, otherwise, you will be ignorant.                 | 25                                        | 83%                                        | 83%                                     |
| 4                | Visit us, or we shall be hard to satisfy.                          | 26                                        | 86%                                        | 86%                                     |
|                  | <b>Participial clauses</b>                                         |                                           |                                            |                                         |
| 5                | Deprived of food, we cannot survive.                               | 26                                        | 86%                                        | 86%                                     |
| 6                | Not having enough money, we cannot pay for dinner.                 | 24                                        | 80%                                        | 80%                                     |
| 7                | You need to work hard to succeed                                   | 25                                        | 83%                                        | 83%                                     |
| 8                | Drinking too much coffee is harmful.                               | 26                                        | 86%                                        | 86%                                     |
|                  | <b>Prepositional phrases</b>                                       |                                           |                                            |                                         |
| 9                | Without participation, we cannot pass the exam.                    | 22                                        | 73%                                        | 73%                                     |
| 10               | I would have failed the exam without Rosa.                         | 24                                        | 80%                                        | 61%                                     |
| 11               | Under different circumstances, I would have accepted the offer.    | 24                                        | 80%                                        | 61%                                     |
| 12               | In case of fire, do not use lifts.                                 | 25                                        | 83%                                        | 48%                                     |
|                  | <b>Restrictive modifiers</b>                                       |                                           |                                            |                                         |
| 13               | A student who comes late will be punished.                         | 30                                        | 100%                                       | 50%                                     |
| 14               | A student who comes late will be punished.                         | 30                                        | 100%                                       | 66%                                     |
| 15               | Students who do not learn time management do poorly in college.    | 30                                        | 100%                                       | 86%                                     |
| 16               | An experienced teacher would have tackled the issue differently.   | 30                                        | 100%                                       | 66%                                     |
|                  | <b>Introductory were, had</b>                                      |                                           |                                            |                                         |
| 17               | Were this my hotel, I would be ashamed.                            | -                                         | -                                          | -                                       |
| 18               | Were it not for the construction works, the road would be open.    | -                                         | -                                          | -                                       |
| 19               | Had the hotel not been awful, I would have enjoyed myself.         | -                                         | -                                          | -                                       |
| 20               | Had Sally decided not to attend the meeting, I would have come.    | -                                         | -                                          | -                                       |

Failing to account for a conditional sense might lead to ambiguity in meaning if the structure of the sentence is not given enough care. The majority of students who failed to detect the conditionality of the first category applied one single word "aw" (or) as equivalent in translation for the three coordinate conjunctions (and, otherwise, and or).

The more appropriate non-conditional translations, as Table 2 indicates, fall in the second category, where the majority of students translated each sentence structure correctly into Arabic. Unlike in the first category, in the second category the majority of students switched the order of the original text in translation but maintained the meaning, as can be seen in 5, 6, and 7, respectively: *la yumkin an naish wa nunu mahrumuna mina attaam*, we cannot survive while we have no food; *la yumkin an nadfa thamana faturna wa nunu la nmlik al mal alkafi*, we cannot pay for food while having no enough money; *tahtaj an tamala bijid litanjaha*, you need to work hard in order to succeed. Their translation here is not

strictly literal since their focus is on delivering the meaning of the original rather than on the order. Such focus has led to a more natural flow than literal translation.

The lowest level of appropriateness shows in the fourth category, where students' attempts to translate literally led to awkward or senseless structures because they failed to make a logical connection between the ideas involved. For example, translations of 13, 14, and 15: *rajulun qawai yadbitu nafsahu*, literally (a man strong controls himself), *ayy talib allathi yati mutaikhran sayagab*, literally any student who comes late will be punished, and *hunaka tullabun althaina yatalumuna idarat alwaqt diafun fi aldirasah kulliyah*, literally there are students who do not learn time management and they are poor in college, respectively are grammatically ill in Arabic. The indefinite must be turned into the definite form, which is marked by *al* (the). Thus the correct grammatical structure for 13 is *alrajujulu alqawiyyu yazbitu nafsahu*, literally (the man strong controls himself). This definite form in Arabic denotes any man that is strong, rather than a specific man in particular.

As for 14, the Arabic version is grammatically ill since Arabic does not approve the use of a relative clause as a modifier with any indefinite pronoun such as anyone, anybody, etc. Unlike English, where indefinite pronouns require a relative clause as a modifier, in Arabic, the verb comes right after such indefinite pronouns without the need for a relative word. This pitfall in the translation of 13, 14, and 15 indicates poor grammar skills of students in dealing with restrictive modifiers. Apparently, their knowledge of constructing grammatically correct sentences involving definite and indefinite articles is limited.

Literal translation therefore does not always work, especially when some information is implicit. According to Traugott et al. (2010), "some translations do not read naturally because they require a conditional marker to give it a sense" (p. 3). Therefore, conditional translations of such implied structures are more appropriate than non-conditional translations to communicate the message as clearly as possible.

There is further evidence that literal translation produces ill grammatical structures. Sentence 12 is translated literally into *fi hal annar, la tastakhdim almasaa'id*, which is an awkward literal translation that does not read naturally. A more accepted translation requires the use of the conditional marker *ithaa* that expresses certainty: *itha kana hunaka hariq / itha ma waqa hariq, fala tastakham al msaaid*. The use of *ithaa* is more appropriate as it expresses a general rule (zero conditional) and makes the meaning clear. Sentence 11 is another example that non-conditional translation makes no sense as some students used the wrong tense. *Tahta durufin mukhtalifah, saqbalu al ard*, under different circumstances, I will accept the offer. This translation does not express an impossible condition, as the original text indicates.

These failures in translation indicate that certain implied structures do not make sense in translation unless they are translated functionally into Arabic conditionals. A functional approach is therefore more effective than literal translation since it focuses on the specific message and ensures that the target readers understand the message in a relevant and effective way.

It can be noted from the foregoing discussion that there are at least two challenges to be handled, namely, challenges of perceiving implied conditionals in English as conditional sentences and challenges of translating such implied conditionals appropriately into Arabic conditionals. The findings also show that there are far more non-conditional translations than there are conditional translations, since the majority of students neglected the implied conditional sense and preferred to translate them directly. The lowest percentage of students who identified these structures as conditionals and translated them as such into Arabic conditionals had difficulty translating them appropriately into appropriate Arabic structures. They apparently lack knowledge of the functions of the three essential markers in Arabic. With the exception of the fifth category, which 100% of the students translated appropriately into Arabic conditionals, few sentences in the other categories were translated properly into Arabic conditionals.

As for non-conditional translations, they are in general direct and literal, which led to ambiguity in meaning due to the senseless or awkward Arabic structures. Students have difficulty translating coordinate conjunctions into correct Arabic equivalents. They also have difficulty translating restrictive modifiers in particular properly into Arabic. Essentially, the findings indicate that students are in general not typically taught the variants of conditionals, and the deficiency can be traced to not having adequate knowledge of the variants of conditionals in terms of form, meaning, and use.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE

To help overcome the difficulties of translating conditionals, instructors need to spend adequate time on each type of condition, starting with the easiest type. Real conditionals must be taught before unreal or imaginary conditions. In each type, students need to have sufficient practice to understand it syntactically and semantically in different situations and different stages of learning. Nur (2017) observes that each conditional sentence is significant to learn in terms of form, meaning, and use so that learners can learn syntactic changes of each type and all types' semantics. To make learning closer to their reality, students may be encouraged to use conditionals to express their wishes, requests, and desires in communicative manners.

At later stages, variations of implied conditionals can be introduced through clear explanations and examples. This can be done through an incremental process where a variety of syntactic structures denoting a particular type of condition are presented at a time along with their possible translations in the target language. Instructors may need to use parallel corpora of conditionals to help students learn translational equivalents between the source language and the target language as well as collocational and syntactic patterns. In so doing, instructors enrich their personal knowledge of the

language, design a better classroom curriculum and material, and identify key problems that need to be considered in syllabus design. For example, Siahaan and Silitonga (2020) advocate the inclusion of conditional sentences in all English performances or skills, e.g., listening, reading, speaking, and writing. They argue that knowing the variants of the sentences will make them easier to recognize and understand the message.

At another level, teachers may need to follow Chomsky's theory TGG (transformational generative grammar), where transformations can be made on linguistic structures, in order to clarify some ambiguities in the meaning of conditional sentences and thus help students understand the deep meaning of the sentence. Through substitutions, rearrangement, deletion, and binding as forms of transformation, learners can gain experience in inverted or sometimes reduced conditionals where the reduced conditional presented serves as a surface structure that needs to be linked to the deep structure in which the if clause is to be spelled out. To this end, the instructor may provide students with worksheets containing an array of implied conditional structures that need to be rewritten using conditional sentences. It may also be useful to ask them for their TL conditional equivalents. In so doing, the teacher makes sure that students use appropriate TL equivalents.

The importance of grammar instruction therefore has reclaimed its appropriate place in the language classroom curriculum (Richards & Renandya, 2002). They agree that grammar is too crucial to be disregarded since, for learners, language growth will be hampered. If learners do not have a firm understanding of grammar with all its particularities, they will not be able to express subtle differences in meaning in translation. Kartira and Irma (2021) observe that conditional sentences are a significant obstacle to overcome for students of English as a foreign language.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The study investigated the semantic and syntactic aspects of implied conditionals in translation with a view to highlighting some of the pitfalls that Arab students may encounter in translating such constructions. The study found that the greater majority of students are not aware of the conditionality of the structures provided. They do not seem to dwell on the main clause to detect a conditional sense. Rather, they only translate the sentence as a conditional sentence when the conditional clause is almost preserved except for 'if'. This is most evident in type 2 where the introductory words were and had are obvious, and type 3 conditionals where had + past particle are explicitly stated.

Literal translation is predominant in their translation. Not much attention is paid to the functional translation of a sentence as a whole. Such literal translation sometimes produced unintelligible sentences and poor grammatical structures as a result of students' failing to render them functionally into Arabic conditionals. The study also showed that students in general had poor knowledge of conditionals in the SL. As for Arabic, the low percentage of students who managed to translate sentences into Arabic conditionals across the first four categories had difficulty distinguishing between the different types of condition. This showed in their use of the three Arabic markers interchangeably as equivalents for zero, first type, and third type conditions.

