Journal of Language Teaching and Research

ISSN 1798-4769

Volume 15, Number 3, May 2024

Contents

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 685-696, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.01

English Language Learners' Attitudes Towards Bilingualism: Chicago Suburbs Case Study

Ivana Edmonds
Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

***Abstract*—This study assumes that the native language of immigrants and their descendants in the US is not equally cherished as the dominant language of the host country. The goal of the study was to examine English as a second language (ESL) high school Hispanic students' attitudes towards their home language (L1), English (L2), and bilingualism in their high school in the Chicago area, USA. The research, which includes sixty respondents, was based on an online questionnaire that was conducted in the selected high school. The results of the study showed generally positive attitudes towards the L1, L2, and bilingualism/the bilingual program by the English language learners. However, the results suggest a need for a different bilingual program, more additive in nature, which will include L1 instruction and offer better support, particularly for the lower English proficiency learners. In turn, it will prevent students from becoming monolingual in their second language. Moreover, the results also suggest that further research is needed after integration of the proposed bilingual program, which would prompt changes that would increase its effectiveness and measure students′ achievement patterns. This study offers suggestions for teachers and policymakers for improvement of their bilingual program at their school, while keeping the students′ interests in mind.**

***Index Terms*—bilingual education programs, English language learners (ELLs), home language maintenance, English as a second language (ESL), bilingualism**

I. Introduction

The topic of bilingualism in the USA has been pivotal in education since it addresses the needs of numerous immigrants that were faced with a new language and culture upon their arrival to the new country. Bilingual education in the USA refers to an approach to teaching language minority students in their native languages and in English through a variety of programs (Ovando et al., 2006).

In reference to the US, the origins of bilingual education date as far back as the 17th century, however, it wasn't until the first half of the 19th century that bilingual education legislation was passed in Ohio, which became the first state to authorize German-English instruction in schools. Due to the sizeable influx of immigrants, instruction in a number of languages in US schools (Blanton, 2005; Crawford, 1992; Kloss, 1998) was eventually met with xenophobic sentiments, triggering the trend of encouraging families to blend in with the American culture, and give up using their native language. The goal was to Americanize immigrants through the assimilation process (Schmid, 2000). This was a part of an English-only ideology, which spread throughout the first half of the 20th century (Blanton, 2005). By 1923, about two-thirds of the states had ruled that English be the only language of instruction, disregarding bilingual education as a form of instruction (Baker, 2011; Ovando, 2003). The second half of the 20th century witnessed the reintroduction of bilingual education in the US. The 1964 Civil Rights Act and the (1968) Bilingual Education Act (BEA) stood out the most in protecting language minority students by introducing a minimum standard of education (Baker, 2011; Garcia, 2009) and advocating changes in the federal policy, viewing English language learners as 'with positive potential' rather than 'deficient' due to their (lack of) English language skills (Flores & Murillo Jr., 2001). In the 1990s and early 2000s, many language restriction initiatives (English-only legislation) arose through voter initiatives. Proposition 227 in California and Proposition 203 in Arizona went as far as banning bilingual education, emphasizing that students should learn English by being taught in English (Del Valle, 2003; Haas, 2014). In 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) was passed, creating big changes for bilingual education. The focus was now placed on English-language instruction (without maintaining students′ culture and home language), with the goal of assimilating students into the mainstream classrooms as quickly as possible. In reference to the above brief of bilingual education policies, English language learners have faced unfair treatment being geared towards monolingualism in English, making them believe their home language (L1) is of less value (Garcia & Diaz, 1992).

The main aim of this paper is to examine the attitudes of English as a second language (ESL) high school Hispanic students' attitudes towards their home language (L1), English (L2), and the bilingual program in their high school in the Chicago area, USA. Firstly, bilingual education programs will be presented as well as the relevant field research. Next, research questions will be introduced, followed by elaboration of the questionnaire. Finally, the results of the study will be presented along with a discussion of the findings and practical implications of the study.

II. Bilingual Education Theoretical Background

A. Bilingual Education Programs

Bilingual education research focuses on programs using two languages of instruction (Baker & Jones, 1998; Cummins, 2010; Freeman, 1998), where students are required to learn another language because their home language (L1) is not the language of the broader society, such as English in the U.S. They are speakers of minority languages, often experiencing the process of subtractive bilingualism, which is one of the two main bilingual educational models for non-native English speakers in the United States (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004; Ovando, 2003; Ovando et al., 2006). The other model is additive (Lambert, 1975).

Subtractive bilingualism refers to the loss of the linguistic features of L1, which are replaced with the linguistic features of L2. The aim of the dominant language is to devalue the inferior language (Garcia, 2009a), which results in marginalization of the language learners with their L1 culture. It often happens that Hispanic learners who learn English in this way end up losing their home language, and as a result, new generations become monolingual (Baker, 2011; Garcia, 2009a; Landry & Allard, 1993). Some examples of subtractive programs are: structured English immersion, transitional programs (early-exit, such as sheltered instruction and late-exit), ESL (pull-out and self-contained), and submersion (sink or swim) (Antunez et al., 2000; Baker, 2011; Soltero, 2004). Their primary purpose is to become monolingual in the second language by leaving out the native language (Soltero, 2004).

Additive bilingualism aims to develop full bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism by adding the second language, while maintaining the first language (Landry & Alard, 1993; Soltero, 2004). Their linguistic outcome is bilingualism and biliteracy in L1 and English. Some examples of additive bilingualism are immersion (dual language and two-way immersion) and maintenance (heritage language and developmental (Genesee, 1999; Soltero, 2004). Research shows that additive bilingual programs create students that are most likely to succeed (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2000; Genesee et al., 2006; May et al., 2008; Thomas & Collier, 2002). According to Latchana and Dagnew (2009), attitude is defined as a mental state which includes feelings and beliefs. Positive attitudes seem to raise students' motivation, thus positively affecting students' competence in language learning (Lennartsson, 2008), which in turn affects students' success rate (Dörnyei, 1994, 1998, 2003). On the contrary, subtractive bilingual programs generally show lower levels of educational success. The additive and subtractive distinctions will serve to evaluate the philosophy of bilingual education and students′ attitudes towards bilingualism.

The subtractive or additive approach to bilingualism affects students' attitudes towards the education process, connecting it to their academic achievement, in addition to a number of other factors which influence the learning of a second language such as: context, age, intelligence, attitude, motivation, and self-esteem. Gardner and Lambert (1972) argue that student's proficiency in a second language is not only due to their mental competence or language skills, but also due to the learner's attitudes towards the target language.

There is abundant research in the field of educating ELLs in the USA (cf. Cummins, 1996, 2000, 2010; Freeman, 2004; Garcia, 2009a, 2009b), but significantly less in the field of teachers′ and parents′ opinions regarding the matter (Pajeres, 1992; Shannon & Milian, 2002), and even fewer on students′ attitudes towards bilingual education (Tienda & Mitchell, 2006). Students′ perspectives should be heard in order for bilingual programs to be more successful, which may help shape the policies of their schools when it comes to making decisions regarding bilingual education programs.

B. Home Language Maintenance

The usage of the first language (L1) is crucial in early second language (L2) acquisitions, and it continues to be beneficial during the entire process of L2 learning (Auerbach, 1993). This is why an adequate additive bilingual program is pivotal for adolescents in order to continue with L1 development and usage.

Kipp et al. (1995) suggested that home language maintenance is affected by a variety of individual factors such as age, gender, place of birth, education, prior experience with the majority language (English in this case), length of stay in the host country, the reason for migration, etc. Moreover, there are also several group factors that could affect heritage language maintenance, such as the size of an ethnic group in the area of residency, the language policy of the host country, and the proximity of the minority language (Spanish) to the majority language (English). The combination of both factor types affects language maintenance and its loss depending on language learners' previous experiences and situations.

Lack of opportunities for learning L1 and poor proficiency in English may contribute to learners losing their self-confidence and a chance to get on a path to success (Krashen, 2003). Furthermore, Krashen (2003) pointed out that learners' motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety could be affected by adaptation to the new environment. These variables, which are recognized in his affective filter hypothesis, play a facilitative role in second language acquisition. If learners are highly motivated, self-confident, and not anxious, their chances for success in second language acquisition (SLA) and future endeavors are greater. On the contrary, learners do not advance well when affected by negative feelings, such as monotony or anxiety. This is a barrier that may keep individuals from learning; therefore, if teachers are aware of the variables from the affective filter hypothesis, they will create a more enjoyable and less stressful language learning experience.

Language maintenance is necessary to keep the native language functional and connected to cultural values (Reyhner, 2003). These values help individuals build stronger self-images, creating more positive learning environments. In addition, Reyhner (2003) proposes that everyone could benefit from bilingualism. Since the United States holds one of the highest numbers of immigrants in the world, totaling 44 million, it is essential to raise the issue of bilingualism, considering that immigrants already come to the US speaking their home language, and in order to adapt to their new country they should learn English as well (U.S. Census, 2019). Immigrant populations are, therefore, directly affected by bilingualism, as well as schools, working environments, hospitals, and other numerous institutions that interact on a regular basis with diverse communities. This proves that language maintenance should not only be important for individuals, but also for preservation and development of traditional cultures, which should be supported by schools and other educational institutions.

III. Goals and Research Questions

The aim of the study was to examine English as a second language (ESL) Hispanic high school students' attitudes towards their home language (L1), English (L2), and bilingualism/the bilingual education program offered in their high school in the Chicago area, USA. There is an assumption that positive attitudes towards the L1 generate positive attitudes towards the bilingual program students are participating in, since bilingual programs offer learning English with the assistance of L1. If students are satisfied with the program they are attending, they will obtain better results. An insight into the students' perceptions would allow the district to consider selecting a more fitting program accordingly. This could influence other districts to conduct similar questionnaires and create tailored bilingual programs for their students, aiming for more successful academic achievements. This research is conducted on a smaller scale, as a part of a larger research conducted within the scope of a PhD thesis.

The research attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are ESL Hispanic students' attitudes towards home language (L1)?
2. What are ESL Hispanic students' attitudes towards English language (L2)?
3. What are ESL Hispanic students' attitudes towards bilingualism/the bilingual education program at their school?

IV. Methodology

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used to investigate the research questions on a sample of 60 study participants. An online Google Forms questionnaire containing 34 questions was designed, with open- and closed-ended questions, allowing for data categorization. The focus was placed on students' attitudes towards L1, L2, and bilingualism/the bilingual program in their school. A qualitative method was used to analyze open-ended questions, focusing on any prominent aspects noticed in the responses, subject to interpretation, such as reaction or behavior.

A. Participants

The study is focused on Spanish-English bilingual students from a northern suburb of Chicago (USA) high school. This area was selected due to the high number of English language learners. The high school has 2,212 students, 230 of whom are English learners, 207 of whom are Hispanic (90%) (Illinois Report Card, 2021-2022). This population composition is relevant because the majority of English language learners in the state of Illinois, USA are Hispanic (Migration Policy Institute, 2018).

Students who participated in this study attended grades 9-12 (ages 14-18). The majority were freshmen (38.22%) and sophomore (31.66%) ELLs. The 11^{th} (16.66%) and 12^{th} (13.33%) graders represented less than 30% of the Hispanic ELLs. Their English language proficiency ranged from levels 1-5 (entering (1), emerging (2), developing (3), expanding (4), and bridging (5)), which is measured by the ACCESS test for English proficiency and is administered yearly. Based on the test results, students qualify as English language learners if they score less than 5 on a scale to 6. The average duration of English learning is 8.16 years, with an average deviation from the arithmetic mean of 2.36, and ranges from 3.00 to 14.00 years.

The school offers bilingual education courses in English, math, science, and social studies, using only the sheltered instruction content classes. Sheltered instruction does not primarily focus on language development; it rather focuses on the content area knowledge, using only English to transfer knowledge. Teachers simplify the language and use scaffolding strategies in the content area (Wright, 2010).

According to the 2014 district's plan and program for English language learners, districts have significant flexibility when developing programs to satisfy the needs of English learners (ELL Plan, 2014). This means that students′ attitudes towards their bilingual program can make a difference in the implementation of more appropriate programs. The district could choose between transitional bilingual, developmental bilingual, dual language, ESL, content-based ESL, and sheltered English instruction. At the moment, only sheltered English instruction is offered.

B. Data Collection

The questionnaire was conducted electronically between February and April 2023 in the school′s computer lab, and it was administered by the students′ English language teachers. In this way, students had a set time to complete the questionnaire and were supervised. It was used as a data collection tool, targeting Hispanic ESL high school students.

The main contact was the school′s assistant principal, who was sent a formal Request to Conduct a Study, which was approved.

The questionnaire was created as a combination of structured (scaled questions, multiple-choice responses, and Yes/No responses) and unstructured questions (open-ended questions), and was divided into three sections. Each section contained a mixture of structured and unstructured questions: student attitudes towards L1, student attitudes towards L2, and student attitudes towards bilingualism/bilingual programs. Structured questions were designed to focus on students' habits and usage of their home language (Spanish) at their homes, away from home, and in different situations, as well as their own evaluation of their English knowledge. The questions were short, closed-ended with yes/no answers, with an option to select from a list of given responses, or multiple-choice responses. A 5-point Likert-scale was used with the scaled questions (1 being completely disagree and 5 being completely agree) (Tullis & Albert, 2013). Conclusions could be made from the students′ responses regarding their usage of Spanish (L1) and English (L2), and the overall importance of both languages.

Another group of questions used was unstructured, open-ended questions, which focused on personal information and feedback. Personal information included questions such as their age, time spent learning English/their proficiency level, persons they speak their L1 with, etc. The feedback provided students' experiences on the given questions.

C. Data Analysis

The framework for the study analysis consisted of four questionnaire categories with general questions about the students, their attitudes towards L1, their attitudes towards L2, and bilingualism/the bilingual program in their school. The data were analyzed using SPSS Statistics 25 software as one of the most recognizable tools used for descriptive statistics (IBM Corp., 2017). The questionnaire items were scrutinized by calculating the frequency (f), probability (p), t-value (t), degree of freedom (df), chi-square ($\chi 2$), mean, standard deviation (SD), and overall percentages (%) of participants' responses for each item.

V. Results

In this section, the research results from the questionnaire are presented beginning with the first, general section that included questions regarding students′ age, ethnic background, English language learning experience, the bilingual program at their school, their self-assessment of English and Spanish, information on language spoken at home, and their language preference with family and friends.

In reference to students' ethnic backgrounds, all respondents were of Hispanic descent (n=60, 100%) in grades 9-12. The average duration of learning English among the observed respondents is 8.16 years, with an average deviation from the arithmetic mean of 2.36. The respondents′ proficiency scores based on the ACCESS test were as follows: Level 1 WIDA entering (n=2, 3.33%), Level 2 WIDA emerging (n=4, 6.66%), Level 3 WIDA developing (n=30, 50%), Level 4 WIDA expanding (n=18, 30%), and Level 5 WIDA bridging (n=6, 10%). Most respondents are involved in the ESL program (n=41; 68.33%), some are enrolled in the bilingual program (n=11, 18.33%), while the rest (n=7; 11.67%) did not know what program they attended (see Table 1 below). The majority self-assessed their knowledge of English with a 3 (n=29; 48.33%), while only 3 respondents rated their knowledge as excellent (n=3; 5.00%) (see Table 2). On the contrary, the largest number of respondents self-assessed their knowledge of the Spanish language with a grade of 5 (n=52; 86.86%), while only 1 respondent assessed their knowledge as insufficient (n=1; 1.67%) and 7 as average (n=7; 11.67%) (see Table 3).