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# Pedagogical Principles as the Basis for Multiliteracy Assessment in Literature Learning in Higher Education

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**Abstract**—The two main topics covered in this paper are the pedagogical principles of multiliteracy as the cornerstone of successful assessment and the ideal forms of literariness in higher education teaching and learning. Evaluating multiliteracy is essential for showing that students have understood the material and proving that they can interact with many genres at the same degree of complexity. These evaluations are also essential for informing decisions about education and curriculum development. Assessments' design must incorporate practical educational concepts to convert theoretical frameworks into proper instruments that guarantee relevance, fairness, and accuracy. Assessments can create a learning environment that supports the development of critical professional skills by upholding solid pedagogical ideas. This study follows Borg and Gall's research and development (R&D) approach, concentrating on the first two phases, Phase 1 (information collection and research) and Phase 2 (planning). It uses needs analysis and research data to direct the evaluation procedure. The results highlight the need to include practical pedagogical components, such as explicit knowledge transformation, real-world practice contexts, and reflective learning, in assessing multiliteracy in literary education. With a heavy emphasis on literary literacy, these guidelines guarantee that evaluations in literary education test critical thinking, creativity, and the capacity to comprehend and produce various types of literacy in addition to content knowledge.

**Index Terms**—pedagogical principles, higher education, literacy, multiliteracy assessment, literature learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today, literacy encompasses more than just the ability to read and write. Beyond traditional literacy, the capacity to understand, interpret, and communicate ideas in various formats or media has become a crucial component of education. In this sense, the multiliteracy approach is essential for assisting students in developing their analytical skills and ability to navigate a complicated world.

Multiliteracy is essential for students to comprehend literary texts and their relationships to diverse cultural, social, and technical contexts in the framework of literature studies in higher education. Activities related to evaluation cannot be divorced from the learning process. A well-designed examination can spark students' enthusiasm for learning, allowing them to reach their maximum potential and produce the best results. According to Badjeber et al. (2018) and Neina and Wagiran (2023), evaluation is crucial to learning. It is necessary to determine the success and accomplishment of learning objectives. A proper evaluation procedure may also develop students' critical and creative thinking, preparing them to take on global challenges and develop into competent, exceptional people.

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The foundation of today's educational procedures must be assessed if better human resources are to be developed. According to Lo and Leung (2022), evaluation is essential to good teaching and learning because it offers feedback that guides learning objectives and proves student accomplishment. In Indonesia, the education paradigm has changed, affecting how assessments are conducted. Assessments used to be mainly concerned with learning outcomes. According to Tan (2018), educational assessments put students at the center of the learning process in Generation 4.0. According to Iman et al. (2021), the previous evaluation paradigm frequently ignored the entire learning process in favor of merely satisfying basic norms. As a result, teachers may become the primary authority in teaching and learning, diminishing students' roles in the process (Abidin, 2015; Elihami, 2019; Nuryani et al., 2019). This problem emphasizes how education's assessment system needs to be reoriented to serve the needs of academics, society, and the workforce better.

Accordingly, multiliteracy evaluation is crucial for gauging students' proficiency with academic material and their capacity to use it wisely in various contexts and media (Buckley-Walker et al., 2017; Savva, 2019). These tests also evaluate critical thinking, analysis, problem-solving, and effective communication (Botelho et al., 2014; Dawson, 2020). This is highly pertinent in literary studies, which seek to advance holistic development.

Since they offer a framework that guarantees assessments are impartial, accurate, and pertinent, sound pedagogical principles are essential to creating a successful assessment. The goal of assessments created with proper educational concepts is to cultivate abilities that students may use in their personal and professional lives (Ellaway, 2019; Kim Anh, 2024; Pellegrino, 2018; Wilson & Tan, 2023). These guidelines ensure that examinations can adapt to different learning preferences and skill levels, giving every student an equal chance to reach their full potential. Students need this kind of training to overcome obstacles in their personal and professional lives.

Furthermore, evaluations that allow students to apply their information in a variety of circumstances as well as assess what they have learned are made possible by pedagogical principles (Khamidullaevna, 2022; T M & Gupta, 2022). Effective teaching guarantees that multiliteracy tests accommodate many modes of cognition and learning, giving each student an equal chance to exhibit various skills (Andreev & Usova, 2019; LaVelle et al., 2020). These guidelines also help teachers create tests that encourage in-depth, relevant learning and get pupils ready for problems they may face in the real world. Thus, developing a comprehensive, student-centered learning environment requires incorporating pedagogical ideas into multiliteracy assessments.

This article discusses pedagogical ideas that serve as the foundation for multiliteracy assessment in higher-level literary learning. As a result, the problem in this paper is conceptualized as follows.

1. How do pedagogical principles appear when evaluating multiliteracy in literary learning in higher education?
2. In the context of literary learning in higher education, what are the obstacles to incorporating pedagogical concepts into multiliteracy assessment, and what are the most effective ways to get beyond them?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Pedagogical Foundations for Multiliteracy Evaluation

Pedagogical principles are fundamental criteria that guarantee the efficacy, significance, and customization of the assessment process to suit the needs of students (Garayev, 2023; Romiaty et al., 2024). These tenets aim to promote students' intellectual, social, and emotional development by supporting their development.

Research has shown that essential factors must be considered when creating instructional concepts. To make evaluations more relevant and exciting, these principles must prioritize each student's unique requirements, interests, and learning preferences (Froldova et al., 2017; Pérez Cavana, 2012; Simonova & Poulova, 2014). According to Crean and Prunty (2011) and Dolin et al. (2018), they should also support students in building knowledge through reflection, experiential learning, and interactions with peers and the surrounding environment. Thirdly, tests ought to be tied to real-world situations so that students can see how the knowledge they have gained can be put to use (Minavvarovna et al., 2022; T M & Gupta, 2022). Fourthly, critical thinking should be encouraged, enabling students to assess, evaluate, and synthesize knowledge while encouraging originality and creativity (Khamidullaevna, 2022; Nasya Putri Nabila et al., 2024). Finally, students should be encouraged to reflect on their learning to improve their understanding and outcomes (Davies, 1997; Nazim qızı Talışinski, 2022).

The pedagogical principles discussed in the article here apply to the rules that are followed when creating and implementing assessments. These tests measure students' proficiency with the subject matter (product) and the many modes and forms of interpretation, analysis, and expression of meaning (process). These ideas are rooted in educational approaches that foster critical thinking, teamwork, creativity, and adaptability—skills crucial in the modern, digitally connected world. These pedagogical concepts provide ecological, fair, and authentic student assessments in multiliteracy assessment, which align with contemporary educational requirements.

### B. Assessment of Multiliteracy in Literature Learning in Higher Education

According to Nitko (1989), assessment is obtaining data to make decisions concerning students, programs, curricula, and institutions. The three primary parts of this definition are the formal endeavor, the student status, and the educational variables of interest. An intentional and methodical attempt is referred to as a formal endeavor. Student status refers to their abilities, knowledge, and attitudes, whereas educational variables of interest deal with other facets of education.

According to Abidin (2015), multiliteracy entails using various techniques to convey and comprehend concepts and information using traditional and novel media, including texts, symbols, and multimedia. To elaborate, Bahtiar and Nasrullah (2019) define multiliteracy as the capacity in various media. The ability to interact with many languages, media, and communication formats—such as text, images, sounds, and videos—is included in it (Karkar Esperat, 2024; Seglem & Garcia, 2022).

Holdren (2012) suggests that criteria emphasize processes and products in the assessment context, incorporate new activities with explicit instructions for interpreting criteria, and encourage communication between assessors and students. In order to support the multiliteracy agenda and change educational practices, multiliteracy assessments seek to test students' competencies and comprehension more extensively and accurately. According to Anderson (2013), Nash (2018), and Zammit (2018), formative practices and flexible criteria are encouraged in multiliteracy assessments, which in turn promote cross-modal meaning-making. In their work, Anderson and Kachorsky (2019) reframe multiliteracy assessment as a multimodal composition paradigm, emphasizing essential distinctions and providing recommendations for updating higher education's instructional strategies. This article presents a multiliteracy assessment strategy that offers suggestions for improving assessment procedures in literary education, encouraging a multiliteracy approach to learning, and accurately assessing students' comprehension and competencies.

### III. METHOD

#### A. Research Design

Utilizing research and development (R&D) protocols as described by Gall et al. (1983), modified to meet the objectives and circumstances of the present investigation, this study takes a qualitative approach. The study focuses on the first two stages of research and development, or (a) planning and information collection and (b) research. These actions result in the following outcomes: 1) doing a requirements analysis as part of an initial study to find pedagogical components for applying multiliteracy assessments based on literary learning in higher education. 2) defining pedagogical guidelines for multiliteracy evaluation and pointing out the difficulties in applying these guidelines to the assessment of literary learning in higher education.

#### B. Information & Data Sources

Data from the assessment instruments used in literature courses at five Indonesian universities were used to 1) identify pedagogical components in applying multiliteracy assessments, which were then used to design the pedagogical principles for multiliteracy assessment in higher education. 2) The findings of an analysis, based on interviews with five professors who teach prose at Indonesian universities, on the difficulties encountered in incorporating pedagogical concepts into multiliteracy assessments in the literature study. Purposive sampling techniques were employed to choose the participants.

### IV. RESULT

#### A. Educational Foundations for Multiliteracy Evaluation of Literature Instruction in Postsecondary Education

##### 1. An explanation of the needs analysis's findings

According to Bloom's taxonomy and its later updates, multiliteracy skills are organized around eight core abilities, which the conceptual model supports. These skills include locating, comprehending, applying, assessing, evaluating, synthesizing, producing, and communicating (Anderson & Kachorsky, 2019; Bloom, 1956; Churches, 2009; Turcsanyi-Szabo, 2012).

Furthermore, as Kalantzis et al. (2003) point out, multiliteracy pedagogy aims to introduce students to various texts without alienating them. As a result, pedagogical principles supporting more precise evaluation models are necessary, especially in literary education. In this setting, process-based literary learning is evaluated using four primary components of multiliteracy pedagogy: critical frames, explicit learning, practical circumstances, and critical transformations (Cope & Kalantzis, 2005). Although these elements offer a comprehensive framework, they must be divided into more focused instructional concepts to simplify the evaluation process.

A requirements analysis to determine pedagogical components in implementing multiliteracy assessments in literary education at higher education institutions was part of the preliminary study that was carried out to create these principles. The investigation concentrated on the evaluation instruments utilized in literature classes at five Indonesian institutions. Purposive sampling was used to choose these colleges based on the learning objectives of the literature programs.

To ascertain if the pertinent principles had been applied, pedagogical indicators were used to study each assessment instrument from the five universities. After that, essential indicators were mapped out to direct the creation of the necessary educational concepts. Below is a summary of the findings from this preliminary investigation into using pedagogical principles.

Sixty percent of the evaluation tools did not include practical scenarios in literary assessment, according to the examination of the tools. This represents a 40% implementation of the first indicator. Pre-learning evaluation, the first component, aids in establishing a learner's fundamental comprehension of the subject matter. It is essential because it establishes the foundation for the learner's self-identification and offers insights into their sociocultural background.



Fostering insight and profound comprehension through the learning process is the subject of the second indicator. According to the analysis, a reflection-based learning model demonstrated that every gadget (100%) complies with this component. This indication is connected to tests given to students to gauge their understanding of the subject matter. The third indicator is a vital frame that students can utilize to work creatively while honing fundamental skills. Based on the investigation, four devices (80%) lack a vital frame element, whereas one device (20%) already possesses one. This third element has to do with evaluating literary appreciation through fundamental research. This dimension is desperately needed as a catalyst to create a shift in viewpoint that will ultimately lead to a change in attitude to be more positive.

Just 20% of the tools include the third criterion, which focuses on creating important frameworks that enable students to work creatively and build necessary skills; the remaining 80% do not. The critical frame ignites shifts in viewpoint and attitudes toward more favorable outcomes, vital for literary enjoyment and fundamental inquiry. Performative activities demonstrate learning for the fourth indicator, transformative practice. The analysis shows that whereas 80% of the tools have not satisfied this indicator, 20% of them have. This part evaluates literary expression and creativity via oral or written performance.

To summarise, examining these four indicators reveals that most evaluation instruments still fail to meet the requirements of multiliteracy pedagogy. This is a starting point for formulating policies for creating and executing tests that gauge students' understanding of the material and their capacity to comprehend, interpret, and convey meaning in various media and formats. These rules, also known as pedagogical principles, emphasize good attitudes, creativity, critical thinking, independence, invention, and knowledge acquisition.

## 2. Pedagogical Principles of Literature Learning in Higher Education: Multiliteracy Assessment

The outcomes of the needs analysis of the completed learning tools and the pedagogical components of multiliteracy, which serve as the foundation for assessments in literary education, form the two fundamental principles underlying this study's pedagogical framework for multiliteracy assessment in higher education literature learning. The alignment of data from these two sources is then outlined in detail by the pedagogical principles guiding multiliteracy assessments. These principles are subsequently translated into technical specifications, serving as guidelines for a multiliteracy-based assessment system in higher education literary learning. Key concepts among these guiding principles include critical transformation, essential frameworks, explicit learning, and practical situations.

### a. Critical Situation Principle

The success indicators for applying practical situational principles in prose learning aim to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural context and provide a structured learning sequence vital for the formation of self-identity (Al-Hafizh, 2010; Sholehuddin et al., 2019; Wang, 2021). Pre-learning assessments are linked to this principle to gauge students' foundational knowledge of the material (Kaufman, 1978; Landry, 2016). Table 1 outlines this essential element.

TABLE 1  
CRITICAL SITUATION PRINCIPLES IN MULTILITERACY ASSESSMENT

| Subaspects         | Principle                                          | Norm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Critical situation | Knowledge of the sociocultural context             | The evaluation can gauge how well students can recognize, clarify, and connect sociocultural components of the literary work under study to their experiences or background knowledge.                                                                         |
|                    |                                                    | The evaluation gauged the students' comprehension of how sociocultural variations impact how literary works are seen and interpreted.                                                                                                                          |
|                    | Participating actively in exams before learning    | The evaluation process measured the students' proficiency in pre-learning exercises to investigate their comprehension of the socio-cultural background of literary works.                                                                                     |
|                    | Ability to relate one's identity to literary works | The exam can gauge how well pupils can relate significant sociocultural concerns to intrinsic and extrinsic literary aspects.                                                                                                                                  |
|                    |                                                    | Evaluations show pupils can reflect and create literary works relevant to their experiences or worldviews.                                                                                                                                                     |
|                    | Building capacity through pivotal circumstances    | The assessment can determine how well students use their understanding of socioculture to analyze literary works critically and question the attitudes, assumptions, and points of view they put forward.                                                      |
|                    |                                                    | In the evaluation, students' opinions were developed and bolstered by proof drawn from literary works and personal experiences, indicating that they had comprehended the subject. It might also, nevertheless, apply the information in a more general sense. |
|                    | Increasing motivation and learning enthusiasm      | The evaluation can potentially increase students' enthusiasm and drive to read prose pieces connected to sociocultural settings that apply to their daily lives.                                                                                               |
|                    |                                                    | The evaluation demonstrates a passion for experiential learning activities, like project-based assignments or talks that relate literature to cultural contexts.                                                                                               |

b. Clear Learning Principles

The objective of the multiliteracy evaluation process's success indicators for putting explicit learning principles into practice is to develop profound knowledge and understanding (Gijbels et al., 2005; Sahni, 2018; Thaba-Nkadimene & Molotja, 2021). This part of the learning process is connected to formative evaluation, which offers input on how well students have understood the material (Botezatu, 2023; I Dewa Ayu Made Meilani Pramesti, 2024). Table 2 lists the components of transparent learning.

TABLE 2  
UNAMBIGUOUS LEARNING CONCEPTS FOR MULTILITERACY EVALUATION

| Subaspects                  | Principle                                                          | Norm                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clear learning              | Objectives for learning are clear.                                 | The assessment can be used to describe the multiliteracy assessment procedure and define and clarify the learning objectives.                                                                                                 |
|                             |                                                                    | The evaluation demonstrates how the specified activity or task and the learning objectives are in sync.                                                                                                                       |
|                             | enhanced comprehension of concepts                                 | The formative assessment findings demonstrated that students had a deeper comprehension of the key ideas covered in class based on their responses to questions, completion of assignments, and participation in discussions. |
|                             |                                                                    | The evaluation procedure demonstrates that students have comprehensive memorization and comprehension of the subject matter by having them explain the ideas they have learned in their own words.                            |
|                             | Participating actively in the educational process                  | The evaluation demonstrates students' engagement in activities meant to strengthen their understanding, like group discussions, exercises, or projects centered around multiliteracy.                                         |
|                             |                                                                    | Participation of students in Q&A sessions or debates might be enhanced by the assessment conducted.                                                                                                                           |
|                             | Utilizing criticism to make improvements                           | Through formative assessments, the assessment process offers feedback to fix mistakes, raise the caliber of assignments, and increase student comprehension.                                                                  |
|                             |                                                                    | The comments motivate students to revise and improve their assignments, illustrating a continuous and reflective learning process.                                                                                            |
|                             | Capacity to incorporate data                                       | Depending on the evaluation method, data from various media or sources might be combined to create a more thorough picture.                                                                                                   |
|                             |                                                                    | The assessment demonstrates that the student can connect previously learned concepts to new ones. It demonstrates how education exposes kids to knowledge and the outside world.                                              |
|                             | Alignment between assessment findings and instructional objectives | Formative and summative assessment scores show that students have attained the required understanding since they align with the established learning objectives.                                                              |
|                             |                                                                    | The established criteria and learning objectives are in agreement.                                                                                                                                                            |
| c. Critical Frame Principle | Critical and reflective thinking abilities are growing.            | Through assessment tasks, including text analysis, argument evaluation, and creative solution development, the assessment findings demonstrate critical and reflective thinking skills.                                       |
|                             |                                                                    | Formative evaluation signifies deeper processing and highlights the need for a learning environment where students may find, comprehend, apply, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and generate the knowledge they have learned.  |
|                             | favorable reaction to the process of learning                      | Pupils give affirmative answers, demonstrating that studying improves their comprehension of the subject.                                                                                                                     |
|                             |                                                                    | Students exhibit greater confidence when taking examinations because they are more prepared and aware of the learning objectives.                                                                                             |

c. Critical Frame Principle

Students are encouraged to actively participate in their learning by building skills using success indicators for implementing the critical framing principle in the multiliteracy assessment process (Hendriani et al., 2021; Misaa et al.,

2022; Thaba-Nkadimene & Molotja, 2021). This component emphasizes the importance of critical evaluation in literary appreciation through inquiry (Draditaswari, 2024; Pieper, 2020). Table 3 provides a detailed summary of this essential aspect.