In reference to the respondents′ usage of languages and their preferences, for most respondents the language spoken at home is Spanish (n=40; 66.67%), while the rest of them (n=20; 33.33%) use both English and Spanish. The majority prefer communication in English (n=32; 54.24%), while 14 (n=14; 23.33%) prefer the use of Spanish, and the same number (n=14; 23.33%) prefer to use both Spanish and English. Most respondents communicate with their friends in both English and Spanish (n=36; 60.00%), while no one communicates only in Spanish among friends. All respondents (n=60; 100.00%) use the English language when learning. Most respondents' parents speak only Spanish (n=42; 70.00%), while only 2 respondents′ parents speak only English (n=2; 3.33%). The largest number of respondents rarely visit their family in their country of origin (n=41; 68.33%). The majority confirmed that teachers' use of Spanish in lessons makes them understand better what they are learning (n=33; 55 %), while the rest (n=20; 33.33%) responded that the question did not apply to them (see Table 4).

TABLE 1
ENGLISH LEARNERS' PROGRAMS OF ENROLLMENT

5. What English program (ESL) are you enrolled in?	n	%
Bilingual (I learn both in Spanish and English)	11	18.33
ESL	41	68.33
I don't know	7	11.67
Transitional	1	1.67

TABLE 2
STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH

6. How well do you speak English?	n	%
1	0	0
2	9	15.00
3	29	48,33
4	19	31.67
5	3	5.00

TABLE 3
STUDENTS' SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SPANISH

7. How well do you speak Spanish?	n	%
1	1	1.67
3	3	5.00
4	4	6.67
5	52	86,67

TABLE 4
SPANISH USED IN LESSONS

15. The teacher's use of Spanish in lessons makes me understand better what I am learning.	n	%
Yes	33	56.90
Doesn't apply to me.	20	34,48
No	5	8.62

TABLE 5
THE USE OF LANGUAGE

8. What language(s) is spoken at home?	n	%
Spanish	40	66,67
both English and Spanish	18	30.00
other	2	3.33

12. What language do your parents speak?	n	%
Both English and Spanish	16	26,67
English	2	3.33
Spanish	42	70.00

15. The teacher's use of Spanish in lessons makes me understand better what I am learning.	n	4. How many years have you been learning English?	4. How many years have you been learning English?	f	p
Yes	33	7.42	1.70	9.35	<0.001
Doesn't apply to me.	20	9.75	2.43		
No	5	6.60	2.88		

6. How well do you speak English?	6. How well do you speak English?	f	p
2.88	0.60	14.56	<0.001
3.85	0.75		
3.60	0.55		

A descriptive analysis was used on the questionnaire section about students′ attitudes towards home language (L1). A statistically significant majority gave an affirmative answer to the statements "I would like to have more classes with help in Spanish (66.7%)," and "It is important to speak and read Spanish fluently (96.61%)," while a statistically significant majority of students reacted negatively to "Students who speak Spanish are smarter (91.67%)," "It is more important to speak Spanish than English (95.00 %)," and "I feel embarrassed to speak Spanish at school (95.00%)." Regarding the importance of Spanish when it comes to maintaining it, “Students are not encouraged to speak Spanish at school" (n=36, 60%) and "Speaking Spanish will not make me successful" (n=42, 70.00%) was selected by the majority. The results are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 6
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOME LANGUAGE (L1)

Item #	Yes		No		χ^2	*p*
	n	**%**	***n***	**%**		
16. I would like to have more classes with help in Spanish.	40	66.67	20	33.33	6.67	0.010
17. It is important to speak and read Spanish fluently.	57	96.61	2	3.39	51.27	<0.001
18. Students who speak Spanish are smarter.	5	8.33	55	91.67	41.67	<0.001
19. It is more important to speak Spanish than English.	3	5.00	57	95.00	48.60	<0.001
20. I feel embarrassed to speak Spanish at school.	3	5.00	57	95.00	48.60	<0.001
21. Students are not encouraged to speak their home language (Spanish) at school.	36	60.00	24	40.00	2.40	0.121
22. Speaking Spanish will not make me successful.	42	70.00	18	30.00	9.60	0.002

Furthermore, the descriptive analysis on students′ attitudes towards English (L2) is summarized below. The statement "I prefer learning only in English" received a negative response by a small majority (n=35, 58.33%), while a statistically significant majority of students provided a negative response to the statement "I knew about the English learning programs offered at this school when I started it" (n=13, 22.41%). The majority of the respondents supported English and its importance in the future, which is evident from the following statements: "I think it is more important to speak English than Spanish" (n=53, 89.83%), "Speaking English makes you more successful" (n=55, 93.22%), and "Students who speak good English are smarter" (n=53, 88.33%). Finally, the statements on students′ satisfaction with ESL classes (n=51, 86.44%) and their need for more ESL classes (n=46, 77.97%) were both answered affirmatively by a great majority. The results are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 7
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH (L2)

Item #	Yes		No		χ^2	*p*
	n	**%**	***n***	**%**		
23. I prefer learning only in English.	25	41.67	35	58.33	1.67	0.197
24. I think it is more important to speak English than Spanish.	53	89.83	6	10.17	37.44	<0.001
25. I am satisfied with the ESL classes that I take at my school.	51	86.44	8	13.56	31.34	<0.001
26. I think I should have more ESL classes because they help me with learning.	46	77.97	13	22.03	18.46	<0.001
27. I knew about the English learning programs offered at this school when I started it.	13	22.41	45	77.59	17.66	<0.001
28. Students who speak good English are smarter.	53	88.33	7	11.67	35.27	<0.001
29. Speaking English makes you more successful.	55	93.22	4	6.78	44.09	<0.001

Lastly, the final section about students′ attitudes towards bilingualism/the bilingual program in their school is presented. For all statements that were offered, except for "I would like to learn in English and Spanish all subjects" (n=17, 29.31%), a statistically significant majority of students had positive responses. Overall, their attitudes towards bilingualism are positive, which shows in their willingness to learn content area subjects such as science or social studies in Spanish and English (n=42, 72.41%), placing importance on speaking fluently in both English and Spanish (n=57, 95.00%), getting a good education (n=60, 100%), and keeping their culture alive (n=60, 100%). The results are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 8
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS BILINGUALISM/THE BILINGUAL PROGRAM IN THEIR SCHOOL

Item #	Yes		No		$\chi 2$	*p*
	n	**%**	***n***	**%**		
30. I would like to learn all subjects in English and Spanish.	17	29.31	41	70.69	9.93	<0.001
31. I would like to learn in English and Spanish just some subjects, such as science or social studies.	42	72.41	16	27.59	11.66	0.001
32. It is important to speak English and Spanish fluently.	57	95.00	3	5.00	48.60	<0.001
33. It is important for me to get a good education, so I can get a good job.	60	100.00	0	0.00	60.00	<0.001
34. It is important to keep my culture - my customs and traditions.	60	100.00	0	0.00	60.00	<0.001

The length of learning English among respondents who want to learn all subjects in English and Spanish is shorter by 1.94 years, and the presence of a statistically significant difference was determined by the questionnaire (t=3.02; p=0.004).

TABLE 8A

30. I would like to learn in English and Spanish all subjects.	Yes			No			*t*	*df*	*p*
	n	**Mean**	**SD**	**n**	**Mean**	**SD**			
4. How many years have you been learning English?	16	6.81	2.29	40	8.75	2.12	3.02	54	0.004

Self-assessed knowledge of the English language is lower by 0.57 points among respondents who want to learn all subjects in English and Spanish, and the presence of a statistically significant difference was determined by the examination (t=2.77; p=0.008).

TABLE 8B

30. I would like to learn all subjects in English and Spanish.	Yes			No			*t*	*df*	*p*
	n	**Mean**	**SD**	***n***	**Mean**	**SD**			
6. How well do you speak English?	17	2.82	0.81	41	3.39	0.67	2.77	56	0.008

The duration of learning English among respondents who want to learn just some subjects in English and Spanish, such as science or social studies, is shorter by 1.48 years, and the presence of a statistically significant difference was determined by the examination (t=2.18; p= 0.034).

TABLE 8C

31. I would like to learn in English and Spanish just some subjects, such as science or social studies.	Yes			No			*t*	*df*	*p*
	n	**Mean**	**SD**	***n***	**Mean**	**SD**			
4. How many years have you been learning English?	41	7.85	1.78	15	9.33	3.24	2.18	54	0.034

Self-assessed knowledge of the English language was lower by 0.59 points among the respondents who want to learn just some subjects in English and Spanish, such as science or social studies, and the examination established the presence of a statistically significant difference (t=2.90; p=0.005).

TABLE 8D

31. I would like to learn in English and Spanish just some subjects, such as science or social studies.	Yes			No			*t*	*df*	*p*
	n	Mean	SD	*n*	Mean	SD			
6. How well do you speak English?	42	3.10	0.62	16	3.69	0.87	2.90	56	0.005

VI. DISCUSSION

Results of the research questions analyses will be discussed in the following section, including students' attitudes towards L1, their attitudes towards L2, and bilingualism/bilingual programs in their school.

In order to better understand the significance of bilingual education to the target students, and the role of the languages they are using, it is crucial to analyze their background. This is addressed in the general part of the questionnaire. All the respondents are of Hispanic descent, and as such are directly exposed to biculturalism and bilingualism. When asked to self-assess their knowledge of English and Spanish, they showed more confidence with their knowledge of Spanish, in comparison to their knowledge of English. The largest number of respondents self-assessed their knowledge of the Spanish language with a grade 5 (n=52; 86.86%). On the contrary, the largest number of respondents self-assessed their knowledge of English with a 3 (n=29; 48.33%), while only 3 respondents rated their knowledge as excellent (n=3; 5.00%). It is clear from this information that students have a solid background in Spanish, which comes from using it in their homes (see Table 8). They keep the Spanish active at home for communication purposes, since most of their parents and family members speak only Spanish. Two-thirds of the students confirmed this, which is why it is imperative for them to know Spanish and to continuously develop it. It can be concluded from the rest of the students′ responses that their Spanish is developed at a conversational level only. Their only language of learning is English (59 students confirmed). Moreover, a beneficial correlation was found between the teacher′s use of Spanish in lessons, which helps to better understand English and speak it, and the length of learning English. Students with lower proficiency (self-assessed) in English showed a greater need for Spanish support in lessons (F=14.56; P<0.001). In addition, the average duration of English learning is the highest among respondents who believe that the statement "The teacher's use of Spanish in lessons makes me understand better what I am learning" does not apply to them. This is not surprising considering that English knowledge should be at a higher proficiency level the longer learning lasts, possibly even to a level of exiting the bilingual program. On the contrary, most students who responded positively to the same claim have almost the least experience in learning English, as evident in the analysis that established the presence of a statistically significant difference (F=9.35; P<0.001; Table 5).

Surprising information was revealed in the students’ responses about the English learning programs offered at their school. Two-thirds of the students said that they were enrolled in an ESL program ((n=41; 68.33%) and roughly one-sixth in a bilingual program (learning in both English and Spanish) (n=11, 18.33%). Considering that their school only provides sheltered instruction for content classes, such as math, science, and social studies as a bilingual learning method, students seem to be misinformed about the program they are attending. It is possible that the bilingual program they are referencing is sheltered instruction for lower proficiency students since they need special assistance in their native language when learning. Those who answered “ESL program” get additional support in English for some of their classes that are only in English. Since ESL programs are often offered in elementary schools as a form of bilingual support (they focus more on language development than the content and are geared towards lower proficiency students) (Cummins, 2010; Ovando et al., 2006), it is possible that the students called it the same out of habit. This suggests that they do not question the program they are attending and its benefits for their future education.

The results suggest that Spanish is considered very important, as the students would like to see more of it in school and become fully proficient in it, but at the same time, they do not want to place more importance on it over English. One of the reasons for this is the lack of encouragement from the school (60% of the students felt they weren’t encouraged to speak Spanish in school). All of the students′ English proficiency (ACCESS) scores fall between low proficiency levels 1&2 (9.6%+28%) and intermediate proficiency levels 3&4 (46.4%+16%) (Illinois Report Card, 2021-2022). Furthermore, their scores are aligned with the 2022 ACCESS overall performance scores for the state of Illinois. These students would certainly benefit from a bilingual program that would involve L1 support in learning English.

The study findings showed that Hispanic English language learners hold positive attitudes toward their home language. Domestic use of Spanish makes it a part of students′ culture and tradition, and they wish to have an opportunity to develop it further through a bilingual program of additive nature offered at their school (Soltero, 2004).

The second research question about Hispanic ESL students' attitudes towards English (L2) came as a response to the school’s learning environment, which is promoting English learning without relying on the home language. In order to assimilate faster to the host culture, the students want to learn only English (Baker, 2011; Celaya, 2016) believing that focusing only on one language would make their learning experience more successful and faster. This was evident from the questionnaire results showing that all students (100%) use English when learning. This could be explained by the fact that students are not used to learning in both languages, since their school does not offer such programs. Lack of encouragement to speak Spanish at school (n=36, 60%) contributes to the belief that English is not only dominant, but superior to their home language, which is why they support the statement that it is more important to speak English than Spanish (n=53, 89.83%). To add, students are not properly introduced to the English language learning program at the beginning of their high school education, which is evident from negative responses (almost 80% of the students, n=45;77.59%) to the statement “I knew about the English language program when I started.” Due to the push from the school to transition the English language students quickly into the mainstream classes by using as much English as possible while creating monolingual English learners, the students seem to share similar attitudes towards English language superiority. This shows in their confirmation (n=53, 88,33%) of statements “Students who speak good English are smarter” and “Speaking English makes you more successful (n=55, 93.22%)”.

An analysis of the questionnaire results suggests students′ positive attitudes towards the second research question, which refers to their L2. They find it more important to speak English than Spanish, and also students who speak English to be smarter and more successful than those that don’t. They prefer to speak English (n=31, 54.24%), and all of them use it in learning (see Table 7).

The third research question, which concerns Hispanic ESL students' attitudes towards bilingualism/the bilingual education program at their school, also resulted in positive attitudes. Their positive attitude towards bilingualism certainly arrives from their home environment and traditions. All of them stated that it is important to keep their culture alive, while Spanish is spoken in two-thirds of homes (n=40, 66.67%), and even in more cases parents speak only Spanish (n=42, 70%). The home support makes them believe that it is important to speak English and Spanish fluently and to use English and Spanish in learning certain subjects, such as science or social studies. The minority preferred learning all subjects in both languages (see Table 8).

In addition, the students may have expressed positive attitudes towards the school′s bilingual program based on its name, or simply were aiming to improve their English knowledge by participating in it. A majority preferred having more ESL classes (n=46, 77.97%). The research reminds us that ESL classes most often use L2 for quicker language acquisition without using L1 as support (Francis et al., 2006). In this way students develop lower language proficiency skills, such is colloquial language, which may trick the non-English language learners’ staff into believing that their academic language is more advanced than it actually is. Most schools identify their programs as bilingual, although they only offer subtractive bilingual programs with only sheltered instruction or ESL classes, and are far away from true bilingual programs that promote bilingualism and biliteracy in both languages studied.

Students develop positive attitudes towards subtractive bilingual programs, as in this case, because they see it as a quick and only path to mastering English. At the same time, this causes a loss of interest to further develop L1, which was evident from the negative feedback majority gave regarding learning all subjects in both languages. This finding is contradictory to students′ wish to speak both languages fluently (in all areas, not just for communication purposes) because they are not knowledgeable about what is necessary to master a language.

Based on the conducted research it is evident that there is a gap in the English language proficiency among students. Moreover, all students scored between lower and intermediate English proficiency levels. It was expected that an additive bilingual program would be offered at the high school suiting English language learners′ needs; however, this was not the case. According to the Illinois Report Card (2021-2022), the goal of their school′s “Bilingual” Education Program is to help students acquire English language proficiency in all four language domains, while gaining academic skills. The stated goals align with a program that contains ESL instruction, which is not offered at this school. Moreover, the bilingual program that the school offers uses sheltered instruction content classes, which are meant for English learners at advanced levels of English proficiency.

VII. Conclusion

The study showed that there is a clear language separation when it comes to its purpose. English is used for academic purposes, mostly only at school- in classes and among peers, while Spanish is used for conversational purposes-at home, among family and friends. This suggests that true bilingualism is not present, with students being fully bilingual and biliteral in both languages.

This study shows Hispanic ESL students' positive attitudes towards L1, as they already have support for Spanish at home, however, they become aware of its inferiority to English, stemming from the school′s lack of effort to support its maintenance and usage. The students are willing to participate in additive bilingual programs if guided properly, which was evident from their positive responses regarding reading and speaking Spanish fluently, as well as their desire to use both languages in learning.

Furthermore, the students′ positive attitudes towards English can be explained by the idea of assimilating faster into mainstream education and society. They view English as a means to success. Consequently, they are led to believe that learning Spanish would hold them back in their progress. The school and the authorities see Spanish as a hindrance to learning, fearing it would only diminish students’ focus as they learn English. On the contrary, learning English in a proper program can reduce the learning process. Often a common misconception that many hold is that learning two languages slows the process down, however, research shows (Eckert, 2000; Fairclough, 1989) that the L1 background makes stronger foundations for the second language learners, helping them acquire it with fewer difficulties. A second language does not have to be acquired under the condition of losing the home language.

Finally, it can be concluded from the study that Hispanic ESL students have positive attitudes towards bilingualism/the bilingual program at their school. The school's existing bilingual program is a fast-track sheltered program that focuses on content instruction with the goal of achieving English language proficiency using a bare minimum of L1, or without using any. Although the students expressed satisfaction with their bilingual program, they clearly did not understand that there is a wide spectrum of bilingual programs a school could choose from, that aim for bilingualism and biliteracy in English and home language, and that such programs would be more beneficial to them. The questionnaire yielded suggestions the students would like to add to the program. For instance, the majority would like to have more L1 support, which would benefit the lower proficiency level students the most. Others would like more ESL support, which would make their comprehension smoother. Since only a subtractive bilingual program is offered at their school, there is a lack of support to further develop students′ mother tongue. A solution would be to include a transitional bilingual program, which would offer content area subjects in the native language, while teaching students English through special ESL instruction. Since the law does not require bilingual programs to undergo an official assessment, and since it is up to each school to decide on its own type of bilingual program, this study is a great reminder to the decision-makers of the importance of the selected bilingual program for the school, the district, the students, as well as the overall success.

VIII. Practical Implications of the Study

The implications of the findings are directed at the school′s decision-makers, the ELL teachers, and the students′ parents as follows: (1) ELL teachers, as experts in working with bilingual students, should propose a bilingual program more additive in nature. Since the transition from a subtractive (that offers very limited support for ELLs) into an additive program (as the opposing program) is quite significant, a good starting point may be selecting a subtractive bilingual program that requires a lesser transformation, such as a transitional, which is a step closer towards an additive bilingual program. It is the most widely implemented bilingual model in the USA (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 1999). This would facilitate students’ academic progress through the language they understand, while they acquire enough proficiency in the second language to function academically in English;

(2) Both, the school and the district will benefit from offering a proper bilingual program for English language learners, which will show in their achievements (better test results, graduation rates, etc.) because students will be motivated to learn. Apart from the cultural advantages, students in bilingual programs experience other positive outcomes, such as improved working memory, increased control over attention, greater awareness of the form of language, and other benefits economic in nature (Adesope at al., 2010). From the above stated, the district should realize that adequate English language programs should be offered based on its learners′ English language proficiencies (lower proficiencies should have more L1 support);

(3) The change in the bilingual program will allow parents to get involved with their children′s education. If more Spanish is included in the instruction, the parents will be able to understand better what their children are learning and what is expected of them. This will create a more positive learning environment for students, their language and literacy development, and a sense of belonging, considering that their native language is supported at school and among teachers (Portes & MacLeod, 1996).

These findings open more options for research on Hispanic ESL students′ achievement patterns while attending the modified bilingual program, in comparison to their achievement patterns under the previous system. Attitudes of Hispanic ESL students’ parents towards bilingual education could also be further explored. Undoubtedly, the proposed bilingual program change is a process that requires follow-up studies that will examine changes and the overall success of students.

References

[1] Adesope, O.O., Lavin, T., Thompson, T., & Ungerleider, C. (2010). A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Cognitive Correlates of Bilingualism, *Review of Educational Research*, *80*(2), 207–245.

[2] Antunez, B., DiCerbo, P. A., & Menken, K. (2000). *Framing effective practice: Topics and issues in educating English Language Learners.* Retrieved December 3, 2022, from https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/24223263/framing-effective-practice- ncela-george-washington-university

[3] Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Re-examining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly, 21*(1), 9-32.

[4] Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.

[5] Baker, C., & Prys Jones, S. (1998). *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

[6] Blanton, C. K. (2005). *The strange career of bilingual education in Texas*. College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press.

[7] Cashman, H. R. (2006). Who wins in research on bilingualism in an anti-bilingual state? *Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development*, *27*(1), 42-60. https://doi: 10.1080/17447140608668537

[8] Celaya, M. (n.d.). (2016). *The Role of the L1 in the Acquisition and Use of the L2: New Perspectives*. Retrieved November 29, 2022, from https://raco.cat/index.php/Bells/article/download/98198/148953/0

[9] Crawford, J. (1999). *Bilingual education: History, politics, theory and practice*. Los Angeles: Bilingual Education Services.
[10] Crawford, J. (2004). *Educating English learners: Language diversity in the classroom*. Los Angeles, CA: Bilingual Educational Services.
[11] Crawford, J. (1992). *Hold your tongue: Bilingualism and the politics of "English-only"*. New York, NY: Addison-Wesley.
[12] Cummins, J. (1984). *Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
[13] Cummins, J. (2010). Bilingual and immersion programs. In: M. Long & C. Doughty (Eds.), *The handbook of language teaching* (pp. 161–181). Malden: Wiley Blackwell.
[14] Cummins, J. (1996). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*. Toronto: California Association for Bilingual Education.
[15] Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power, and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
[16] Del Valle, S. (2003). *Language rights and the law in the United States: Finding our voices*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
[17] Dörnyei, Z. (2003). Attitudes, orientations, and motivations in language learning: Advances in theory, research, and applications. *Language Learning*, *53*(S1), 3-32.
[18] Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, *31*(03), 117-135. https://doi:10.1017/s026144480001315x
[19] Dörnyei, Z. (1994). Understanding L2 Motivation: On with the Challenge! *The Modern Language Journal*, *78*(4), 515–523.
[20] Eckert, P. (2000). *Linguistic Variation as Social Practice: The Linguistic Construction of Identity in Belten High*. Malden, MA & Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers. Retrieved December 3, 2022, from https://web.stanford.edu/~eckert/PDF/eckertchap252000.pdf
[21] *ELL Plan*. (2018). Retrieved October 17, 2022, from https://il02000989.schoolwires.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=2173
[22] Fairclough, N. (1989). *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
[23] Flores, S. Y., & Murillo Jr., E. G. (2001). Power, language, and ideology: Historical and contemporary notes on the dismantling of bilingual education. *Urban Review*, *33*(3), 186-206. https://doi: 10.1023/A:1010361803811
[24] Francis, D. L. N., & August, D. (2006). Language of instruction. In: D. August & T. Shanahan (Eds.) *Developing literacy in second-language learners* (pp. 365-413). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
[25] Freeman, R. (1998). *Bilingual education and social change*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
[26] Freeman, R. (2004). *Building on community bilingualism*. Caslon, Inc.
[27] García, O. (2009a). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
[28] García, O. (2009b). Education, multilingualism and translanguaging in the 21st century. In T. Skutnabb-Kangas, R. Phillipson, Mohanty, & M. Panda (Eds.), *Social justice through multilingual education* (pp. 140–158). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
[29] García, R. L. & Diaz, C. F. (1992). The status and use of Spanish and English among Hispanic youth in Dade County (Miami) Florida: A sociolinguistic study, 1989–1991. *Language and Education, 6(1)*, 13–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500789209541322
[30] Gardner, R.C. & Lambert, W. E. (1972). *Attitudes and motivation in second language learning*. Newbury House, Rowley, MA.
[31] Genesee, F. (1999). Program alternatives for linguistically diverse students. *UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence*. Retrieved November 28, 2022, from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/95t956xz
[32] Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, B., & Christian, D. (2006). *Educating English Language learners: A synthesis of research evidence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
[33] Haas, E. (2014). Proposition 227, proposition 203, and question 2 in the context of legal rights for English language learners. In G. McField (Ed.), *The miseducation of English learners: A tale of three states and lessons to be learned* (pp. 1 – 24). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.
[34] IBM Corp. Released. (2017). *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 25.0.* Armonk, NY: IBM Corp. Retrieved October 17, 2022, from https://hadoop.apache.org
[35] *Illinois Report Card*. (2021-2022). Retrieved November 28, 2022, from https://www.illinoisreport card.com/school.aspx?source= studentcharacteristics&source2=acess&Schoolid=340491260170001
[36] Kipp, S., Clyne, M., & Pauwels, A. (1995). *Immigration and Australia's language resources*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
[37] Kloss, H. (1998). The American Bilingual Tradition. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *24*, 4, 489-491. http://doi:10.1080 /15235882.2000.10162780
[38] Krashen, S.S. (2003). Three roles for reading for minority-language children. In: G. Garcia (Ed.) *English learners: Reaching the highest level of English literacy* (pp. 55-70). Columbus, OH: Pearson.
[39] Lambert, W. E. (1975). Culture and language as factors in learning and education. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.) *Education of immigrant students* (55-83). Toronto: O.I.S.E.
[40] Landry, R., & Allard, R. (1993). Beyond socially naive bilingual education: The effects of schooling and ethnolinguistic vitality on additive and subtractive bilingualism. In: L. M. Malave (Ed.) *Annual conference journal*. *Proceedings of the National Association for Bilingual Education Conferences* (1-30). Tucson, AZ; Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED360866.pdf
[41] Latchanna, G., & Dagnew, A. (2009). Attitude of teachers towards the use of active learning methods. *E-journal of All India Association for Educational Research*, *21*(1), 53-60.
[42] Lennartsson, F. (2008). *Students' motivation and attitudes towards learning a second language: British and Swedish students' points of view*. (Dissertation). Retrieved October 21, 2022, from https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:vxu:diva-2571
[43] May, S. (2008). Bilingual/Immersion Education: What the Research Tells Us. In: Hornberger, N.H. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. Springer, Boston, MA. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-30424-3_113
[44] *Migration Policy Institute.* (2018). Retrieved October 17, 2022, from https:/www.migrationpolicy.org/topics/education
[45] Ovando, C. J. (2003). Bilingual education in the United States: Historical development and current issues. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *27*(1), 1-24. https://doi: 10.1080/15235882.2003.1016258

[46] Ovando, C. J., Collier,V. P., & Combs, M. C. (2006). *Bilingual and ESL classrooms: Teaching in multicultural contexts* (4th ed). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
[47] Pajares, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research*, *62*(3), 307-332. https://doi: 10.3102/00346543062003307
[48] Portes, A., & MacLeod, D. (1996). Educational progress of children of immigrants: the roles of class, ethnicity, and school context. *Sociol. Educ*. *69*(4), 255–275. https://doi: 10.2307/2112714
[49] Reyhner, J. (2003). Native language immersion. In: Reyhner, J., Trujillo, V., Carrasco, R.L., & Lockard, L. (Eds.) *Nurturing Native Languages* (1-6). Retrieved December 3, 2022, from https://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/NNL/
[50] Reynaldo Contreras, A. (2006). Title VII, Bilingual Education of NCLB and Immigrant Students in Urban Schools. In Brown, F. & Hunter, R.C. (Eds.), *No Child Left Behind and other Federal Programs for Urban School Districts* (Advances in Educational Administration, Vol. 9) (pp. 155-186). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. https://doi.org/10.1016/S14-793660(06)09009-3
[51] San Miguel Jr., G. (2004). *Contested policy: The rise and fall of federal bilingual education in the United States*, *1960–2001*. Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press.
[52] Schmid, C. (2000). The politics of English only in the United States: Historical, social, and legal aspects. In R. Duenas Gonzales & I. Melis (Eds*.), Language ideologies: critical perspectives on the official English movement* (Vols. 1-2, Vol. 1, 64–86). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[53] Shannon, S. M. & Milian, M. (2002). Parents choose dual language programs in Colorado: A questionnaire. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *26*(3), 681-696. https://doi: 10.1080/15235882.2002.10162584
[54] Soltero, S. W. (2004). *Dual Language: Teaching and Learning in Two Languages*. Pearson Education Inc.
[55] Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2002). A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. *UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence*. Retrieved November 28, 2022, from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/65j213pt
[56] Tienda, M. & Mitchell, F. (2006). *Hispanics and the future of America*. National Academies Press (US). Washington DC.
[57] Tullis, T. & Albert, B. (2013). *Measuring the user experience: Collecting, analyzing, and presenting usability metrics* (2nd ed.) Elsevier Inc. https://doi.org/10.1016/C2011-0-00016-9
[58] US Census. (2019). *American community questionnaire 5-year data 2019*. Retrieved October 21, 2022, from https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-5year/2019.html
[59] WIDA. (2023). *ACCESS for ELLs interpretive guide for score reports grades K-12*. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Retrieved November 29, 2022, from https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Interpretive-Guide.pdf
[60] Wright, W. E. (2010). *Foundations for teaching English language learners: Research, theory, policy, and practice*. Philadelphia, PA: Caslon.

Ivana Edmonds was born in Rijeka, Croatia. She is a PhD student at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, studying American studies and focusing on bilingual education in the USA. She holds a Master's degree in Elementary Education from Roosevelt University (2011), Schaumburg, Illinois (USA), and Master's degree in Bilingual Education with ESL and bilingual (Spanish-English) endorsements from De Paul University (2007), Chicago, Illinois (USA).

She is currently employed as a full-time senior lecturer at University of Rijeka, Croatia, at the Faculty of Law, teaching Legal English. She also teaches English classes at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in the field of pedagogy. She has worked with English language learners of all age groups for nearly two decades, teaching English at an elementary school (Zion School District 6, IL, USA), high school (Rijeka, Croatia), business school/college (Rijeka, Croatia), various language schools (Rijeka, Croatia), and at the university level (Rijeka, Croatia). Her fields of interest are bilingual education, English for specific purposes, and CLIL. She has published over a dozen articles in various international scientific and professional journals and books of proceedings.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 697-706, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.02

Redefining the Association Between Memory, Mnemonics and Vocabulary Acquisition—Reviewing Paradigms in Research

Diana Agnes
Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

R Srinivasan
Department of English, School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, India

***Abstract*—The role of memory in language learning is indispensable. A child uses an extraordinary amount of memory when learning to recognise words in the language, creating rules for their use, and connecting speech to the environment and mind. Memory and learning are interdependent, as memory is the process of encoding, storing and retrieving information that is crucial to learning. The value of learning new words, along with the role of memory and mnemonic devices in the process of vocabulary acquisition, is rarely discussed. The article aims to give a comprehensive account of the word and its significance, as well as the numerous aspects that influence word learning, together with the value of learning new words and the functions of memory and mnemonic devices involved in the process of vocabulary acquisition. The various memory models, the efficient processing of information with the aid of mnemonics and how mnemonics have changed over time in studying languages and other subjects are reviewed here. The other major aspects of this study are the dual coding method and an explanation of how mnemonics operate and how mnemonics have evolved with time in studying languages and other subjects.**

***Index Terms*—vocabulary learning, second language learning, short-term memory, long-term memory, mnemonics**

I. Introduction

The role of vocabulary acquisition is indispensable, whether it be mastery of a language (Schmitt, 2008) or communicating the meaning (Wilkins, 1972). Moreover, it is impossible to communicate without having sufficient vocabulary (Mediha & Enisa, 2014). Vocabulary should be accorded the significance it deserves in the language literacy process from the initial stages. A bounteous number of words and expressions must be learned to better command a foreign language. Learners must, therefore, inexplicably be equipped with skill sets that allow them to widen their vocabulary. Instead of asking the students to memorize such lengthy lists, it would be better to help students stimulate their memory to improve their grasp of the language. Training learners on how to use the various vocabulary learning strategies can benefit them as it will help them make decisions about their applications and can also assist learners in becoming autonomous when choosing the strategies to employ. Learners rarely memorize a new term the first time they encounter it since it takes time to remember a new word. During vocabulary acquisition, students use a variety of tactics.