TABLE 3  
CRITICAL FRAMING PRINCIPLES FOR MULTILITERACY ASSESSMENT

| Subaspects     | Principle                                                       | Norm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Critical frame | the capacity to recognize and assess assumptions in the text    | This assessment illustrates how well students can distinguish between the character, subject, or performer in examining the literary work under consideration and the presumptions praised in the outline.                              |
|                |                                                                 | This evaluation is an excellent illustration of how researchers can legitimately challenge preconceived notions, weigh their merits, and investigate them to the extent necessary to comprehend a literary work after it has been used. |
|                | Critical and comprehensive formulation of questions             | The exams faithfully reflect crucial questions that reflect a deep understanding of this work and potential ones if they have anything to do with the text and its historical, social, and cultural background.                         |
|                |                                                                 | The evaluation also increased discussion and involvement with the major topics and concerns of the work.                                                                                                                                |
|                | robust and dependable argumentation abilities                   | Students may be inspired by the evaluation to create well-organized and persuasive arguments backed up by textual evidence and pertinent outside sources, considering a range of viewpoints.                                            |
|                | inventiveness in crafting original interpretations              | The evaluation can provide fresh perspectives on literary works and demonstrate students' inventiveness in assembling original or novel interpretations backed by in-depth critical examination.                                        |
|                | Capacity to connect the text to current social issues           | The evaluation can offer insight into contemporary issues by connecting the text's themes and ideas to pertinent social, cultural, or political issues.                                                                                 |
|                | enhancing critical thinking skills via the investigation method | Assessments can demonstrate how students' critical skills have developed, particularly their capacity to consider, analyze, and assess the literary works they have studied.                                                            |
|                | Using critical frames in talks and presentations                | Specific evaluations effectively employ critical framing in talks or presentations, exhibiting a thorough comprehension and the capacity to convey student thought.                                                                     |
|                | Capacity to connect the text to current social issues           | The evaluation can offer insight into contemporary issues by connecting the text's themes and ideas to pertinent social, cultural, or political issues.                                                                                 |
|                | enhancing critical thinking skills via the investigation method | Assessments can demonstrate how students' critical skills have developed, particularly their capacity to consider, analyze, and assess the literary works they have studied.                                                            |
|                | Using critical frames in talks and presentations                | Specific evaluations effectively employ critical framing in talks or presentations, exhibiting a thorough comprehension and the capacity to convey student thought.                                                                     |
|                | Capacity to consider the process of learning                    | Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning experience during the evaluation, which includes using critical frames to get a deeper understanding and appreciation of literary texts.                                           |
|                | Evaluation findings indicating vital capability development     | The quality of the students' analysis, arguments, text interpretations, and evaluation results demonstrate that the students have significantly enhanced their critical thinking skills.                                                |
|                |                                                                 | In doing so, the evaluation makes the case that by reacting critically and creatively, students can provide a variety of fresh critical understandings or inventive answers to problems in literary texts.                              |

#### d. Critical Transformation Principles

Performative tasks are used in multiliteracy evaluation to demonstrate how transformative practice concepts have been applied (Cooper et al., 2013; Patterson et al., 2015). Literary originality and expression, both written and spoken, are evaluated in this component (Layoc, 2024; Rosado et al., 2022).

TABLE 4  
CRITICAL TRANSFORMATION PRINCIPLES FOR MULTILITERACY ASSESSMENT

| Subaspects              | Principle                                                           | Norm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Critical transformation | hone your thoughtful and critical thinking abilities when writing   | Utilize the assessment process to practice creative growth. Students are urged to develop fresh concepts, experiment with various styles and methods, and produce increasingly complex work in response to criticism.                                                                                       |
|                         | Oral expression is characterized by inventiveness and inventiveness | In addition to teaching students how to elicit fresh interpretations or distinctive delivery styles and rhetorical and performative notions, the evaluation requires students to creatively and innovatively deliver some oral presentation of literary works (poetry reading, monologue, or presentation). |
|                         | The capacity to connect one's own experiences with literary works   | The evaluation enables the management and treatment of individual experiences related to reading and producing works with intricate political undertones to be made public.                                                                                                                                 |
|                         | Learning objectives are met through performative assignments.       | Student achievement of the learning objectives, including critical thinking abilities, creativity, and a thorough comprehension of literary works, is demonstrated via the evaluation procedure.                                                                                                            |
|                         | Literary works' social and contextual relevance                     | These assessments may challenge the students to show their work to bring about social change and comprehend the urgent need for excellent literature beyond academic essays' scope.                                                                                                                         |
|                         | The process of learning through creative evolution                  | Creative evolution: Students will continuously explore ideas and experiment with styles and techniques to incorporate feedback and generate more complex work during evaluation.                                                                                                                            |

#### B. Difficulties and Approaches in Using Multiliteracy Assessment in Literature Instruction in Higher Education

Various multiliteracy assessments are still challenging to include in instructional materials, particularly for advanced learners. These challenges stem from how we now teach and interpret texts and the complex and ever-changing nature of literacy in today's digitally connected, globalized society. Mensonides et al. (2024) define literacy in the digital age as having the ability to read and write well on various platforms, such as social media, digital, and visual media. Assessing these multiliteracies becomes more complicated when one considers the varying degrees of access to and usage of technology across students (Brown et al., 2010; Walsh, 2017).

Addressing the varied student backgrounds and skills required to acquire various forms of literacy outside of the digital realm, such as visual and cultural literacy—essential elements of multiliteracies, as examined by multiple researchers (de Andrade Pereira, 2001; Karkar Esperat, 2024)—is a major overarching challenge. It can be challenging for students to incorporate these literacies into interpreting and articulating literary texts (Erniwati et al., 2023; Saxena, 2018; Yavuz, 2014). On the other hand, teachers are responsible for creating robust and all-encompassing evaluation models that test students' critical thinking, creativity, and invention in addition to their content knowledge (Chan-Anteza, 2020; Sofyan et al., 2024).

In order to tackle these problems, we suggest implementing a more student-centered methodology that permits the investigation of many modes of expression in theory and practice (Chaudhary, 2024; Nikoladze, 2023; Tang, 2023). Teachers can use practice theory to facilitate reflective and interactive learning. They can also support metacognition by providing feedback that helps students develop their ideas within multiliteracy objectives. In order to enhance learning and assessment, the curriculum should also incorporate digital technology and online platforms. This will allow students to collaborate across disciplines and access more resources and professional development opportunities. These techniques can help multiliteracy assessments be used in higher education in a diverse learning environment in a way that is more inclusive, flexible, and adaptable (Carraro, 2023; Johnstone et al., 2022; Tai, 2023).

Putting many practical concepts into practice can improve learning quality and assessments, while the challenges of developing multiliteracy tests can be reduced. These tactics, which include using digital technology, offering a variety of extra resources, and emphasizing student-centered learning, enable students to acquire various forms of literacy pertinent to the demands of the modern world. Therefore, learning becomes more flexible and inclusive, and variances in students' backgrounds and skill levels can be considered. Because of this, students learn the subject matter and develop critical, imaginative, and creative thinking abilities that are useful in their personal and professional lives. The learning and assessment process in the university setting will become more comprehensive, pertinent, and meaningful if these tactics are applied consistently.

### V. DISCUSSION

#### A. The Need to Use Constructivist Pedagogy to Integrate Multiliteracy Assessment Immediately

The main goal of constructivist pedagogy is to have students actively involved in creating knowledge through their interactions with classmates, texts, and media. Because it is student-centered and enables them to deepen their

understanding through practical experiences, discussion, and reflection, this approach is essential for developing knowledge (Laskar & Bhattacharjee, 2022). By engaging with various texts, media, and classmates, learners can link new concepts to their previous experiences and knowledge, which leads to a more profound and meaningful grasp of the subject. Additionally, this pedagogy promotes autonomy, encouraging students to take control of their learning journey, investigate different resources, and engage in questioning and self-evaluation (Arasit, 2023; Mishra, 2023; Ranjana, 2022). This process equips them to handle future changes and challenges.

When applied to the multiliteracy assessment model in literary education, these constructivist principles underscore engaging with various text formats and media, such as digital, visual, and cultural materials. Interacting with these diverse literacies enhances students' understanding of literary works, allowing them to view and interpret them through multiple perspectives. As a result, assessments should evaluate students' understanding of content and their ability to engage with and integrate different forms of literacy, capturing the complexity of modern communication.

### B. Reflective Assessment and Student-Centered Learning

Realistic multiliteracy practice requires a student-centered approach that puts the student's needs, experiences, and growth first in the learning process (Chaudhary, 2024; Radzitskaya & Tasbulatova, 2024). This method promotes continual, reflexive, formative assessments so students can evaluate themselves as they grow, much like when teachers give them feedback on their work.

Assessment, much like teaching, requires creativity and imagination. Literary learning should consider both the outcomes and the processes, considering whether students develop the ability to think critically or creatively, and should adapt to various literacy contexts. This approach encourages students to explore their potential for understanding fully and expressing ideas in any literary work. The argument is that engaging students dialogically in interpreting texts and media should be promoted in multiliteracy assessments to foster critical and creative thinking.

Through exploring various perspectives on the same subject, literary perspectivism helps students develop their approach to literature and fortify their analytical abilities. It also encourages the use of cutting-edge concepts in literacy and literature. Writing, public speaking, multimedia presentations, and participation in class discussions are just a few of the ways that students can express themselves through a student-centered multiliteracy evaluation (Fernández-Costales, 2023; Jacobs, 2013; Karkar Esperat, 2024; Thibaut & Curwood, 2018). As a result, exams become more inclusive and exciting by allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities in ways that suit their preferences and strong points.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Infusing new matriculation techniques, infusing practicality into English dialogue learning, arranging fragmented activities with complicated language, and supporting holistic transformation are all part of the pedagogical concepts for assessing multiliteracy in literature study. When taken as a whole, these guidelines guarantee that the assessment procedure assesses students' comprehension of the subject matter while promoting critical thinking, creativity, and the capacity to interact with diverse literacies in literary contexts.

While there are benefits to using the multiliteracy assessment technique, there are also drawbacks. These include staff resistance to change, a lack of resources, and the requirement to modify procedures for various learning styles. Innovative approaches are needed to address these issues, such as moving toward student-centered learning, applying contemporary educational technologies, and incorporating different literacies into the framework for learning and assessment to better handle the intricacies of multiliteracy evaluation.

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# Contrastive Discourse Analysis of the Interpersonal Relationships Between the Two Main Characters of the English Novel *Gone With the Wind* and Its Vietnamese Translation *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*

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**Abstract**—This paper explored the interpersonal relationships between the characters Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara in the English novel *Gone with the Wind* and its Vietnamese translation, *Cuốn theo chiều gió*. By comparing the English and Vietnamese versions of their interactions, this study aimed to highlight how cultural and linguistic differences influence the portrayal of relationships. A comparative discourse analysis approach was employed, focusing on key dialogues and interactions between Rhett and Scarlett in both the original English text and the Vietnamese translation. The analysis examined linguistic strategies, speech acts, and interpersonal dynamics through a detailed examination of language use, politeness strategies, and emotional expression to understand how these elements vary between the two languages and reflect cultural differences. The study revealed distinct variations in how the interpersonal dynamics between Rhett and Scarlett are articulated in English and Vietnamese. In English, the discourse often emphasizes directness and emotional intensity, reflecting Western norms of assertiveness and individualism. In contrast, the Vietnamese translation tends to highlight indirectness and subtlety, aligning with cultural norms of politeness and respect. These differences underscore the influence of cultural context on interpersonal communication and relationship portrayal. The findings suggest that while the core narrative remains consistent, the nuances of character interactions are significantly shaped by linguistic and cultural factors. This study underscores the importance of considering cultural context in discourse analysis and translation studies, revealing how language reflects and constructs social relationships. Future research could explore other cultural pairs to further understand these dynamics in various contexts.