It will be challenging to communicate and convey ideas about people, places, or things, as well as actions, relations, and situations (Clark, 1993). A vocabulary or wordbook is a collection of words' pronunciations and definitions that is kept in memory (Gredler, 2002b). One can further emphasize whether one knows or does not know a word. Instead, the level of knowledge that "people can possess" about a word should be considered (Beck & Mckeown, 1991). A collection of words that someone can understand or comprehend can also be described as vocabulary. A person's ability to comprehend language well will affect his or her ability to communicate effectively (Nunan, 2006). Developing a vocabulary is a fundamental aspect of conveying meaning (Wilkins, 1972). When it comes to mastering a language, be it a foreign language or one's mother tongue, vocabulary is one of the most significant as well as intractable aspects of learning any language. The foundation of a language is its vocabulary, which is why it is so important to language learners. Due to the fact that they give names to actions, objects, and thoughts, words are regarded as the key core components of a language. Without them, we are unable to transmit our true meaning (Hatch & Brown, 1995). In recent years, extensive research has been conducted on vocabulary knowledge in second languages. One notable theory is the Vocabulary Size Test theory, which suggests that a person's vocabulary knowledge is linked to their language proficiency. In relation to this theory, focusing on the acquisition of high-frequency, academic, technical, and low-frequency words is recommended to enhance overall vocabulary size. Cameron has specifically examined English as an additional language and highlights the significance of vocabulary size in educational attainment, showcasing the disparities in vocabulary knowledge between English as an additional language students and native speakers (Cameron, 2002a). These papers collectively underscore the importance of vocabulary size tests in evaluating language learning outcomes and informing effective teaching strategies.

Researchers have examined various aspects of vocabulary acquisition, such as the effects of exposure, context, and word frequency. They have also explored different vocabulary learning strategies, such as explicit memorization and contextual guessing. Using a contextual guessing approach proved to be more advantageous for long-term memory retention than memorizing individual words in isolation (Samiyan, 2014b). The proposed idea is that intentionally learning explicit displays leads to enhanced search performance and sustained recognition (Kroell et al., 2019). In 1981 studies focused on the reader strategy of using context to decipher the meanings of unfamiliar words (Van Parreren & Parreren, 1981). Additionally, studies have investigated the incidental acquisition of vocabulary during language learning activities. While progress has been made, there is still a research gap regarding memory techniques and their effectiveness in vocabulary acquisition. Mnemonics, which use imagery and associations to aid memory, have shown promising results in learning studies but require further investigation. Although earlier research has shown encouraging results regarding the use of mnemonics in language learning, there is still a significant gap in the study of this field. A thorough investigation is required to gain a comprehensive understanding of the memory-related cognitive processes and their specific contributions to vocabulary acquisition in a second language. It is essential to conduct extensive research that would enable the development of more effective and targeted teaching strategies and instructional materials for individuals learning a new language. The foundation of any language that holds the content of any notion or conception is its vocabulary. With a basic understanding of vocabulary and the alphabet, people who speak different languages can easily converse with one another. It represents the foundation of linguistic literacy. Most preceptors focus on vocabulary when teaching a language to provide a strong foundation for learning. Greenberg and Knowlton emphasized the importance of visual imagery in autobiographical recall (Greenberg & Knowlton, 2014).

And Teng and Kravitz provided evidence of mutual disruption between visual working memory and low-level perception, showing that incoming stimuli can be influenced by the information held in mind (Teng & Kravitz, 2019). The exploration of the overlap in content between visual attention and visual working memory revealed that attention can be diverted by distractors related to specific memory content (Olivers et al., 2006). The above-mentioned studies elucidate how language learning outcomes and the retention of acquired vocabulary are positively impacted by the effective utilization of memory and mnemonic devices in vocabulary acquisition. The review is intended to highlight that, in comparison to conventional teaching methods, using memory strategies during learning vocabulary can improve memory performance for subsequent word and phrase recall. The research article aims to confirm this claim by giving insights into the relationship between language acquisition, recall, and memory from the available literature.

A. Decoding Word Learning

Prior to learning how to read, it is essential for a learner to grasp the concept of words. This understanding is crucial because it involves the awareness that spoken words, written words, and read words are all separate entities. Each syllable within a word holds its own significance, and not all words are simply a string of letters. Every word possesses a distinct meaning and function, and they differ from one another in various ways. The concept of "word" is often employed inexactly or ambiguously, even in the study of linguistics. Speakers typically comprehend intuitively that words are made up of sounds, have meaning, are used to form fundamental phrases and sentences, and are frequently included in dictionaries.

B. Components of Word Knowledge and Influencing Factors

A limitless number of delineations on how to “know a word" have been offered by researchers. Understanding a word's form and meaning are both integral components of knowing it (Kersten, 2010a), and the term "knowing a word" refers to having access to valuable information (Nation, 2001)". Open and fruitful knowledge is typically classified as either active or unresisted vocabulary knowledge. The many components of word knowledge include the term's meaning, verbal relationships, morphology, grammar, pronunciation, and so on (Nation, 2001). Nevertheless, understanding the relationship between form and meaning is the most crucial aspect of word knowledge (Laufer & Girsai, 2008).

Spelling, pronounceability, morphology, grammar, length, and semantic aspects are the seven factors that influence word learning (Schmitt, 1997). Pronounceability explains the sound system in English, while spelling represents how the sound system is written. Research has shown that a word can be correctly spelt if it can be accurately pronounced. L1 writing and orthography, the exact spelling of words, also play a role in second-language orthography. However, no definitive evidence suggests that word length affects word acquisition.

The complexities of morphology, such as irregular plural forms and the assignment of gender to inanimate nouns, may make it more difficult to become skilled in a language (Schmitt, 1997). The term "synformy" refers to the confusion that arises when students mix up words that have similar sounds or appearances. Categorizing words into grammatical categories like nouns, adverbs, verbs, and adjectives can be difficult to understand. Abstractness and register are examples of semantic characteristics of words. The process of learning words is believed to be influenced by idiomatic expressions and multiple meanings.

II. Working Memory and Second Language Learning

The capacity to acquire fluency in a second language is referred to as an individual's foreign language learning ability. Recent research has revealed that working memory, a central concept in cognitive psychology, significantly affects various aspects of language acquisition. These aspects include vocabulary learning, language comprehension, performance, analysis, and overall understanding. Consequently, working memory is recognized as an essential attribute for successfully learning a foreign language. Numerous studies have shown that it is one of the finest indicators of how well foreign language learning will improve (Pérez & Alvira, 2017). It is typically regarded as an indicator of how each person learns a second language differently. In fact, the American psychologist, Carroll, launched the current research. He said that in order to acknowledge one's capacity to learn a foreign language, one must have certain insights about how learning a foreign language affects learning a second language:

Passing a test and being able to learn a language are two entirely different aspects. Numerous studies have demonstrated that they are unrelated at the start of the lesson but related at the conclusion.

Foreign language acquisition is different from academic motivation in terms of learning capacity.

The capacity to acquire a foreign language is a characteristic trait that is less prone to change.

Rather than being a requirement, proficiency in a foreign language should be considered when determining the rate and depth of learning a second language.

General intellect and the ability to acquire a foreign language are not the same. The foundation of a language is its vocabulary, which is also one of the indicators of how well a language may be learned (Carroll, 1962).

The minor characteristic of cross-discipline is present in the learning of vocabulary in a second language. However, there are currently no widely recognised theories or models. There are just a few specialised models, such as the process model and the model of vocabulary knowledge.

Many theories and methods of learning a second language are inapplicable to vocabulary acquisition because their main focus is on grammar and pattern recognition. Vocabulary has unique characteristics, so it is necessary to undertake specific research or modify the acquisition theory. To explain language acquisition, which is influenced by psychology, researchers use a psychological model. For instance, it is beneficial to comprehend the linguistic and cognitive psychology of language learning. The discussion of morphology and collocations, however, highlights the linguistics discipline's constrained application. However, utilizing them to develop a theory on second language vocabulary acquisition can contribute to the progression of linguistic, cognitive science, and psychological theories.

Baddeley determined that working memory, an essential system for performing various tasks, has a limited capacity for processing and storing information, Baddeley put forth a conceptual model of working memory that consists of three elements: a central executive responsible for processing information within its limitations, along with two sub-components known as the phonological loop and visual-spatial sketchpad. These sub-components play a role in generating and temporarily retaining mental images. Learning to use vocabulary is the process through which a reader or listener becomes familiar with a difficult or unfamiliar phrase through a substantial amount of linguistic material. If a word has already been encountered, learning it again will be significantly quicker and require less storage space (Baddeley, 2003).

A. Language Learning and Long-Term Memory

Since nothing can be conveyed without vocabulary and no communication is feasible without language, researchers feel that learning vocabulary is an essential part of becoming functional in an EFL context. Due to the difficulty of being unable to express oneself due to a lack of knowledge of basic vocabulary words, students will always need to strengthen their capacity to accumulate more words (Folse, 2004). Some components of language usage are initially conscious but later become unconscious as a result of direct teaching or become automatic with repetition (Oxford, 1990b). The process of learning vocabulary involves not only labelling words but also categorizing them. This underscores the importance of training to effectively organize, integrate, and connect existing knowledge with new information to better handle unfamiliar content. Students can develop a word bank as a result, which they can utilize both actively and passively (Thornbury, 2004).

Establishing links between words is essential for vocabulary to be successfully retained in long-term memory (Arias, 2003). Memory studies suggest several techniques to ensure that knowledge is permanently stored in long-term memory (LTM). Thornbury offered a number of strategies in 2004 to help ensure that knowledge is permanently kept in long-term memory (LTM), including spacing, pace, application, cognitive depth, organisation, creativity, and mnemonics. Students can most surely acquire and apply language in an informative way by adhering to these principles because they are seen in memory techniques, including organising in order, generating associations, and reviewing (Oxford, 1990b). Indeed, research suggests that learned words are gradually forgotten (Schmitt, 2008). Forgetting happens following literacy lessons thus, first, recycling is crucial and must happen right away. After one, three, and eight consecutive weeks, the literacy rate decreases by 66, 48, and 39 per cent, respectively (Anderson & Jordan, 1928). These results underline the importance of repeatedly giving students opportunities to utilise the new phrases. The absence of a standardized approach to vocabulary instruction in handbooks, along with insufficient frequency of exposure to new words, highlights the significance of this criterion (Schmitt, 2014).A learner can use a variety of techniques to experience greater recall of previously learned language (Schmitt, 1997).

B. The Information Processing Model and Memory Systems

Memory can be defined as the mental activity of storing information for future use and retrieval (Loftus & Loftus, 1976). Atkinson and Shiffrin proposed the first systematic and comprehensive information-processing model in 1968. Memory processing was divided into three scales: sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Atkinson and Shiffrin's widely used stage theory model of information processing postulates that learning and memory include numerous stages. Long-term memory, working memory or short-term memory, and sensory memory are all included in this approach. Shortly after entering the sensory register, information is processed before being sent to the short-term memory. Short-term memory, a conscious and active stage, momentarily stores information and processes it through rehearsal. Then, the prepared information can be transferred to long-term memory, where it is organised and kept for a long time. Semantic memory, which deals with general knowledge, and episodic memory, which refers to one's own experiences, are both parts of long-term memory. There have also been suggestions for declarative, procedural, and imagery memory organisational systems (Atkinson & Shiffrin, 1968).

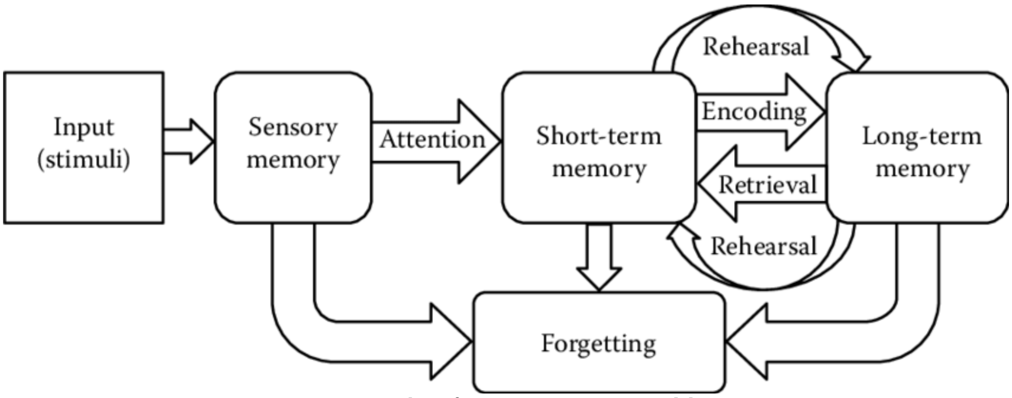


Figure 1. The Information Processing Model

Note- The Information Processing Model proposed by Atkinson and Shiffrin in 1968, explained how information is received, processed and stored based on maintenance and elaborate rehearsal. (Clark & complete profile, 2020)

Long-term memory and short-term memory are dynamic systems, hence it cannot be said that information can never be lost once it is stored in these memory systems. While forgetting can occur at any stage of memory development, there are multiple strategies that can facilitate the retention of information. Encoding, retrieval, rehearsal, and other processes are crucial for aiding in the memorization of information, as seen in the image above.

C. Role of Repetition and Elaboration in Vocabulary Learning

Words learned via word lists are remembered through practice, but words taught through sentence writing are remembered through semantic elaboration (Baddeley, 1997). In other words, semantic elaboration improves memory for word meaning and form. Loftus introduces the concept of the retention interval in retention studies to provide further clarity on the relationship between retention and memory. The time between the presentation of a word and its subsequent rehearsal is referred to as the retention interval. For example, a retention interval of four seconds implies that a word is seen and then repeated in one's mind within that timeframe. It is important to note that a retention interval can exceed a duration of four seconds. When a word is practised after a longer period (more than 15 seconds), it is more likely to be recalled as longer intervals tend to lead to forgetting (King et al., 2002). The length of the recall interval impacts the invasion of short-term memory (Loftus & Loftus, 1976).

Retention times vary depending on the extent of processing. Processing levels primarily relate to the function of coding in learning; it is important to process the content in various ways at first to ensure memory. Although Baddeley proposed flatness, richness, and breadth processing, the idea of processing depth is still viewed as an excessively simplified viewpoint on information processing (Kersten, 2010a). Researchers in the field of linguistics also suggest the involvement-load theory and the generative model. Writing sentences involves significantly more cognitive effort than learning words from lists, which is purely a memory-learning method. Writing sentences takes a higher level of processing than acquiring words from lists. In other words, vocabulary learned by creating sentences is easier to retain than vocabulary taught by creating lists.