**Index Terms**—interpersonal relationships, speaker, addressee, *Gone With the Wind*, *Cuốn theo chiều gió*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal relationships, especially the relationship between the speaker and the addressee in conversation, are intricately linked to intercultural communication from initiation to completion. This relationship serves as a method frequently utilized by speakers to accomplish their objectives, facilitate action processes, and gain self-awareness within the communication process (as noted by Gardner & Howard, 2010).

Contrasting the relationship between Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara involves examining Scarlett as the speaker addressing Rhett, and vice versa, in Margaret Mitchell's work *Gone with the Wind* and its Vietnamese translation *Cuốn theo chiều gió* by translator Vu Kim Thu. This analysis will illuminate particular challenges that commonly impede oral intercultural communication, including translation and second language acquisition in Vietnam today.

The present article aims to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Clarify the foundation for comparing (Tertium comparationis) the relationship between the speaker and the addressee in conversation.
2. Identify the equivalences and differences in content and methods of expressing interpersonal relationships (between Rhett and Scarlett and vice versa) in both the English original version and the Vietnamese translation across the initiation, experimentation, and separation stages.
3. Offer recommendations for communication strategies (including narrative translation) among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds and for second language acquisition (encompassing foreign language teaching, learning, and self-study) pertaining to the relationship between the speaker and the addressee in conversation.

With the above purposes and tasks, the article only examines the process of creating meaning in the relationship between Rhett and Scarlett in three stages according to Adler's (2018) division: initiation, experimenting, and

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differentiating. These are typical stages for contrasting the way of creating meaning in the relationship between speaker and addressee in the English work *Gone with the Wind* and Vietnamese translation *Cuốn theo chiều gió*.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis offers valuable insights into how social dynamics and cultural contexts shape communication, particularly when focusing on interpersonal relationships between speaker and addressee. This literature review examines previous research related to discourse analysis, focusing on interpersonal relationships, cross-cultural communication, and the comparative analysis of English and Vietnamese interactions. This foundation will support an exploration of the interpersonal dynamics between Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara in Margaret Mitchell's work *Gone With the Wind* and its Vietnamese translation, *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*.

### B. Discourse Analysis and Interpersonal Relationships

Discourse analysis investigates how language reflects and constructs social interactions and relationships. Key studies in this field highlight that discourse is not merely a medium for communication but a dynamic tool that shapes and is shaped by interpersonal relationships (Gee, 2014; Schiffrin, 1994). Brown and Gilman's (1960) seminal work on the "power and solidarity" model emphasizes that discourse can reveal underlying power dynamics and social bonds between interlocutors.

Wardhaugh (2015) adds to this understanding by discussing how discourse practices not only reflect but actively construct social relationships and hierarchies. According to Wardhaugh, language use is fundamental in establishing social identities and managing interpersonal relations (Wardhaugh, 2015, p. 268).

This theoretical framework is crucial for analyzing the complex relationship between Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara, as it considers both the power asymmetries and solidarity expressed through their interactions.

### C. Cross-Cultural Discourse Analysis

Comparative discourse analysis, particularly across languages and cultures, uncovers how cultural norms and values influence communication styles. Studies by Hymes (1974) and Halliday (1978) reveal that discourse varies significantly across cultures, affecting how relationships are constructed and perceived. For example, Hofstede's (2001) work on cultural dimensions highlights differences in communication styles between individualistic and collectivistic cultures, which can profoundly impact interpersonal interactions. This is pertinent for comparing English and Vietnamese discourse, as these cultures have different norms and expectations concerning interpersonal relationships.

### D. English and Vietnamese Communication Styles

English and Vietnamese discourse practices reflect their distinct cultural contexts. English, particularly American English, often emphasizes directness and individualism (Tannen, 1994), whereas Vietnamese communication is typically more indirect and context-sensitive, reflecting a collectivistic culture (Nguyen, 2013). For instance, Vietnamese discourse often involves nuanced politeness strategies and indirect expressions to maintain harmony and respect (Nguyen & Bui, 2020). This contrast provides a rich basis for examining how Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara's relationship is portrayed differently in the English and Vietnamese versions of the novel.

### E. Comparative Studies of Literary Discourse

Comparative studies of literary discourse between languages can reveal how cultural translations affect character interactions and relationship dynamics. Studies such as those by Venuti (1995) on translation theory and cultural translation highlight how translated texts can reflect the translator's choices, which in turn impact the representation of interpersonal relationships. For instance, differences in how Rhett and Scarlett's interactions are portrayed in the Vietnamese translation could illuminate broader cultural attitudes toward gender roles, power, and romance.

### F. Specific Studies on *Gone With the Wind* and Its Vietnamese Translation, *Cuốn theo chiều gió*

Research on *Gone With the Wind* and its various translations provides insight into how cultural contexts shape literary interpretation. For example, Kramp's (1999) analysis of the novel's depiction of Southern gender roles and racial attitudes offers a lens through which to examine how these themes might be adapted in other cultural contexts. The Vietnamese translation, *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*, presents an opportunity to explore how themes of romance and power are reinterpreted in a different cultural setting, potentially altering the dynamics between Rhett and Scarlett.

This literature review establishes a foundation for analyzing the interpersonal relationships between Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara through a comparative discourse analysis of English and Vietnamese versions of *Gone With the Wind* and *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*. By drawing on theories of discourse analysis, cross-cultural communication, and literary translation, this study aims to uncover how cultural differences influence the portrayal and interpretation of interpersonal relationships in literature. The next sections will build on these insights to explore the specific ways in which Rhett and Scarlett's interactions are shaped by the cultural contexts of English and Vietnamese discourse.

### III. THEORETICAL ISSUES RELATED TO CONTENT OF THE ARTICLE

#### A. Interpersonal Relationships in Conversation

The interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the addressee represents one of the structured categories of meaning in communicative acts, as recognized by members of the language-using community as norms in communication (Conville & Rogers, 1998). These norms denote the degree of respect or intimacy between the speaker and the addressee in face-to-face interactions. Such meaning is conveyed either directly or indirectly through personal and social factors (social deixis) determined by specific communication contexts. The universal model used to examine this relationship across languages is often represented as I – YOU – HERE – NOW, serving as the common ground (*tertium comparationis* or TC) for comparing the relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

The components of the above model are pure inflections, and their meanings are determined by their position and relationship within the system: "I" refers to the speaker; "YOU" is the second-person pronoun indicating the addressee; "HERE" denotes the place; and "NOW" signifies the time when the speaker establishes an interpersonal relationship with the addressee. The relationship between the speaker ("I") and the addressee ("YOU") in the same communication situation always involves a swapping of positions, even in a conversation between only two participants. For example, in the conversations between Rhett and Scarlett, when Rhett speaks, he is in the first person ("I") and Scarlett is in the second person ("YOU"); when the turn of speech changes, Scarlett speaks in the first person ("I") and Rhett becomes the addressee, the second person ("YOU").

The operation of the four components mentioned above is demonstrated by examining how meaning is created in Scarlett's relationship with Rhett (and vice versa) at three different stages of time and space – the Initiation Stage, the Experimenting Stage, and the Differentiating Stage – in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*.

##### (a). The Initiation Stage

In the Initiating Stage, the researcher analyzed how relational meaning was created and expressed by Scarlett (the speaker) to Rhett (the addressee), and vice versa, in the dialogue that takes place in the reading room.

###### Example 1

1. Scarlett: *Sir, you should have made known your presence.*
2. Rhett: *But you, my dear Miss O'Hara, are a girl of rare spirit, very admirable spirit, and I take off my hat to you.*

##### (b). The Experimenting Stage

In this stage, the researcher analyzed how Scarlett's relationship with Rhett (and vice versa) is expressed in a speech at a hospital fundraiser, many years after the conversation in the reading room.

3. Scarlett: *Why, Captain Butler! How you do run on!*
4. Rhett: *But, my dear Mrs. Hamilton, you so obviously wanted to be conspicuous!*

##### (c). The Differentiating Stage

Here, the researcher analyzed Scarlett's expression of her relationship with Rhett (and vice versa), 12 years after their first meeting in the family dining room:

5. Scarlett: *Oh, Rhett, I love you so, darling! I must have loved you for years, and I was such a fool I didn't know it.*
6. Rhett: *My pet, it's written plainly on your face.*

The role of the addressee is articulated through the component "you" in numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, while the role of the speaker is denoted by "I" in numbers 2 and 5. Both components function across three stages: the temporal stage (a), the spatial stage (b), and the relational stage (c). The interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the addressee in speech involves the synthesis of numerous components, and this significance is established by the speaker.

According to Evans (2015), meaning creation should be investigated from language, thinking, and culture. Goddard and Wierzbicka (2016) argued that the relationship between speaker and addressee is one of the "universal human concepts that are lexicalized in all languages" (p. 101). This concept provides us with "a common measure" to describe and compare these configurations across languages and cultures. This "common measure" was used to compare the interpersonal relationship that Scarlett displays with Rhett at specific periods and positions, and vice versa, how Rhett interacts with Scarlett in both the English and the Vietnamese versions of the novel.

#### B. Stages in the Relationship Between Speaker and Addressee

Interpersonal relationships continuously shift through I - YOU - NOW - HERE in English and *TÔI - ANH - BÂY GIỜ - Ở ĐÂY* in Vietnamese, reflecting changes in factors such as time and space. These changes result in transformations in various characteristics of the relationship.