Repetition and rehearsal have essentially the same meanings. Repetition is one of the mental strategies known as rehearsal that aids in helping students recall knowledge. According to psychologists, there are two sorts of rehearsals: maintenance and extended rehearsals without deeper coding, maintenance rehearsal is simply remembering or preserving information (such as repeating it by heart). Although it is believed that information processed by maintenance rehearsal prevents forgetting, this knowledge does not result in long-term learning In contrast to maintenance rehearsal, elaborate rehearsal produces long-term memory and requires extensive semantic processing (such as composing phrases) (Baddeley, 1997). The extended rehearsal procedure is also a difficult one. In the process of elaborate rehearsal, students should mix prior knowledge with new knowledge (Sousa, 2006).

Information is regularly spoken out or pondered about during maintenance rehearsal. Short-term memory will momentarily store the knowledge; and will not make it to long-term memory. (Examples: Memorizing historical years, learning musical keys.) In the case of elaborate rehearsal, the method of learning entails considering the significance of a subject and coming up with meaningful thoughts. Long-term memory is improved when the information is connected in meaningful ways. Examples include linking ideas and mnemonics.

III. Long-Term Memory and Vocabulary Learning

According to the multi-store memory model proposed by Atkinson and Shiffrin, the long-term memory (LTM), stage is responsible for the retention of information and skills over extended periods of time. The process of transferring information from short-term memory to long-term storage is crucial in the formation of lasting memories. Long-term storage has an unlimited capacity and can maintain stability for extended periods. The process of consolidation allows short-term memories to transform into long-term ones. Explicit (conscious) and implicit (unconscious) memory are two distinct classifications within long-term memory. Declarative and explicit memories both pertain to memories accessed by the conscious mind. Declarative memories, also known as explicit memories, encompass all memories accessible to conscious awareness. Explicit memory encompasses two categories: semantic memory, which involves knowledge about the world, and episodic memory, which pertains to specific experiences or events. The majority of implicit memories are unconscious and include procedural memory, involving the recall of body movements and the use of objects within an environment. Procedure-based memories include those required for operating an automobile or a computer. Long-term memory formation occurs largely outside of consciousness. Most of this information is present in our unconscious mind but can be brought back and saved in our working memory for later use. Retrieving certain memories can be easy, while others can be difficult.

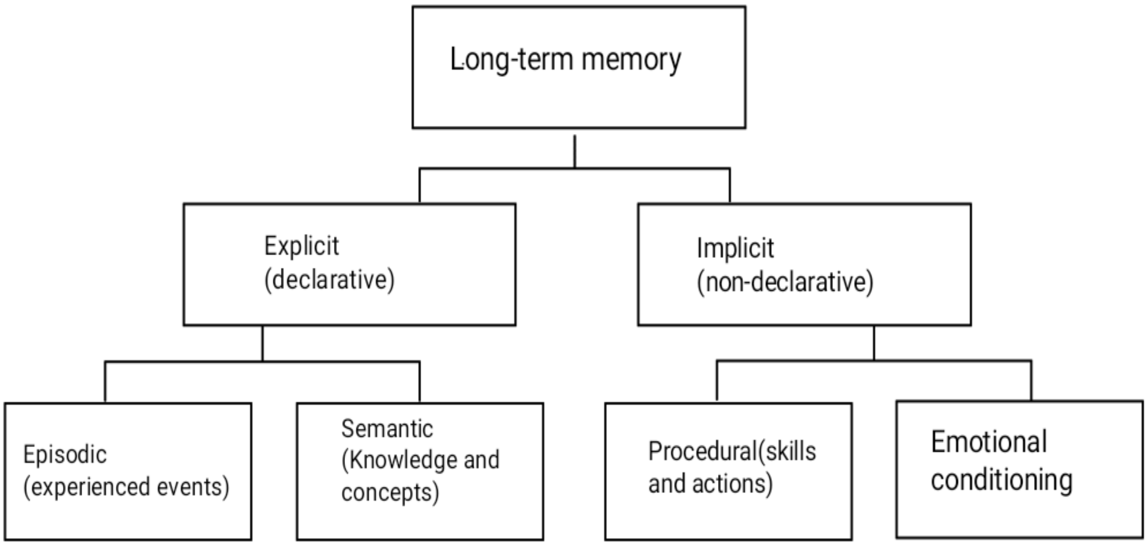


Figure 2. Long-Term Memory Classification

Note-Long-term memory can be categorized into two main types: Explicit and Implicit (Tulving, 2007). Semantic memory, which concentrates on knowledge of facts, and episodic memory, which refers to personal experiences, are categories of explicit memory. Contrarily, procedural memory, which entails knowing how to carry out specific activities, and information learned through training make up implicit memory.

Episodic memory is responsible for storing our actively experienced past events, such as our most recent birthday, in a narrative-like format. Tulving first suggested the idea of episodic memory in the 1970s, and has since been refined by Tulving and other researchers. Presently, researchers believe that episodic memory involves remembering the specific details of an event, including the "what", "where", and "when". This type of memory involves recalling vivid details and a sense of familiarity. In contrast, semantic memory pertains to storing information related to words, concepts, knowledge, and facts, and is typically expressed as factual statements. The term "semantic" refers to its connection to language and the study of language. Your semantic memory, for instance, stores the answers to questions like ‘What is the definition of psychology?’ and ‘Who was the first African-American president of the United States?’.

A. Role of Semantic and Episodic Memory in Vocabulary Acquisition

Semantic memory is a type of mental store that enables language use instead of episodic memory. Episodic memory involves storing temporally dated events and their temporal-spatial connections (Tulving, 2007). In comparison, semantic memory enables us to describe objects or concepts by recalling general knowledge about them, such as defining a bicycle as a two-wheeled vehicle with pedals and handlebars. On the other hand, recalling personal experiences, like being chased by a dog while biking around a pond, relies on episodic memory. Furthermore, unlike episodic memory, semantic memory does not require recalling a specific event. Both types of memory play a role in acquiring new information. Semantic memory aids in the formation of new episodic memories. Similar to how semantic memories serve as the building blocks from which sophisticated and in-depth episodic memories are built, episodic memories make it easier to retrieve information from semantic memory. According to several scholars, these two types of memory regularly interact with one another in intriguing and theoretically significant ways rather than always functioning independently.

B. Mnemonics as Memory Techniques for Efficient Acquisition and Recall of Words

The "vocabulary learning strategy" (VLS) has garnered significant attention due to its effectiveness in facilitating vocabulary acquisition. This approach deviates from traditional teaching methods, focusing instead on the impact of learners' actions on vocabulary learning (Schmitt & Zimmerman, 2002). Strategies play a crucial role, particularly when encouraging children to learn independently and enhance their understanding and retention of new words (Celce-Murcia, 2001). One challenge often encountered is children's tendency to quickly forget recently learned words. To address this, researchers have explored various VLSs.

The mnemonic keyword method is an effective strategy to enhance vocabulary knowledge. Mnemonic instruction, involves strategies specifically designed to improve memory. This often includes modifying or connecting the content to be learned with the learner's existing knowledge Mastropieri and Scruggs (1991). The keyword method is recognized as one of the most effective mnemonic devices, particularly when students are unfamiliar with the material they need to learn.

The word "mnemonic" originates from the Greek term "Mnemosyne," which refers to the goddess of memory in ancient Greek mythology. The use of mnemonics dates back to around 500 B.C. (Yates, 2001). An early version of the contemporary method of loci was the first mnemonic device to be implemented, and many more have been created since then (Higbee, 1987). Memory plays a significant role in the development of vocabulary and grammar skills. Two main categories of memory are involved: short-term memory and long-term memory. Newly learned words are briefly stored in short-term memory, which has a limited capacity and can only hold onto knowledge for a brief period of time. In contrast, long-term memory has vast storage capacity but operates at a slower pace. The objective of vocabulary learning and teaching is to achieve the transfer of words from short-term memory to long-term memory, resulting in enhanced and long-lasting retention (Schmitt, 2014).

Our mind functions similarly to the London Underground, where different pieces of stored information are interconnected (Atkinson, 2002). This analogy emphasizes the numerous relationships that exist between words within the mental lexicon, varying in strength or weakness.

The main approach to transferring vocabulary to long-term memory from short-term storage and establishing strong associations is by connecting new lexical items to existing concepts in the mental lexicon (Schmitt, 2014). Mnemonics, an educational method for enhancing memory, involves teaching individuals to link newly learned knowledge with previously acquired information. The preservation and retrieval of information from memory are aided by mnemonic strategies, which can be linguistic or visual Information is more likely to be retained for a longer period of time when it is communicated in a way that integrates or meaningfully ties to previous knowledge. This facilitates easier retrieval through verbal or visual cues. In essence, teachers can use mnemonic techniques to connect new information to facts already stored in students' long-term memory. They are used to connect a word to knowledge that has already been learned, typically through grouping or imagery (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 1991). Mnemonic devices can be used to speed up learning and improve memory (Thompson, 1987). By incorporating new knowledge into innate cognitive units and offering clues for retrieval or suggestions, mnemonic strategies accomplish the learning tasks.

Various scholars have proposed diverse classifications of mnemonic devices. As an illustration, in Thompson’s categorization, mnemonic techniques are divided into five categories: linguistic, spatial, visual, physical response, and verbal methods (Thompson, 1987). On the other hand, there are four key methods through which mental associations are created, including images and sounds, in-depth analyses are performed, and action is used (Oxford, 1990). In contrast, Baddeley classifies mnemonic methods into verbal and visual imagery strategies (Baddeley, 1999). The peg word method, keyword method, method of loci, narrative telling, spatial grouping, the finger method, and visual mnemonic techniques, which involve images, visualization, and imagery, are some common mnemonic strategies frequently used in language acquisition.

(a). Mnemonic Devices and History

Numerous studies have focused on identifying and teaching vocabulary learning strategies, both for specific languages and in general language learning. However, there have been limited studies conducted on mnemonic devices. Those who have examined mnemonic devices have found that they significantly enhance the retention of second language vocabulary words, both immediately and over time, in contrast to other learning methods. For example, when studying Spanish vocabulary, the effectiveness of the keyword strategy in other control procedures was evaluated by Raugh and Atkinson in 1975. The keyword strategy consistently yielded excellent results. In one experiment, the group using the keyword strategy achieved an overall test score of 88% compared to 28% for the control group. Additionally, Pressley & and Levin, conducted research with children aged 3 to 6, using the keyword technique to learn simple Spanish vocabulary. According to the findings, toddlers who used the keyword strategy retained more vocabulary than kids who weren't taught how to apply it (Pressley & Levin, 1981). A study conducted later by Carlson discovered that the group taught utilizing the method of loci exhibited significantly improved recall compared to a control group (Carlson et al., 1976). Specifically, when the order of the words was significant, the method of loci and the peg word system proved to be superior techniques. Surprisingly, their statistical analysis showed that learning vocabulary in sets with unrelated semantic content was more effective than learning vocabulary in sets with linked semantic content. The study concluded that providing new vocabulary from the same semantic set together might actually hinder vocabulary learning due to cross-association and contradict conventional recommendations found in many course books. For a study on how memory strategy teaching and learning through context affected Turkish EFL learners' ESP vocabulary recall, it was found that mnemonic or memory techniques can enhance vocabulary learning. The study's findings also demonstrated that teaching strategies should be incorporated into contextual vocabulary learning (Atay & Ozbulgan, 2007). Students should be helped to recall a term using various memory techniques after learning its meaning in various circumstances. Second, instruction should emphasise the entire spectrum of methods rather than just one or two, and students should be encouraged to select the most useful one(s) for themselves.

(b). Mnemonics and the Dual Coding Theory

Pavio and other researchers initially proposed the Dual Coding Theory of Memory to explain the strong memory-enhancing effects of visual images. However, this theory goes beyond its initial purpose and has broader implications for cognitive theory. Since its introduction, it has sparked extensive debate and investigation in experimental psychology, significantly renewing interest in imaging from both scientific and philosophical perspectives. The theory has been successfully applied in various psychological domains, such as examining thinking processes, individual differences in thinking styles, and language comprehension. Dual coding theory also addressed the dichotomy between observational and theoretical thinking in science while attempting to explain bilingualism (Paivio & Desrochers, 1980).

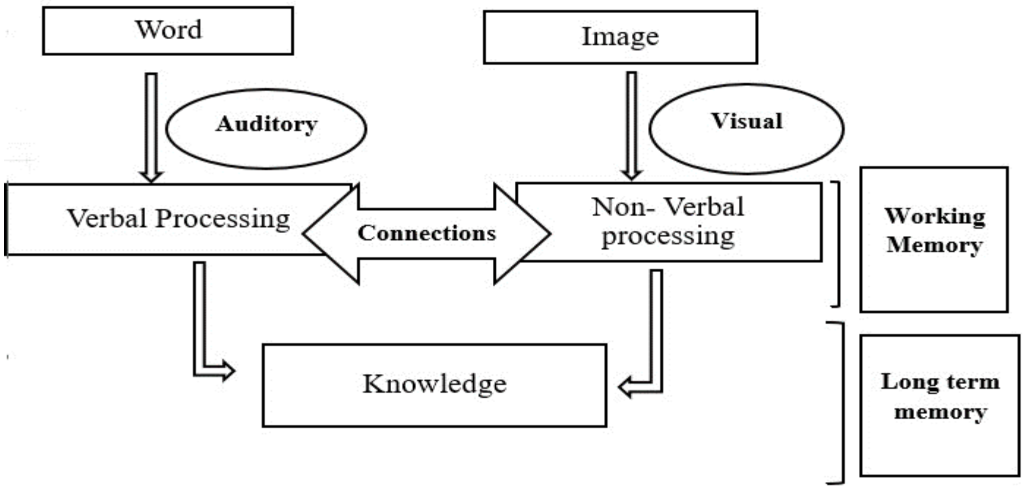


Figure 3. Dual Coding Mechanism
Note- Dual coding is a notion put forth by Paivio (1986) that suggests the human cognitive system codes information in two different ways to reflect the capacity of our cognitive architecture to handle both spoken and nonverbal objects and events at once. (www.theemotionallearner.com, n.d)

The theory proposed by Paivio known as the dual-coding theory, asserts that images are more effective in enhancing memory than words. According to this idea, human memory's verbal and visual subsystems are interconnected. While the vocal system manages language and abstract information, the visual system processes and stores concrete information, including images, sounds, and sensations. Despite their separate nature, these two systems are interconnected. A referential relationship occurs when a verbal representation is derived from a visual stimulus, or vice versa. This concept is called dual coding, which encompasses information that can be visually and verbally recognised (Paivio, 1986). Dual coding improves memory as it allows for the preservation of one memory trace even if the other is lost. Furthermore, images are more likely to activate connections between visual and verbal information, making them easier to recall compared to words.

IV. CONCLUSION

The ability to visualise ideas is crucial. When we need to recall a concept, we create an image of it or a related thought, a picture that only lives in our minds. However, when that happens, we perceive the image as though it were genuinely in front of us. The mnemonist has the potential to alter these images if he or she has a powerful imagination. The power to represent imaginary objects and the ability to modify them go hand in hand, so in addition to improving our memory by making up mental pictures on the spot, we can also gradually adjust these pictures to the topics, subjects, and other things we need to learn. Therefore, an object may have attributes and traits that it doesn't have in our memory.

The mnemonist must first consider how many more perceptual properties an object could possibly have. He must then be able to adapt these qualities to the demands resulting from analysing the material he must learn. All of these factors may cause the mnemonist to use different and occasionally inappropriate fictional objects compared to the genuine ones he was inspired by. In conclusion, engaging our imagination helps improve our memory. Memory theory understanding supports the resolution of memorisation and recall difficulties, and transferable skills allow participants to deploy mnemonic strategies in varied vocabulary learning contexts. In addition, teachers who understand these theories can create pedagogical practices that involve mnemonics in vocabulary teaching to maximize effectiveness and lengthen the duration of newly learned words. Ultimately, knowledge of memory and mnemonics empowers learners and educators to improve vocabulary learning outcomes.

References

[1] Anderson, J. P., & Jordan, A. M. (1928). Learning and retention of Latin words and phrases. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *19*(7), 485–496. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0073011

[2] Arias, L. D. (2003). Memory? No way! *Folios*, *18*, 115-120.

[3] Atay, Derin & Ozbulgan, Cengiz. (2007). Memory strategy Instruction, contextual learning and ESP vocabulary recall. *English for Specific Purposes*, *26*, 39-51. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2006.01.002.

[4] Atkinson, D. (2002). Toward a Sociocognitive Approach to Second Language Acquisition. *Modern Language Journal*, *86*, 525-545. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00159.

[5] Atkinson, R. C., & Raugh, M. R. (1975). An application of the mnemonic keyword method to the acquisition of a Russian vocabulary. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning and Memory*, *1*(2), 126–133. https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.1.2.126.

[6] Atkinson, R. C., & Shiffrin, R. M. (1968). Chapter: Human memory: A proposed system and its control processes. In Spence, K. W., & Spence, J. T. *The psychology of learning and motivation* (Volume 2). New York: Academic Press. pp. 89–195.

[7] Atkinson, R. C., & Shiffrin, R. M. (1968). Human Memory: A Proposed System and its Control Processes. In *Psychology of Learning and Motivation* (pp. 89–195). https://doi.org/10.1016/s0079-7421(08)60422-3

[8] Baddeley, A. (2003). Working memory and language: an overview. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, *36*(3), 189–208. https://doi.org/10.1016/s0021-9924(03)00019

[9] Baddeley, A. D., & Logie, R. H. (1999). Working memory: The multiple-component model. In A. Miyake & P. Shah (Eds.), *Models of working memory: Mechanisms of active maintenance and executive control* (pp. 28–61). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139174909.005

[10] Baddeley, A.D. (1997). *Human Memory: Theory and Practice (Revised Edition)*. Psychology Press, East Sussex

[11] Beck, I., & McKeown, M. (1991). Conditions of vocabulary acquisition. In R. Barr, M. L. Kamil, P. B. Mosenthal, & P. D. Pearson (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research*, Vol. 2, pp. 789–814). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

[12] Cameron, L. (2002a). Measuring vocabulary size in English as an additional language. *Language Teaching Research*, *6*(2), 145–173. Retrieved October 24, 2023 from https://doi.org/10.1191/1362168802lr103oa

[13] Carlson, R. F., Kincaid, J. P., Lance, S., & Hodgson, T. (1976). Spontaneous use of mnemonics and grade point average. *The Journal of Psychology*, *92*(1), 117–122. https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.1976.9921344

[14] Carroll, J. B. (1962). The prediction of success in intensive foreign language training. In R. Glaser (Ed.), *Training and research in education* (pp. 87-136). Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

[15] Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*. Heinle & Heinle Pub.

[16] Clark, D., & complete profile, V. M. (2020, February 24). *Atkinson & Shiffrin - Memory matters. . . three-stage model of memory. . . Donald Clark Plan B: Atkinson & Shiffrin - Memory Matters. . . Three-stage Model of Memory. . .* Retrieved November 20, 2022, from http://donaldclarkplanb.blogspot.com/2020/02/atkinson-shiffrin-memory-matters-three.html

[17] Clark, E. (1993). *The Lexicon in Acquisition (Cambridge Studies in Linguistics)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://10.1017/CBO9780511554377.

[18] Folse, K. S. (2004). *Vocabulary Myths: Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching*. University of Michigan Press ELT.

[19] Gredler, G.R. (2002). Snow, C.E., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (eds.) (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 432 pp., $35.95. Psychol. Schs., 39: 343-344. https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.10011

[20] Greenberg, D., & Knowlton, B. J. (2014). The role of visual imagery in autobiographical memory. *Memory & Cognition*, *42*(6), 922–934. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13421-014-0402-5

[21] Hatch, E., & Brown. S. (1995). *Vocabulary, Semantics, and Language Education*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

[22] Higbee, K.L. (1987). Process Mnemonics: Principles, Prospects, and Problems. In: McDaniel, M.A., Pressley, M. (eds) *Imagery and Related Mnemonic Processes.* Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4612-4676-3_19

[23] Egyankosh. (n.d.). *Information Processing Unit 4 models of Information Processing.* Retrieved November 10, 2022, from http://egyankosh.ac.in//handle/123456789/20689

[24] Folse, K. S. (2004). Myths about Teaching and Learning Second Language Vocabulary: What Recent Research Says. *TESL Reporter*, *37*(2), 1–13. Retrieved October 20, 2022 from http://www.vocablearning.com/WhyVocablearning/Folse-2004-MythsAboutTeachingAndLearningSecondLanguageVocabulary.pdf

[25] Kersten, S. (2010a). *The Mental Lexicon and Vocabulary Learning: Implications for the Foreign Language Classroom* (Vol. 43). Gunter Narr Verlag Tübingen.

[26] King, D. L., Jones, F. L., Pearlman, R. C., Tishman, A., & Felix, C. A. (2002). The length of the retention interval, forgetting, and subjective similarity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, *28*(4), 660–671. https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.28.4.660

[27] Kroell, L. M., Schlagbauer, B., Zinchenko, A., Müller, H. J., & Geyer, T. (2019). Behavioural evidence for a single memory system in contextual cueing. *Visual Cognition*, *27*(5–8), 551–562. https://doi.org/10.1080/13506285.2019.1648347
[28] Laufer, B., & Girsai, N. (2008). Form-focused instruction in Second Language Vocabulary Learning: A case for contrastive analysis and translation. *Applied Linguistics*, *29*(4), 694–716. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amn018
[29] Loftus, E. F. (1976). Unconscious transference in eyewitness identification. *Law & Psychology Review*, *2*, 93–98.
[30] Loftus, G. R., & Loftus, E. F. (1976). *Human Memory: The Processing of Information* (1st ed.). Psychology Press.
[31] Mastropieri, M. A., & Scruggs, T. E. (1991). *Teaching students ways to remember: Strategies for learning mnemonically.* Brookline Books.
[32] Mediha, N., & Enisa, M. (2014). A Comparative Study on the Effectiveness of Using Traditional and Contextualized Methods for Enhancing Learners' Vocabulary Knowledge in an EFL Classroom. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *116*, 3443–3448. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.780.
[33] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). Knowing a word. In *Cambridge University Press eBooks* (pp. 23–59). https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139524759.004
[34] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524759.
[35] Nunan, D. (2006). Task-Based Language Teaching in the Asia Context: Defining "Task". *Asian EFL Journal*, *8*, 12-18. Retrieved December 21, 2022 from http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/September_2006_EBook_editions.pdf
[36] Olivers, C. N. L., Meijer, F., & Theeuwes, J. (2006). Feature-based memory-driven attentional capture: Visual working memory content affects visual attention. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, *32*(5), 1243–1265. https://doi.org/10.1037/0096-1523.32.5.1243
[37] Oxford, R. L. (1990b). *Language learning strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. Newbury House Publishers.
[38] Paivio, A. (1986). *Mental representations: a dual coding approach*. Oxford University Press: Clarendon Press.
[39] Paivio, A., & Desrochers, A. (1980). A dual-coding approach to bilingual memory. *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, *34*(4), 388–399. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0081101
[40] Pérez, L. M., & Alvira, R. (2017). The Acquisition of Vocabulary Through Three Memory Strategies. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, *19*(1), 103. https://doi.org/10.14483/calj.v19n1.10032
[41] Pressley, M., & Levin, J. R. (1981). The keyword method and recall of vocabulary words from definitions. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *7*(1), 72–76. https://doi.org/10.1037/0278-7393.7.1.72
[42] Samiyan, L. V. (2014). The Comparison Between Contextual Guessing Strategy vs. Memorizing a List of Isolated Words in Vocabulary Learning Regarding Long Term Memory. *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport*, *2*(1), 12. https://doi.org/10.14486/ijscs41
[43] Schmitt, N. (1997). Vocabulary Learning Strategies. In D. N. Schmitt, & M. McCarthy (Eds.), *Vocabulary: Description, Acquisition and Pedagogy* (pp. 199-227). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[44] Schmitt, N. (2008). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, *12*(3), 329–363. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168808089921.
[45] Schmitt, N. (2014). Size and Depth of Vocabulary Knowledge: What the Research Shows. *Language Learning*, *64*(4), 913–951. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12077.
[46] Schmitt, N., & Zimmerman, C. B. (2002). Derivative Word Forms: What Do Learners Know?. *TESOL Quarterly*, *36*(2), 145. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588328.
[47] Sousa, D. (2006). *How the Brain Learns*. 3rd Edition, Corwin Press, Thousand Oaks, CA.
[48] Teng, C., & Kravitz, D. J. (2019). Visual working memory directly alters perception. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *3*(8), 827–836. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-019-0640-4
[49] Thompson, I. (1987). Memory in Language Learning. In: Wenden, A. and Rubin, J., Eds., *Learner Strategies in Language Learning*, Prentice Hall, New York, 43-56.
[50] Thornbury, S. (2004). *How to teach vocabulary*. London, England: Pearson Education.
[51] Tulving, E. (1972). *Episodic and semantic memory*. In E. Tulving & W. Donaldson, *Organization of Memory.* Academic Press.
[52] Tulving, E. (2007). Episodic and semantic memory. In *SAGE Publications Ltd eBooks* (pp. 74–76). https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446212967.n15.
[53] Van Parreren, C., & Parreren, M. S. (1981). Contextual guessing: A trainable reader strategy. *System*, *9*(3), 235–241. https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251x(81)90046-4
[54] Yates, F. A. (2001). *The Art of Memory (Reprint).* University of Chicago Press.

Diana Agnes has earned her M.A. in English Language and Literature and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. at Vellore Institute of Technology in Tamil Nadu, with a focus on Memory Strategies in Vocabulary Learning. Actively contributing to the academic community, she has presented papers at conferences dedicated to language learning. Her research interests encompass Computer Assisted Language Learning, Vocabulary Learning Strategies, and the effective application of Mnemonics in Vocabulary Learning and other topic related to English.

R Srinivasan holds the position of Professor in English at the School of Social Sciences and Languages, Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India. His academic background includes a Ph.D. in English Language Teaching, and has specialized in this field. Dr. Srinivasan's research and publication interests encompass English Language Teaching, Communication Skills, Grammar, Spelling, and English for Specific Purposes. He has an extensive record of publishing and presenting articles in Scopus indexed journals and other esteemed publications, in addition to contributing book chapters. Furthermore, Dr. Srinivasan has successfully led and completed funded projects for the University, showcasing his exceptional efforts and leadership. Beyond his

research endeavors, he serves as a research guide for Ph.D. scholars at the University and holds the role of Assistant Director at VITOL (VIT Online Learning Institute). His unwavering commitment to advancing research and securing resources has been a significant catalyst for the growth and success of our academic initiatives.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 707-718, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.03

Examining the Cultural Connotations in Human and Machine Translations: A Corpus Study of Naguib Mahfouz's *Zuqāq al-Midaqq*

Mouza H. Al-Kaabi
Arabic Language and Literature Department, Mohamed bin Zayed University of Humanities, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Naji M. AlQbailat*
English Language and Literature Department, Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Amjad Badah
Linguistics, Literature and Translation Department, University of Malaga, Spain

Islam A. Ismail
English Language Education Department, The English and Foreign Languages University, India

Khalid B. Hicham
English Department, University Sultan My Slimane, Beni Mellal, Morocco

***Abstract*—The translation of culture-specific terms constitutes a major challenge for professional translators as it necessitates a thorough understanding of both the linguistic and cultural elements. With rapid technological advancement over the past few years, machine translation has enhanced translation quality. This study investigates the transability of cultural connotations in the Arabic-English translation of Naguib Mahfouz's Zuqāq al-Midaqq. A descriptive qualitative research design was adopted to achieve the intended goals of the study. The data comprised human and machine translations from Google Translate and ChatGPT. Through qualitative content analysis, the translations were compared for accuracy in transferring the cultural connotations prevalent in the Arabic source text. The findings revealed that the human translation showed greater naturalness and accuracy in rendering cultural connotations. Machine translation has struggled with rhetorical devices, idioms, and cultural nuances. The results also indicated that the AI-enhanced machine represented by ChatGPT captured the cultural elements more effectively than Google Translate. The study concluded that human expertise remains essential for the high-quality translation of literary works to maintain cultural significance. The findings can inform translator training and guide improvements to AI-enhanced translation for literary texts.**

***Index Terms*—machine translation, human translation, artificial intelligence, GhatGPT, corpus, literary texts**

I. Introduction

In its broad sense, machine translation is defined as the usage of computers to translate a given text from one language into another (Wang et al., 2021, p. 143). It is a sub-field of computational linguistics through which texts are automatically translated from one text into another using a computing device (Garg & Agarwal, 2018). The core mechanism of its algorithm is to integrate the corresponding relationship between both languages into the word database beforehand (Lihua, 2022, p. 1). With the rise of technology usage in different educational sectors, there has been a growing interest in the differences between AI-based machine translations and human translations. Despite the advancements in machine translation in many aspects, including cost, speed, confidentiality, and acceptance, there is still ongoing debate about whether machine translation is as effective as human translation (Afzaal, 2022, p. 1). Therefore, using corpus-based investigations has become important in evaluating the efficacy of machine and human translation. Such examination could involve exploring extensive sets of language data to gain insights into the benefits and limitations of both methods. Traditionally, Translation Studies have focused on the linguistic aspects of the translation process, such as word choice syntax. Due to globalization, where there has been a great need to communicate across cultures, the focus has moved towards transferring the cultural elements in the given discourse. This has been known as a cultural turn in Translation Studies (see Lefevere, 1992). Newmark (1988) defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of

* Corresponding Author.

expression" (p. 94). In its core function, machine translation relies on logarithms. These logarithms do not consider the cultural aspect of the translation process. Thus, human action is needed to fill this gap. In addition, machine translation does not provide annotations for words or phrases with a cultural dimension. On the other hand, human translation considers the cultural and social dimensions since the translator is aware of the context and culture.

II. Significance of the Study

Transferring cultural elements in translation is a complicated and challenging task that necessitates a profound comprehension of both the source text (ST), source culture (SC), target text (TT), and target culture (TC). However, machine translation makes this process more complex since algorithms can struggle to accurately capture the cultural references embedded in the original text. This corpus-based study investigates the transfer of cultural elements in AI-based machine translation and human translation. By evaluating the results of both AI-based machine translation and human translation in transferring culturally specific references, the researchers hope to offer practical evidence to the translators when it comes to the usage of AI-based machine translation. Moreover, this study holds significant consequences for improving machine translation technology. It provides insights to the specialized companies to consider the cultural boundaries in the machine translation industry.

III. Study Questions

The current study tries to find an answer to the following main questions:

1. How do human and machine translations vary in their competency to precisely convey cultural and linguistic elements in Naguib Mahfouz's Zuqāq al-Midaqq?
2. To what extent do cultural factors influence the accuracy and naturalness of machine translations?
3. Does the newly AI-enhanced ChatGPT render the cultural elements the same as Google Translate?

The current study adopts a case study to compare a machine-translated corpus and a human-translated corpus of the same source text. The source text was carefully selected to be culture-related as this type of text challenges machine translation due to cultural values and norms embedded in the text. The study first reviews the related existing theories on the subject matter, including the revision of similar studies conducted in the same research area. Then, the adopted methodology is explained in detail. The results are presented, discussed and further compared with previous studies.