##### (a). Variables in the Relationship Between Speaker and Addressee

The interpersonal relationship between the characters Scarlett and Rhett develops over time and space. Time and space, within which these relationships are established and maintained, are not directly present in the utterance but are assumed in each conversation examined in sections (a), (b), and (c), and their examples. At different times and in different places, the speaker and addressee alternately create and express the meaning of their interpersonal relationship through their speech.

The content discussed above illustrates the evolving relationship between Scarlett and Rhett at three distinct stages and contexts in *Gone with the Wind*.

(b). *Stages in Personal Relationships*

According to Adler and his colleagues (2018), interpersonal relationships can be differentiated into 10 stages: initiation, experimenting, strengthening, integration, tightening, differentiating, limit, stagnation, separation, and end. However, not all interpersonal relationships include all 10 stages; they can be more concisely categorized into only three stages: initiation, experimenting, and differentiating, as follows:

In the initiation stage, the speaker demonstrates interest in the communication and tries to prove that he is someone worth paying attention to. Communication during this stage is usually brief and adheres to principles accepted by the language-using community. This is the opening stage of all relationships, including friendships, romantic relationships, colleague interactions, business partnerships, recruitment interviews, job searches, joining organizations, and so on.

The experimenting stage follows the initial contact with a person with whom one feels a friendly connection. During this stage, individuals explore common interests through conversations that may lack a specific topic or intention from the outset. These conversations are embraced as opportunities to discover shared interests and to better understand the other person. This stage also provides a safe way to assess the potential of the relationship that the other person wishes to establish.

In the differentiating stage, the relationship is progressing well, but external influences may cause one or both parties to develop more personal thoughts. At this point, the established relationship is at risk of fading, and the bond between the two parties, as established in the previous stage (i.e., the 5th stage – Tightening), may be weakened.

The stages mentioned above serve as a general framework for analyzing and comparing how relationships between speakers and addressees are expressed in different languages.

In summary, the variable inflections described are used to illustrate the alternating roles of speaker and addressee between Scarlett and Rhett at each specific stage of their relationship.

C. *Basis for Comparing the Relationship Between Scarlett and Rhett in Gone With the Wind and Cuốn theo chiều gió*

Based on the presentations in the previous sections, the basis for comparing the relationships between Scarlett (speaker) and Rhett (addressee), and vice versa, Rhett (speaker) and Scarlett (addressee), is determined within the system of I - YOU - NOW – HERE. In this system, the primary content selected for comparison includes the relational meanings expressed by Scarlett and Rhett during the initiation stage, the experimenting stage, and the differentiating stage. The basis for comparison includes the following aspects:

1. The interpersonal relationship as expressed by Scarlett (speaker) to Rhett (addressee) and vice versa during the initiation stage.
2. The interpersonal relationship as expressed by Scarlett (speaker) to Rhett (addressee) and vice versa at the beginning of the experimenting stage.
3. The interpersonal relationship as expressed by Scarlett (speaker) to Rhett (addressee) and vice versa in the differentiating stage.

These relationship contents are analyzed from the perspective that meaning creation is a process of integrating semantics across all three aspects: language, thinking, and culture, as embodied in each member of the language-using community.

D. *A Method of Expressing the Interpersonal Relationship Between the Speaker and the Addressee*

The way one person addresses another reveals a lot about their relationship, even if it is sometimes very brief. According to Knapp et al. (2013), the form of address can indicate the nature of the relationship between the speaker and the addressee as well as the level of acquaintance between them. All of this stems from the choice of the addressing form used by the speaker.

(a). *Form of Address*

Knapp et al. (2013) categorize forms of address into four types: (1) formal–impersonal; (2) ambiguous formality; (3) informal; and (4) intimate–emotional.

The formal–impersonal address is often used with strangers, new acquaintances, and people whose roles confer higher status. This type of address is used when there is a significant power gap between the communicating parties. It is also employed when the speaker is showing shyness, fear, or when trying to attract attention by exaggerating the recipient's status.

Ambiguous formality occurs when people feel uncertain or ambiguous about choosing the form of address. Common examples include:

1. General terms such as *Mr.*, *Mrs.*, *Ms.*, *Miss*, etc.
2. Playful or descriptive titles, such as *scholar*, or expressions based on characteristics
3. Casual terms like *Hey*, *you*, etc.

An informal address denotes equality in social status and is less formal. People often use names to increase intimacy.

The intimate–affectionate address is the least formal and is usually reserved for close friends or confidants. In English, listeners can be addressed by a title (T), by their first name (FN), by their last name (LN), by a nickname, by a combination of these elements, or with no form of address at all. A title used before someone's first or last name indicates their social rank, qualifications, position in an organization, gender, etc. For example, titles such as president, sir, captain, professor, doctor, as well as Mr., Mrs., and Miss in English, and grandfather, grandmother, aunt, uncle, brother, sister, comrade, and so on in Vietnamese should be understood as titles.

The form of address is closely related to two indexes: second-person indexes and vocative indexes.

#### (b). *The Thưa Indexes (Speaker Indexes)*

In Vietnamese, *thưa* indexes (speaker indexes) and *gọi* indexes (calling indexes) play distinct roles. While second-person personal indexes typically function as arguments of the predicate, *thưa* indexes and *gọi* indexes do not serve as arguments of the predicate. Instead, they are encoded with kinship nouns, title nouns, personal names, or combinations of these expressions.

*Thưa* indexes are generally nouns or noun phrases that indicate the role of the recipient. These include kinship nouns (e.g., anh, chị/“brother”, “sister”), title nouns (e.g., Giám đốc, trưởng phòng/“Director”, “Department Head”), and personal names (e.g., Hồng, Nga), as well as combinations of these forms of expression (e.g., anh chị hai, anh chị ba “second sibling”, “third sibling”). Grammatically, they do not function as arguments of the predicate. Their role is to serve as annotations, adding information about the roles and social relationships of participants in communication. They help to mark social status or roles within linguistic expressions. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this discussion, this paper will focus specifically on *thưa* indexes.

##### Example 2

*Thưa* indexes (speaker indexes) can appear at the beginning, middle, or end of an utterance. For example:

1. *Thưa thủ trưởng, cháu mười tám tuổi.* (“Dear boss, I’m eighteen years old.”) (Nguyen Minh Chau)
2. *Giáo viên quèn, bán cháo phở chẳng đủ ăn đâu, chị ơi.* (“Poor teacher. Teaching is not enough to live on, sister.”) (Ma Van Khang)
3. *Bắt đầu có chuyện rồi đấy, anh Cận ạ.* (“Things are starting to happen, Mr. Can.”) (Nguyen Minh Chau)

In these examples, if the index “you” (addressee role) in number 1 of Example 1 is supplemented by “sir” (a *thưa* or “speaker” index), and if, in Number 2 of Example 1, “my dear Miss O’Hara”, there is no direct second-person index linked to the *thưa* indexes: *Thưa thủ trưởng* (“dear boss”) in Example 2, Number 1, *chị ơi* (“sister”) in Example 2, Number 2, and *anh Cận ạ* (“Mr. Can”) in Example 2, Number 3.

In the dialogues for Example 1, Numbers 1 to 3, the personal pronoun indexes such as the first personal pronoun “I” or possessive adjective “my”, the second personal pronoun “you”, and the possessive adjective “your” form the communication pair I - You. In this context, the first-person pronoun “I” (speaker role) alternates between Scarlett and Rhett, and similarly, the second-person pronoun “YOU” (addressee role) alternates as well. The indexes such as “Sir”, “dear Miss O’Hara”, “dear Mrs. Hamilton”, “Captain Butler”, “Rhett”, and so on serve as annotations, adding information about the speaker's role and marking social relationships. They express the social status or roles of the participants in communication and add meaning to the second-person pronoun “YOU”.

The way Vietnamese creates meaning in interpersonal relationships differs from English. In addition to central indexes, Vietnamese often uses additional words such as *thưa* in Example 2, Number 1; (7), *ơi* in Example 2, Number 2; and *ạ* in Example 2, Number 3.

Thus, the relationship between the speaker role and the addressee role needs to be understood through the relationship between personal pronoun indexes and *thưa* indexes, whether these indexes appear in the dialogue or not. These indexes often serve as a means of linking to the interactional practices of the participants in communication. Moreover, they are universals in language and present challenges for intercultural communication, including translation and second language acquisition. As a result, the means of expressing interpersonal meaning include personal pronouns, *thưa* indexes, affixes, phrasal verbs, particles, and vocabulary choices.

## IV. SURVEY RESULTS

Drawing from the content of interpersonal relationships and the methods of expressing meaning outlined in Section II, the researcher identified three stages: initiation, experimentation, and differentiation. The interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the addressee in these stages is analyzed from the perspective of meaning creation, which involves the integration of language, thought, and culture. Based on these principles, the linguistic means of expression are determined through forms of address, including the use of *thưa* indexes, the second-person pronoun “you”, and the ratio of sentences employing second-person pronouns compared to those using *thưa* indexes.

### A. *Relational Meaning at the Initiation Stage and Data on Modes of Expression*

To express interest in communication and to demonstrate their significance, Scarlett and Rhett utilized the modes of expression detailed in Table 1:

TABLE 1  
MEANING OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT THE INITIATION STAGE AND THE FREQUENCY OF EXPRESSION MODES USED BY SCARLETT AND RHETT

| Relationship Meaning:<br>The Initiation Stage |                             | English                           |            | Vietnamese                                                          |            |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
|                                               |                             | Type of Indexes                   | Quantity   | Type of Indexes                                                     | Quantity   |
| Scarlett Uses:<br>Formal - Objective          | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | Sir + (zero)                      | 21         | ( <i>thưa</i> ) ông                                                 | 21         |
|                                               | The Second Personal Pronoun | You                               | 455        | Ông                                                                 | 455        |
|                                               | Pair Of Addressing Forms    | I - You                           |            | Tôi - Ông                                                           |            |
| Rhett Uses:<br>Formal - Objective             | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | Miss + 0<br>(Dear) Miss + surname | 125<br>117 | ( <i>thưa</i> ) cô<br>( <i>thưa</i> ) cô + surname<br>( <i>họ</i> ) | 125<br>117 |
|                                               | The Second Personal Pronoun | You                               | 189        | Cô                                                                  | 167        |
|                                               | Pair of Addressing Forms    | I - You                           |            | Tôi - Cô                                                            |            |

### B. Content of Experimenting and Methods of Expression Used by Scarlett and Rhett

The content of the communication parties' efforts to find common ground in the early stages, as well as the data on the expression methods used by Scarlett and Rhett, are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
MEANING OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT THE EXPERIMENTING STAGE AND DATA ON MODES OF EXPRESSION

| Relationship Meaning:<br>Experimenting Stage        |                             | English                                                              |                         | Vietnamese                                                                                               |                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|                                                     |                             | Kind of Indexes                                                      | Quantity                | Kind of Indexes                                                                                          | Quantity                |
| Scarlett Uses:<br>Form-Objective                    | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | Captain + surname:<br>Captain Butler                                 | 164                     | <i>Thuyền trưởng</i> + <i>họ</i> :<br><i>Thuyền trưởng</i> Butler                                        | 147                     |
|                                                     | The Second Personal Pronoun | you                                                                  | 152                     | ông                                                                                                      | 158                     |
|                                                     |                             | I – You                                                              |                         | Tôi - Ông                                                                                                |                         |
| Rhett Uses: Ambiguous<br>Form and Objective<br>Form | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | - Miss + surname<br>- Dear ladies<br>- Fair lady<br>- Mrs. + surname | 106<br>96<br>121<br>142 | - Cô + tên + <i>họ</i><br>- <i>Thưa</i> hai bà<br>- <i>Hỡi</i> giai nhân<br>- <i>Thưa</i> bà + <i>họ</i> | 106<br>96<br>121<br>142 |
|                                                     | The Second Personal Pronoun | you                                                                  | 171                     | Bà<br>Cô                                                                                                 | 122<br>173              |
|                                                     | Pair of Addressing Forms    | I - You                                                              |                         | Tôi - Cô/ Tôi - Bà                                                                                       |                         |
|                                                     |                             |                                                                      |                         |                                                                                                          |                         |

### C. Meaning of Interpersonal Relationships at the Differentiating Stage and Methods of Creating Meaning

This stage is characterized by the relationship being on a positive path of development; however, external influences may lead one or both parties to start expressing individual thoughts. Examples of how Scarlett and Rhett use social indexes are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3  
MEANING OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT THE DIFFERENTIATING STAGE AND DATA ON MODES OF EXPRESSION

| Relationship Meaning:<br>Differentiating Stage         |                             | English                            |                | Vietnamese                          |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
|                                                        |                             | Kind of Indexes                    | Quality        | Kind of Indexes                     | Quality        |
| Scarlett Uses the<br>Social Form<br>Intimate-Emotional | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | Name (Rhett),<br>Darling           | 131<br>75      | Tên (Rhett),<br>Anh yêu             | 131<br>75      |
|                                                        | The Second Personal Pronoun | You                                | 443            | Anh                                 | 438            |
|                                                        | Pair of Addressing Forms    | I - You                            |                | Em - Anh                            |                |
| Rhett Uses the<br>Social Form<br>Intimate-Emotional    | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes         | Name Scarlett),<br>Darling,<br>Pet | 213<br>11<br>5 | Tên (Scarlett)<br>Em yêu<br>Em cưng | 211<br>11<br>5 |
|                                                        | The Second Personal Pronoun | You                                | 364            | Em                                  | 365            |
|                                                        | Pair of Addressing Forms    | I - You                            |                | Tôi - Em                            |                |

The data on inflections highlights the following:

1. In all three stages of interpersonal relationships, the number of *thưa* indexes is significantly smaller than the number of second-person pronouns in both English and Vietnamese translations of Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind*.
2. The number of *thưa* indexes is comparable in both English and Vietnamese.

3. Most *thua* indexes that indicate the addressee's proper name in English are translated into Vietnamese without additional components. In other words, the semantic translations of *thua* indexes are mostly direct, especially in conversations before Rhett Butler leaves.

## V. DISCUSSION

How to translate meaning and transliterate full names for the speaker and addressee roles are issues this paper has not addressed. In this article, the characters' full names remain unchanged from the original, used by translators Duong Tuong and Vu Kim Thu for convenience. The data description tables above highlight various issues regarding the different stages of the relationship between Scarlett and Rhett. These issues include the use of *thua* indexes appropriate for each stage, the relationship between second-person pronoun indexes and *thua* indexes, and the equivalence of *thua* indexes in Vietnamese compared to those in English, among others.

This article addresses issues directly related to meaning creation in the relationship between the speaker and the addressee role. This paper discusses:

1. Equivalence and differences in the content of interpersonal relationships across the three stages of initiation, experimentation, and differentiation in the relationship between Scarlett and Rhett.
2. Equivalence and differences in the methods of expressing the relationship between the speaker and addressee roles in English and Vietnamese. These are two distinct but interrelated aspects, akin to "two sides of a coin".

The relationship between equivalence and differences in content and linguistic expressions across the two languages is generally presented in Figure 2.1 of Tuong and Tien (2020) in *Contrastive Linguistics: A Course Book*.

### A. Equivalence and Differences in the Content of Interpersonal Relationships Across Stages

The statistical data in Section III shows that interpersonal relationships in English and Vietnamese exhibit both similarities and differences in the following aspects:

#### (a). Equivalence

1. Interpersonal relationships evolve continuously, from the initial conversation between Scarlett and Rhett in the library's reading room to the conversation initiated by Rhett at a hospital donation event, and later to the conversation 12 years later when they are man and wife. However, eventually, Rhett becomes aware of external influences threatening their married life.
2. The stages of initiation, experimentation, and differentiation in both English and Vietnamese share the same basic characteristics.
3. Interpersonal relationships reflect the social positions denoted by the second-person pronoun *you* in English and the kinship term *anh* in Vietnamese (addressee role). Similarly, the first-person pronoun *I* in English and *tôi* in Vietnamese (speaker) follow the norms established by the language-using communities. These norms involve the social position of the addressee and the speaker's perception, often associated with the character's full name, occupation, and title in conversations.

#### (b). The Differences

Experimentation with language in each group and among its members results in semantic changes over time and space. In other words, the method of creating meaning by integrating the linguistic values, thinking, and culture of community members is not entirely the same.

The process of creating meaning in the speaker's interpersonal relationship is associated with determining the social position of the addressee. The concept of this relationship varies between English and Vietnamese-speaking communities. In English-speaking communities, common features include family background, class of origin, and marital status, while in Vietnamese communities, common features include titles, kinship terms, and age.

The initiation stage aims to create an impression. However, the way of creating an impression of "your social position" and the communication styles of the aristocratic elite in the Southern United States in the late 19th century differs from Vietnamese methods. Consequently, the way meaning is created during this period is not the same in English and Vietnamese.

The meanings integrated into the process of establishing interpersonal relationships between the speaker and addressee roles in English and Vietnamese differ. In English, meanings relate to family status, names, titles, marital status for women, and their combinations in communication. In Vietnamese, dominant features include name, age, position, and so on.

The differentiating stage is distinct from the initiation and experimenting stages due to external influences that lead one or both characters to develop more personal thoughts. These external influences cause characters to think differently than they did in the previous two stages. This characteristic is linked to the user's language concept and reflects the community and individuality. For instance, Rhett (and to some extent Scarlett) begins to view their marriage differently after Melanie's death. Rhett respects Scarlett's independence and his own, realizing that love and respect are not the same as jealousy.

### B. Compare and Contrast of Methods of Expressing the Interpersonal Relationship Between the Speaker's Role and the Addressee's Role in English and Vietnamese



(a). *Equivalent in Methods of Expression*

1. Interpersonal relationships in both English and Vietnamese are expressed through both the second personal pronoun and *thưa* indexes. However, these two elements are not always used together in utterances; sometimes one may be present without the other. Furthermore, *Thưa* indexes are often the premise for the second personal pronoun indexes.
2. The *thưa* index component of address forms conveys meanings related to the speaker's subconscious assumptions about the social position of the addressee.
3. The components of the *thưa* index are distinguished from other parts of the sentence by commas (,) before and after. If this component appears in the middle of a sentence, it is followed by a comma; if it appears at the beginning of the sentence, it is preceded by a comma.

(b). *Differences in Expression Methods*

1. *The Second Personal Pronoun Indexes*

The data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 show that all of the relationships established between Scarlett and Rhett, and vice versa, are expressed in English using pairs of personal pronouns such as I - You. In Vietnamese, these relationships are expressed with equivalents such as *Tôi - Ông, Tôi - Cô, Tôi - Bà, Anh - Em, and Tôi - Em* (all of which mean "I - You"). While the English second person pronoun only indicates the role of the addressee without directly reflecting social status, Vietnamese second person pronouns not only denote the addressee's role but also convey social relationships based on the speaker's age relative to the addressee, gender, title, number (singular/plural), and other factors. Moreover, Vietnamese personal pronouns encompass many semantic features that are expressed by *thưa* indexes, a feature not present in English.

2. *Second Personal Pronoun in English and the Resulting Meaning*

In the English version, of the three dialogues, *thưa* indexes are used 51 times, but the second personal pronoun is used over 340 times. This proves that personal pronoun indexes in English are simply grammatical means. They are used by the recipient when they have revealed their acquaintance (or not) about the social position of the recipient by *thưa* indexes (*thưa* indexes → position/role component).

For example, in the reading room of the library, when Scarlett says, "**Sir, you** should have made known your presence", this is the first time Scarlett uses the addressing form noun "Sir" and the second personal pronoun "you" to refer to Rhett.

Similarly, "And **you, Miss**, are no lady" contains the second personal pronoun "you" and the addressing form noun "Miss", and they are used by Rhett to refer to Scarlett. The social position of the speaker role to the addressee role "you". Moreover, the *thưa* indexes in these cases are "Sir" and "Miss". According to Wardhaugh (2015, p. 268), this is the least intimate addressing form of the all of the formal-objective addressing forms in English.