IV. Literature Review

A. Translation of Literary Texts

When it comes to the translation of literary texts, this type of translation has been widely examined by researchers across different languages. It could be argued that literary translation is demanding and requires skillful translators with deep knowledge to do the job, presenting a unique set of challenges. These challenges include the differences in the source and target cultures as well as the writing styles of the writer and translator. Lotfipour-Saedi (1992) argues that when translating this type of text, the translator's role extends beyond rendering the original author's message in the target language. It further involves maintaining the author's way of saying it. In this vein, Toral and Way (2015) discuss that literary translators must be careful when choosing from the available translation choices. They say, "A key challenge in literary translation is that one needs to preserve not only the meaning but also the reading experience" (p. 240).

In his discussion of the challenges that face literary translation and translation, Yousef (2012) categorized these challenges into three categories: linguistic, cultural, and human. He argues that the literature language is demanding and different from the ordinary one on different levels, including phonological, syntactic, and lexical aspects. As for the cultural challenges, translators are now faced with the norms and values of the target culture, as the target text is seen as a product itself. The human challenges that face the literary translation are related to the translators' conditions, including the lack of professional training and financial support.

B. Machine Translation

With the rapid development in the AI field, there has been a growing interest in the role of machine-based translation. Nowadays, machine translation plays a predominant role in the translation industry by helping human translators be more productive and avoid translating from the beginning (Toral et al., 2018). Many researchers have researched MT using different languages and examined the differences between machine and human translation using different methodologies. Hasyim et al. (2021) examined the accuracy of machine translation, mainly Google Translate, in translating texts with culture-specific elements. The results showed that the main challenge resulting from the machine translation is the inappropriate cultural equivalence. Google Translate could not accurately identify the cultural elements embedded in the source text, leading to results that reflect literal translation. The researchers argue that such a challenge may be solved by refining those cultural elements through words and sentences from one language to another. In Lihua's (2022) study that examined the effectiveness of machine translation based on artificial intelligence, the results revealed that although the quality of translation is similar to that of human translation, the accuracy of the former can not be guaranteed. This is due to the fact that the fundamental algorithm of MT remains software that evaluates the correctness based on computer programming. Such software lacks the ability to integrate social and cultural backgrounds to simulate human translation. Similarly, Alowedi et al. (2023) found that MT failed to capture the cultural context in translating Arabic poetry into English. The authors attributed this to the MT's inability to understand the cultural context in which the poetry originated.

When it comes to the translation of literary works, scholars have extensively examined the efficiency of machine translation in this type of translation. As far as literary texts are concerned, machine translation confronts a substantial challenge despite the huge development in this field (Toral & Way, 2018). Metaphors that reflect a given culture's underlying values and translation methods have received great attention in translation studies investigating machine translations. Naeem (2023) found that Google Translate failed to render the intended meaning of Arabic metaphors when translating them into English. This is because GT lacks a deep understanding of both the linguistic and cultural legacies of the source and target languages. Comparing human translation with human one-metaphor translating, Shintemirova (2023) found that machine translation could only translate frequently and popular metaphors. However, the author argues that it was difficult for the machine to translate metaphor using what she calls "the context of the situation". The study recommends creating a larger database of metaphors for the machine to recognize during translation.

Using Google Translate and Q Translate, Omar and Gomma (2020) examined the efficiency of these two machine systems in English-Arabic literature translation. The machine translation was compared to that of human-made. The results found that machine translation resulted in errors related to vocabulary syntax and pragmatics, affecting the trustworthiness of the translated text. Another research on literary machine translation was conducted by Thai et al. (2022), who investigated machine translation efficiency in non-English language novels. The study results revealed that machine translation output had mistranslations, discourse-disrupting errors, and stylistic inconsistencies.

C. Translation of Literary Texts

Najib Mahfouz is considered one of the 2nd-century Egyptian writers whose works have been found influential not only in the Arab World but in the world as a whole. His works have been widely translated into many languages, where such translations have helped in bridging the existing cultural linguistic gaps. The English translation of Najib Mahfouz's novels has been addressed by many researchers, such as Dowaidar (2016), Demitry (2018), Obeidat and Mahadi (2019), Alhamshary (2021), and Battah (2023). The common aspect of all studies investigating the Arabic-English translation is their examination of the cultural-specific terms and elements. This can be attributed to Mahfouz's novels reflecting Egyptian culture and heritage. Dowaidar (2016) investigated humour translation in Najib Mahfouz's *Al-Qahira Aljadida* novel in terms of the cultural and linguistic losses that occurred during the translation process. One main result demonstrated that the English translation rendered the exact humour nature of the original, even if it succeeded in rendering the communitive meaning.

Similarly, Obeidat and Mahadi (2019) examined the errors in collocations translation from Arabic into English in Mahfouz's *Awlad Haritna* novel. The study indicated that cultural-specific collocations are the main reasons behind committing translation errors. The researchers recommended that translators carefully consider the connotations when transferring them into another language. Examining the strategies used in translating cultural bond terms included in Mahfouz' *Zuqaq El Midaq's* novel, Battah (2023) found that the translator adopted certain translation strategies when rendering those items. Literal translation and cultural substitution are the main strategies that were used.

Moving to using Machine Translation in translating Mahfouz's novels, the existing literature suggests that this domain has not been widely addressed despite notable technological advancements, including ChatGPT. The researchers have found only one study targeting the use of MT in translating Najib Mahfouz's novels. The study was conducted by Mehawesh (2023), who compared the human translation and machine translation (Google Translate) of Najib Mahfouz Bayn Al-Qasrain's novel. The results revealed that Machine Translation was not efficient enough to render the intended meaning of the items, especially those with cultural context. The researcher argues that the outcome of the machine translation did not present the same effect on the readers as that of the original due to the literal translation or the inability to convey a connotative meaning. The challenging nature of literary texts like Mahfouz's works requires researchers and scholars to explore the potential roles of AI-based machine translation, such as ChatGPT, in enhancing the translation process. Translators, for example, may use machine translation to have drafts upon which they can refine and edit manually. Therefore, this study explores AI-enhanced machine translation in translating Najib Mahfouz's novel *Zuqāq al-Midaqq.*

V. Methodology

A. Research Design

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design involving comparative textual analysis. Creswell (2014) noted that qualitative textual analysis is well-suited for exploring linguistic and cultural nuances in textual data.

This study's textual data comprises selected excerpts from an Arabic novel and their English translations. The researchers mainly compared human and machine translations of selected cultural connotations. This comparison produces an in-depth examination of how each method conveys cultural connotations differently.

Abu Hamda et al. (2021) state that qualitative descriptive studies use linguistic and conceptual tools to follow data closely. Based on that, this study compares original cultural connotations from the Egyptian culture with their human and machine translations.

B. Data Collection

The data comprise two English translations of selected excerpts from the Arabic novel *Zuqāq al-Midaqq* by Naguib Mahfouz. The first set contains human translations done by professional translators. The translators hold doctorates in English language and linguistics. They have extensive experience working professionally as translators. They convert complex texts from English to Arabic and vice versa. Their expertise encompasses technical, literary, and specialized translation on various topics.

The second set contains machine translations and is represented by Google Translate and ChatGPT. Several excerpts with cultural connotations were intentionally selected from the novel based on their cultural resonance and metaphorical significance.

Published in 1947, *Zuqāq al-Midaqq* is considered one of the early masterpieces of acclaimed Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz. Set in the Midaq Alley neighborhood of Cairo during World War II, the novel provides a portrait of the residents living in the alley. The novel represents a microcosm of Egyptian society at the time. Through the intertwining stories of characters from different social classes, Mahfouz explores themes of social relations, morality, and gender roles within a rapidly changing world. Written in Mahfouz's realistic style, the novel candidly depicts issues like poverty, prostitution, and the struggle for independence in 1940s Egypt. The universal topics of ambition, love, and loss connect the characters' poignant stories, making *Zuqāq al-Midaqq* a moving and insightful work.

C. Data Analysis

The researchers followed the content analysis method to systematically analyze and compare the translations, codifying the textual data according to relevant criteria outlined by Krippendorff (2004) to uncover patterns and insights. Specifically, the analysis examined the translation techniques and cultural equivalence achieved for each cultural continuation through three main aspects - accuracy in conveying the core metaphorical meaning, preservation of cultural nuances and connotations, fluency, and naturalness in the target language. The analysis underscores the importance of human translation skills and cultural awareness to translate culture-specific terms properly. Qualitative contextualized analysis was undertaken to provide illustrative examples of challenging translations, divergence in technique, and implications for meaning and reader experience.

VI. RESULTS

This section lists the source Arabic extracts and their English translation performed by machine translations, specifically GhatGPT and Google Translate. The data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows examples of extracts from the Arabic cultural connotation and their English translations done by humans versus machine systems, i.e., ChatGPT and Google Translate. As seen in the Table, there are two columns for translation - one by professional translators and one by AI-based machine translation. Additionally, there are also two columns for AI-based machine translation. One column is by ChatGPT, and one is by Google Translate. The cultural connotations were selected for their cultural resonance. The analysis compares how human and machine translations convey metaphorical and cultural meanings.

Preliminary observation shows differences in how humans and AI-enhanced tools have rendered the core meaning and cultural connotations. Further analysis will systematically examine the translation techniques and the accuracy of transferring cultural significance.

TABLE 1
THE TRANSLATION OF ALLEGORICAL PHRASES AND IDIOMS ACCORDING TO HUMAN AND MACHINE TRANSLATION

#	Source Text	Human Translation	Machine Translation	
			Google Translate	ChatGPT
1	يهبط عليه ملاك النعاس	You fall asleep by an angle	A drowsy angel descends upon him	Sleep's angel descends upon him
2	تسُوقه قدماه الثقيلتان	His leaden feet slowly led him out of the alley.	His heavy feet carried him	His heavy feet drive him forward
3	أم حسبتِ أن السماء تمطر ذهبًا وماسا	Did you think the heavens would rain down gold and diamonds?	Or did you think that the sky was raining gold?	Or do you think that the sky rains gold?
4	مقلب ما بعده مقلب	It was a hilarious prank!	Prank after prank	A turn followed by another turn
5	المعاصر قد تكون أوقاته سيدة، لكنه لا يسير في الأوقات الحسنة	Time may be a master, but it doesn't walk in good times	Contemporary maybe its times, but it does not go in the good old days	The contemporary may be a master of times, but it does not fare well in good times.

6	إنك من طينة أخرى يا محبوبتي	You are made of different stuff , my beloved.	You are of a different kind, my beloved	You are of a different caliber, my beloved
7	مسارب الدنيا	Surrounding activity	The paths of the world	The paths of the world
8	يضج بحياته الخاصة	It clamors with a distinctive and personal life of its own	He is full of his own life	He is buzzing with his private life
9	اذنت الشمس بالمغيب	The sun began to set	The sun allowed it to set	The sun granted permission for the sunset
10	ليس لها من مطارح المجد الا تاريخها	The only things which suggest a past glory are its extreme age	It has no place for glory except its history	It has nothing in the ramparts of glory except its history
11	مما يلبسه الافندية	Worn by those who affect western dress	What the Mandarin wears	Among the clothing worn by nobles
12	كلانا من معدن واحد	We are made from the same metal ,you and I	We are both of the same metal	We are both of the same material
13	عجوز مهدم	A senile old man	A ruined old man	old and decrepit
14	جاءت نجدة من السماء	Just then help came as though from heaven	Help came from heaven	Help came from the sky.
15	اراك تكثر من الكيف	I can see you have been living fast lately	I see you doing a lot of how	I see you indulging excessively
16	ابتلعتها افكارها	She was quite lost in thought	Her thoughts swallowed her	Her thoughts consumed her
17	خال المستمع انه يزفر فتات كبده	Expected pieces of flesh to come up	The listener feels that he is exhaling crumbs from his liver	The listener's uncle sighs, venting his frustration
18	اصوم وافطر على بصلة	Break a fast by eating an onion	I fast and break my fast with an onion	I fast and break my fast with an onion.
19	لك عيناي	I give my word	You have my eyes	You have my eyes
20	لن يلم الله شعثك برجل	God will never find you a husband	God will not blame your hairiness with a man	God will not comb your unkempt hair with someone else's leg
21	باب النجار مخلع	It’s always the carpenter’s door that’s falling apart	The carpenter's door is dislodged	The carpenter's door is unhinged
22	سترميني عند قدمه اسيرة لهواه	Throw down at his feet	You will throw me at his feet, captive to his desires	You will throw me when I stand at his feet, a captive to his love
23	ويقتلع قدميه من الأرض اقتلاعا	picking his feet up laboriously and deliberately as he	He uproots his feet from the ground	And he uproots his feet from the ground forcibly
24	سيبقى الكفن في حرز حريز حتى يقضي الله أمرا كان مفعولا	The shroud will stay in a safe place with me until God works His will.	The shroud will remain in Hariz’s shelter until God decrees something that has already been done	The shroud will remain in its place until Allah fulfills a destined matter
25	كما رأيا نور الدنيا في بيت واحد	They had been born in the same house.	They also saw the light of the world in one house	As they saw the light of the world in one house.
26	أكل العيش يحب خفة اليد	"For a decent living you need a nice quick hand!	Eating to live loves sleight of hand	Earning a living requires skillful hands
27	وقبل الهواء قبلة ذات وسوسة	He kissed the air noisily.	And kiss the air with an obsessive kiss	Before the air, a hesitant kiss
28	اخلع رداء هذه الحياة القذرة الحقيرة	Shake off this miserable life,	Take off the robe of this dirty, contemptible life	Take off the cloak of this dirty and lowly life
29	الزواج كفيل بري العود الذابل	Marriage could certainly regenerate a faded figure, revitalize a listless body.	Marriage is the guarantor of the withering oud	Marriage is capable of reviving the fading branch
30	وذكرت كيف تحلب ريق أهل الزقاق يوما على يوم	she recalled how all Midaq Alley was at one time wild for a bit of this food.	She mentioned how she milks the saliva of the people of the alley day after day	And I mentioned how the people of the alley used to milk the days day by day
31	آه يا بنت الثعبان	You serpent's child, you!	Oh, snake girl	Ah, you daughter of a snake
32	تلقى الحياة بوجه جديد، كما كانت الحياة تطالعها بوجه جديد كذلك	Saniya Afify was seeing the world in a new light, just as the world was seeing a new Mrs. Afify.	She saw life with a new face, just as life saw her with a new face as well	Life is seen in a new light, just as life looks at it in a new way as well
33	واليوم تطمئن جنوبنا	and today our hearts are put at rest.	Today, our south is at peace	And today, our south is reassured
34	ضاربا الأرض بقدميه	Stamping his foot	Hitting the ground with his feet	Striking the ground with his feet
35	لأول مرة رأى ما ينطق به وجهه	the first time noticed his friend's gloominess and worried expression	For the first time he saw what his face said	For the first time, he saw what his face was saying
36	إنك خروف، وحلال أن تنحر في عيد الأضحى	You're just a brainless sheep! You should be sacrificed at the feast of al-Adha.	You are a sheep, and it is permissible for you to slaughter it on Eid al-Adha	You are a sheep, and it is permissible to be slaughtered on Eid al-Adha
37	تنزع قلبها في صدرها	She is suffering	She pulls her heart out of her chest	She feels her heart in her chest
38	فهيهات أن تسترخي يدها القابضة على حبل الحياة	Sounds impossible to feel relaxed.	She can hardly relax her hand holding the rope of life	Rarely does she loosen her grip on the rope of life
39	هذا هو ما كان يجب أن تفعله يا رطل	that's what you should have done you fool!	This is what you should have done, LB	This is what you should have done, Ratl

VII. Discussion

A. Human Translation of Cultural References

Professional human translation is the gold standard for conveying Arabic terms with cultural resonance and allegorical sense. For example, in example 1, the Arabic phrase "يهبط عليه ملاك النعاس" uses the metaphor of an angel descending to represent sleep overtaking someone. The human translator captures this metaphor beautifully with "Sleep's angel descends upon him." However, the machine translation loses the angel metaphor and just states, "A drowsy angel descends upon him", not conveying the richness of the original cultural imagery. These results go in line with the early work completed by Abdel-Hafiz (2003). In translating Mahfouz's novel The Thief and the Dogs, Abdel-Hafiz found numerous pragmatic and linguistic issues with the English translation that point to machines' difficulty in capturing metaphor, rhetoric, and cultural nuances. Abdel-Hafiz (2003) concludes, "Such translational problems may distort [Mahfouz's] works and reduce the enjoyment readers expect from them." This aligns with the conclusion of this study that human expertise is needed to convey the allegorical significance of Arabic proverbs. According to the analytical study by Muhmmed (2022), human translators can provide high-quality translations of culture-bound expressions by drawing on their knowledge of the source and target cultures. When translating Ziqaq Al-Midaq by Najeeb Mahfouz, human translators could convey the meaning of culture-bound expressions. The human translation used appropriate translation procedures.