On the contrary, from the decoding perspective, when receiving the second personal pronoun indexes "you" in English, the addressee role connects the information in the speaker's understanding to position itself. So, when using the second personal pronoun indexes "you" in English, the speaker implicitly admits to the addressee role that he knows specifically or he does not know anything about their social status (title, occupation, marital status, and so on) or the full name of the addressee. Therefore, interpersonal relationships are self-established by members participating in communication when the speaker knows the addressee's information about social position and vice versa. This is a necessary condition for communication to take place. The speaker needs information about the addressee's social position and vice versa. It is the process of creating meaning in interpersonal relationships, the process of showing politeness in intercultural communication.

Regarding the above principles and the people communicating with each other, in the first meeting (initiation stage) of intercultural communication in English, the speaker often introduces himself with words or phrases like "I'm...", "My name is...", "My full name is...", or "You can call me..."

Furthermore, when that content is unavailable, the questions that often arise are, "What can I call you?" or "What's your name?" This is the first step in interpersonal relationship establishment with a pair of personal pronouns from the I - YOU - NOW - HERE model in English and the *TÔI - ANH - BÂY GIỜ và TẠI ĐÂY* model in Vietnamese. This is also a way to create interpersonal relationship meaning for the second personal pronoun (addressee role).

3. *Differences in the Components of Thưa Indexes*

As stated before in Section 4, differences in the concept of social status of language-using communities lead to differences in methods of expression. The subconscious social status of the parties participating in communication is the title, first name, and last name, so *thưa* indexes in English can be title (T), first name (FN), last name (LN), nick name, a combination of all, or the absence of all. On the contrary, this component in Vietnamese has a typical title that has kinship status such as *grandfather, grandmother, aunt, brother, sister*, and so on.

Titles such as "Sir" or "Captain" are often a central component in English. However, in Vietnamese, there are also other types of components that have the function of annotation, adding information to the central component, such as *thưa ông, ạ*. For examples, see Table 4 below.

TABLE 4  
EXAMPLE SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE IN COMPONENTS OF THƯA INDEXES

| <i>Thưa</i> Indexes in English                             | <i>Thưa</i> Indexes in the Vietnamese Equivalent                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sir</b> , you should have made known your presence.     | <i>Thưa ông, đáng lẽ ông phải cho biết là ông có mặt ở đây.</i>     |
| I have nothing more to say to you, <b>Captain Butler</b> . | <i>Tôi chẳng còn gì để nói với ông nữa, thuyền trưởng Butler ạ.</i> |

#### 4. Differences in Expressing Interpersonal Relationships by Names

The statistical tables show that components of *thưa* indexes in the English version are:

1. Rhett Butler calls Scarlett O'Hara: *Miss O'Hara, Mrs. Hamilton, Scarlett, Darling, Pet, and so on.*
2. Scarlett O'Hara calls Rhett Butler: *Sir, Captain Butler, Rhett, and so on.*

In the Vietnamese translation, components of *thưa* indexes are *cô O'Hara, bà Hamilton, Scarlett, cưng, cún con*, and so on.

1. Scarlett O'Hara calls Rhett Butler: *Thưa ông, thuyền trưởng Butler, Rhett, and so on.*

In the Vietnamese translation, it is almost exclusively a literal translation (word for word translation) – the speaker uses *thưa* indexes + the full name or last name; as such, only components less than these have elements added to express the level of intimacy, respect, or disdain in Vietnamese. This is an issue related to interpersonal relationships in intercultural communication between English and Vietnamese.

For example, in context, Scarlet is Rhett's wife, 28 years old, talking to her husband, Rhett, 45 years old, in a dining room where there are only two people, Rhett and Scarlet. Scarlet is in love, and she doesn't want to leave her husband, nor does she want her husband to go away.

Scarlet: Oh, but **Rhett**, I did want you then, but you were so nasty! (p. 1439)

Scarlett: Ô, **Rhett**, lúc đó em cũng đang chờ anh nhưng anh lại dễ ghét quá! (p. 913)

In English, Scarlett uses *thưa* indexes 11 times with her husband's name (Rhett), and in the Vietnamese translation also has 11 times with her husband's name (Rhett). In this case, in Vietnamese, *thưa* indexes do not have emotional affixes such as *à, a, nhé*, or *này*. As author Chau (2003) affirmed: "Up to now, the speaker calls the addressee, who has higher social status in society or in the family, by his name disrespectfully to that person".

In sum, the interpersonal relationship between speaker and addressee associated with the social position of each individual is a universal concept for both English and Vietnamese-speaking communities. However, this concept is not completely identical but is only equivalent in English and Vietnamese because the process of creating meaning is always associated with language, thinking, and culture. This characteristic leads to equivalence and differences in modes of expression in different languages, especially the meaning expressed through *thưa* indexes and the second-person pronoun. The semantics of these components in Scarlett's dialogue with Rhett, and vice versa, in both English and Vietnamese versions of *Gone With the Wind* are related to the interpersonal relationship in English and Vietnamese intercultural communication.

The way to create meaning in the relationship between speaker and addressee is to understand the meaning, which is directly related to interpersonal relationships in intercultural communication, and how to use words in each language and in translation (English – Vietnamese). Thus, there needs to be complete research on this process in each language.

The process of creating meaning in the interpersonal relationship between the speaker and the addressee role is determined in the I - YOU - NOW - HERE system in English and the TÔI - ANH - BÂY GIỜ - Ở ĐÂY system in Vietnamese. This value is encoded most specifically and clearly in literary works. Therefore, careful and attentive reading is the best way to improve the ability to use language and establish a close relationship between language, thinking, and culture.

When translating *thưa* indexes in works from the original English into Vietnamese, translators need to choose words to most appropriately convey the socio-cultural characteristics in interpersonal relationships in the two languages from English into Vietnamese and vice versa, accordingly.

Additionally, in the process of translating *thưa* indexes from English into Vietnamese and vice versa, translators can add or remove words to suit the culture of each language.

Last but not least, translating *thưa* indexes or any content from English into Vietnamese should be done according to the principle of integrating but not dissolving, striving to enrich one's culture, and always retaining the English and Vietnamese cultural identities.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The interpersonal relationship between the roles of the speaker and the addressee is expressed through addressing forms. This is the method that speakers often use to achieve their goals, to promote their activities, and to perceive themselves in the process of linguistic communication. It is also one of the important elements for a person to be able to acquire a language, playing a very important role and having a direct impact on the effectiveness of intercultural communication from the initiation stage to the end. This semantic value carries many cultural and social characteristics of the language-using community and is the integrated meaning of many semantic components and modes of expression, so it has not been given due attention in directive communication as well as translating action.

The equivalences and differences in the function of expressing interpersonal relationships of the second personal pronoun and *thưa* indexes in English and Vietnamese is one of the main causes that affect the characters' communication capacity. Moreover, they also demonstrate the capacity of Vietnamese to use English and vice versa. In addition, they also affect the quality of translation from this language into another and the culture expressed in each language.

This paper has undertaken a comparative discourse analysis of the interpersonal relationships between Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone With the Wind* and its Vietnamese adaptation, *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*. By examining the nuances of communication between these characters in both English and Vietnamese contexts, this study has uncovered significant insights into how cultural and linguistic factors shape narrative and character dynamics.

The analysis reveals how cultural norms influence communication styles and interpersonal relationships. English, characterized by its directness and individualism, contrasts with Vietnamese discourse which emphasizes indirectness and contextual sensitivity. These differences manifest in the portrayal of Rhett and Scarlett's interactions where the assertive and often confrontational nature of their relationship in *Gone With the Wind* is nuanced by politeness and indirectness in *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió*. This shift reflects broader cultural attitudes toward conflict and harmony.

The study confirms that discourse plays a critical role in expressing and negotiating power dynamics and relational solidarity. Using Brown and Gilman's (1960) framework of power and solidarity, this study investigated how the characters' interactions embody different forms of power and intimacy. In the English version, Rhett's assertiveness and Scarlett's rebelliousness are more overt, while in the Vietnamese adaptation, these traits are conveyed through more subtle linguistic strategies, highlighting the impact of cultural values on the representation of power and social relationships.

The comparative analysis underscores how translation and cultural adaptation processes influence the portrayal of interpersonal relationships. The Vietnamese adaptation of *Gone With the Wind* reinterprets the original text through the lens of Vietnamese social norms and values. This adaptation not only preserves the core narrative but also reshapes the character dynamics to align with local cultural expectations, demonstrating the role of cultural context in literary adaptation.

Furthermore, this study highlights the importance of considering cultural and linguistic contexts in cross-cultural literary analysis. By comparing the English and Vietnamese versions of the novel, researchers gain a deeper understanding of how cultural differences affect the depiction of interpersonal relationships. This approach offers valuable insights for translation studies, cross-cultural communication, and literary theory.

Future research could build on this analysis by exploring other literary adaptations across cultures, focusing on how different cultures interpret themes such as gender roles, power, and romance. Comparative studies involving multiple languages and cultural contexts could further illuminate the ways in which literary texts are adapted and transformed, providing a broader perspective on cross-cultural communication and literary interpretation.

This paper demonstrates that the analysis of interpersonal relationships through comparative discourse offers profound insights into how cultural and linguistic factors shape literary representations. The case of Rhett Butler and Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind* and *Cuốn Theo Chiều Gió* illustrates the complex interplay between language, culture, and narrative, enriching our understanding of cross-cultural adaptations and the dynamics of interpersonal communication. Researchers gain valuable perspectives on how global literary works are reinterpreted and recontextualized to fit different cultural settings, highlighting the dynamic nature of discourse in shaping human relationships.

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2 Tran Thi Kim Tuyen (co-editor, 2024), *Tiếng Việt giao tiếp dành cho người nước ngoài* [Vietnamese communication for foreigners] - Volume 1, Information and Communication Publishing House, ISBN: 978-604-80-9833-9.

3 Tran Thi Kim Tuyen (co-editor, 2024), *Tiếng Việt giao tiếp dành cho người nước ngoài* [Vietnamese communication for foreigners] - Volume 2, Information and Communication Publishing House, ISBN: 978-604-80-9834-6.

Dr. Tuyen hopes everybody helps her to share the experience from her paper. Thank you so much.

# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

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