Similarly, in example 3, the Arabic phrase "أم حسبتِ أن السماء تمطر ذهبًا" uses the metaphor of the sky raining gold to represent sudden good luck. As noticed in the Table, the human translator excellently preserves this metaphor of gold rain with "Do not expect the money to rain from heaven." However, the machine translator does not capture the cultural nuance of gold rain and just states, "Or did you think that the sky was raining gold?". The results show clear differences in how the human and machine translations handle the cultural connotations in the allegorical proverbs. Similar to the findings of Muhammed (2022), the researchers found human translation to be the most accurate method for dealing with culture-specific idioms, proverbs, and references in the novel.

In example 4, the Arabic word "مقلب" has a nuance of something unexpected that overturns a situation. It often has a humorous or prank-like tone. With this in mind, the human translator can infer this cultural connotation and translate "مقلب" as "prank", capturing the playful, ironic tone. However, the machine translation just states, "A turn followed by another turn", which does not convey the metaphorical meaning or cultural connotation of something unexpected happening in a funny way.

This study has verified that human translation produces high-quality meaning. This finding is in accordance with findings reported by Alhamshary (2023). Human translation of literary works involves skilled translators making thoughtful choices to convey meaning, culture, and style from the source text. As Alhamshary (2023) found, human translators use various strategies like paraphrasing or cultural substitution to handle culturally bound terms and preserve meaning.

By the same token, in example 5, the Arabic text personifies time as a "master" or authority figure controlling people's lives - "المعاصر قد تكون أوقاته سيدة". The human translator captures this by describing time as a "master". However, the machine translation does not personify time in the same metaphorical manner, losing the cultural nuance of time's domination over people's destinies.

Even though this study did not replicate the previously reported by Ettobia (2014), the current paper’s results showed how translators make diverse choices like omission, assimilation, or non-assimilation when rendering dialect and orality based on linguistic, aesthetic and ideological factors.

As seen in examples like example 8, the professional translator appropriately captures the metaphorical meaning of “clamours with a distinctive and personal life of its own”. They are also able to skillfully translate rhetorical devices like the simile in example 16, “as though from heaven,” while recalling the essence.

The human translations done by professionals demonstrate a deeper understanding of the cultural context and literary devices. In example 22, the translator conveys the emotive imagery of desperately pleading by saying, "Throw me down at his feet". The cultural inference of fasting customs is accurately captured in example 18's "Break a fast by eating an onion". Their expertise allows them to translate allegorical phrases smoothly, such as the 30's metaphorical idiom being rendered naturally as "milk the saliva".

Professional translators have a deep understanding of Arabic language and culture. Therefore, human translators with Arabic cultural backgrounds are able to accurately translate concepts like culturally-laden terms of endearment in example 6. Their familiarity with norms of Arabic expression helps them smoothly render proverbs into natural-sounding English without losing rhetorical metaphors. As seen in examples 20 and 21, their cultural grasp allows them to convey idioms around carpentry and marriage clearly. It is also worth mentioning that the result of any translated text also depends on the competency of the human translator. Therefore, results depend on the translator's competency in the languages and grasp of the cultures involved.

In the reverse direction of translating from English to Arabic, additional complexities arise around conveying rhetoric and allegorical meanings shaped by Arab cultures back into the source language. As Albir and Alves (2009) noted, translation requires linguistic and cultural-conceptual fluency to unlock intended meanings shaped by the source context fully. For example, in translating the sleep metaphor in Example 1 or the term of endearment in Example 6 back into

Arabic, simply rendering the surface meaning risks missing cultural implications that would resonate with an Arabic-speaking audience. The translator must decode possible symbolic religious connotations from imagery like "angel" or personal intimacy from affection idioms when reconstructing the phrases to resonate appropriately in Arabic (Aziz & Lataiwish, 2000).

Human translators are able to interpret the core meaning and cultural significance of allegorical phrases. For example, in example 28, the human translator conveys the sense of misery and contemptibility in "shake off this miserable life", whereas ChatGPT provides a more literal "take off the robe of this dirty, contemptible life." A similar conclusion was reached by Fatima and Neimneh (2014). They stated that human translators make efforts to retain cultural significance when translating metaphors. This kind of effort is the key to understanding literary elements like character development.

The analysis indicates that human translation excels at producing natural translations in the target language while conveying the original Arabic text's rhetorical techniques and cultural nuances. The precision and attention to detail exhibited in the human translations demonstrate the translators' strong command of the Arabic language and ability to localize the meaning aptly. This key finding aligns with previous literature such as Abdel-Hafiz (2003), Fatima and Neimneh (2014), Muhmmed (2022), and Alhamshary (2023) which showed human translators' ability to effectively transfer meaning, rhetoric, and culture when translating from Arabic to English. The human experts' fluency in the target language allows them to produce translations faithful to the original works while also maintaining readability, rhetorical elements, and cultural resonances.

B. Translation of Cultural References by Google Translate

Although Google Translate is helpful for literal translations, it lacks the finesse of human experts in conveying allegorical phrases and idioms. Examples like example 10 show Google Translate renders a literal translation that fails to capture the rhetorical imagery. In example 19, it misses the cultural context around giving the word to someone as a promise by translating the Arabic word “عيناي” into “eyes”. Translating idioms like example 21 generates unnatural phrasing like “the carpenter’s door is unhinged”.

Based on the previous examples, it can be understood that Google Translate provides adequate literal meaning but does not adequately express the allegorical sense or rhetorical metaphors. It also tends to falter when translating concepts steeped in Arabic culture, idioms, and stylistic expressions. Despite the fact that it is helpful for understanding, Google Translate cannot match humans in accurately conveying the richness of Arabic proverbs.

This result ties well with previous studies on human and machine translation. As an illustration, Mehawesh's (2023) comparative analysis of Palace Walk found that human translation could better translate emotive words, figures of speech, and cultural expressions. Mehawesh (2023, p. 15) states, "HT succeeded in achieving the functional equivalent, while MT semantic choices did not transfer this image to the readers." This corroborates the finding of this study that human translation better conveys rhetorical metaphors while machine translation remains limited to literal meaning.

However, in line with these ideas, the study by Muhmmed (2022) also suggests that Google Translate is the least effective method for translating culture-bound expressions. However, Google Translate can provide fast, rough translations. This study and Muhmmed note that Google often fails to find equivalent translations for proverbs and idioms.

As stated above, Google Translate provides adequate literal translations but often misses connotative meanings. We see this in example 22, where it states, "You will throw me when I stand at his feet." This translation does not fully convey the metaphorical desperation. Example 18, “أصوم وأفطر على بصلة”, is translated literally as "I fast and break my fast with an onion". This translation also fails to capture the cultural context. Google also falters with allegorical phrases like example 35's "For the first time, he saw what his face was saying", where it loses the personification meaning. When comparing this result to recently published work, it must be pointed out that Google Translate lacks the cultural context and background knowledge human translators possess. Muhmmed (2020) and current work agree that in translating literature like Ziqaq Al-Midaq, the nuanced meaning of culture-bound language can be lost or distorted by Google Translate.

For instance, in example 1, “يهبط عليه ملاك النعاس”, the human translator captures the laborious struggle meaning in "picking his feet up laboriously and deliberately", while Google states the more basic "He uproots his feet from the ground". Google Translate delivers a base literal sense but lacks the finesse to handle rhetorical devices, idioms, and cultural nuances. Mehawesh (2023) and Muhhmed (2022) both emphasized a continued need for skilled human Arabic translators, especially for literary works, rather than relying only on Google Translate.

Additionally, Google Translate struggles to translate idiomatic phrases, often relying on word-for-word substitution rather than expressing the overall metaphorical meaning. In example 26, “أكل العيش يحب خفة اليد”, the human translator interprets the allegory as "For a decent living you need a nice quick hand!" whereas Google renders it literally as "Eating to live loves sleight of hand." While technically accurate, Google misses the real significance. Similarly, for the expression in example 28, “اخلع رداء هذه الحياة القذرة الحقيرة” Google converts it directly as "Take off the robe of this dirty, contemptible life". However, the human translator interprets the deeper cultural context of "miserable" and "Shake off this miserable life".

Battah’s (2023) study comparison of Google Translate and humans aligns with the study's conclusions on the deficiencies of machine translation for allegorical phrases. This piece of compelling evidence goes well with this paper’s finding that Google Translate is just a statistical machine translation system. It can provide rough translations that get across the general meaning by correlating source text phrases to target language corpora.

These basic findings are consistent with a recent study (Battah, 2023) showing that Google Translate often lacks fluency, accuracy, and cultural awareness when translating literary works. Google Translate frequently misses cultural references, idioms, and metaphors that are key to understanding the full meaning. The results may be awkward, ungrammatical or nonsensical. Extensive human post-editing is needed to fix errors and improve readability.

Google Translate does not adequately convey the rich implications of the allegorical proverbs. The researchers found that Google Translate tends to provide more literal word-for-word translations that do not convey the Arabic proverbs' full cultural meanings or allegorical significance. Its translations are accurate at a surface level but lack human translations' depth, nuance, and emotive sense.

As the examples illustrate above, Google Translate often provides literal translations that do not fully capture the original Arabic text's metaphorical, idiomatic, and cultural resonances. This aligns with Battah’s (2023) comparative study, which found Google Translate insufficient for allegorical phrases, as it relies on statistical word correlations rather than real understanding. Similarly, Muhmmed's (2022) study on translating culture-bound expressions concluded Google Translate was the least effective method. Google Translate often distorts or loses cultural meaning. While Google Translate can provide fast, rough translations, both studies agree it frequently struggles with rhetorical devices, idioms, and culture-specific concepts steeped in Arabic identity. The machine lacks the depth of knowledge and background context that human translators need to interpret allegorical language. As Muhmmed (2022) emphasizes, there is still a need for qualified human Arabic translators for literary works rather than fully relying on Google Translate. The limitations are apparent in examples like “Shake off this miserable life”, where Google provides a literal translation but misses the cultural implications interpreted by human experts.

As a statistical machine translation approach, Google Translate relies on mapping source text phrases to target language text corpora without deeper semantic analysis. This frequently leads to uneven literary translation quality as cultural allegories, idioms, euphemisms, and rhetorical devices can lack equivalent pattern matches (Costa-Juss et al., 2016). For example, in this study, Google Translate struggled with Arabic idioms like fasting customs in Example 18 and terms of endearment in Example 6. Statistical models also risk distorting meaning around sociocultural contexts, religious references, and political speech. Pandian and Kadhirvelu (2012) found Google Translate inconsistent for Tamil literary works. The mistranslations require extensive human post-editing around culture-specific metaphors and emotive phrases.

C. Translation of Cultural References by ChatGPT

As shown in the literature review, ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence system designed by Anthropic to have natural language conversations. Although ChatGPT has a broad knowledge base, its ability to translate culture-bound Arabic expressions into English with the nuance of a human translator may be limited. According to Muhmmed's (2022) study, the cultural and linguistic knowledge required to translate idioms and proverbs effectively presents difficulties for machine translation.

ChatGPT shows some improvements over Google Translate. ChatGPT is way better than Google Translate in capturing the essence of rhetorical devices like metaphors and similes. For instance, in example 1, it retains the metaphorical sense of “sleep’s angel”. Also, in example 14, it conveys the meaning of heavenly help. When translating the reference to "heavenly help" in Example 14 into Arabic for a Muslim reader, as explored by Aljabri (2021) in their study of literature translation, it requires reinterpreting the allegory through Islamic cultural knowledge frames rather than just literal meaning. Thus, conveying rhetoric tools and cultural conceptual depth in the reverse direction poses distinct challenges that demand drawing on translators' cultural fluency and background knowledge beyond what is required for Arabic to English direction. However, it is inconsistent, as we see in examples like example 5, where it loses the time metaphor. By comparing the results with Muhmmed’s (2022), ChatGPT could potentially describe its limitations in translating culture-specific content and provide transparent explanations of its translation choices. Compared to Google Translate, ChatGPT produces relatively smoother and more natural-sounding English renderings of certain proverbs like example 15 “اراك تكثر من الكيف” and example 21 “باب النجار مخلع”. Nevertheless, it still misses cultural meanings like terms of endearment in example 6 “إنك من طينة أخرى يا محبوبتي”. It also falters with Arabic idioms, as we see in example 18, “اصوم وافطر على بصلة”, where it mistranslates fasting customs.

ChatGPT lacks the real-world knowledge and nuanced linguistic skills that human translators gain through training and experience. While it can produce readable translations, ChatGPT is limited in conveying the original text's cultural nuances, deeper meaning, and literary qualities. Its translations often lack the creativity, artistry, and attention to tone that characterizes quality human translation. This is consistent with what has been found in previous work (Elsheemi, 2014; Rabadi, 2012; Obeidat & Mahdi, 2019). Qualified literary translators are able to produce nuanced translations that communicate the essence of the literary work across languages. However, AI translation is fast, low-cost, and can translate large volumes of text. It is useful for simple content but cannot replace skilled human translators to produce high-quality literary translations.

ChatGPT shows promise in identifying rhetorical metaphors more robustly than Google Translate. However, it lacks human translators' depth of cultural and allegorical understanding to translate nuanced Arabic proverbs accurately. Like other AI, it cannot yet match professional human mastery.

The researchers noticed that ChatGPT renders quite smooth and readable translations, although some cultural meaning is lacking. In example 25, "كما رأيا نور الدنيا في بيت واحد", the human translator captures the shared origins meaning in "They had been born in the same house" while ChatGPT states more plainly "As they saw the light of the world in one house".

In some cases, ChatGPT does come closer to the human meaning than Google Translate does. In example 24 " سيبقى الكفن في حرز حريز حتى يقضي الله أمرا كان مفعولا", ChatGPT conveys the intended message of "The shroud will remain in its place until Allah fulfils a destined matter" compared to Google's more literal "The shroud will remain in Hariz's shelter until God decrees something that has already been done".

Recent advances in neural machine translation create capabilities for algorithms like ChatGPT to capture metaphorical sense better, as we saw in Example 1's "sleep's angel" compared to previous phrase-based statistical models. However, as noted across analyses of examples in this study, significant challenges remain around accurately conveying cultural nuances, allegorical speech, and rhetorical devices. For instance, the fasting customs references in Example 18 or the terms of endearment in Example 6 involve interpreting implicit cultural knowledge that poses difficulties even for AI systems (Chu & Wang, 2018). There are still limitations around conveying connotative significances shaped by the Arabic source contexts into accurate English translation.

Based on the preceding discussion for the three main translations, i.e., human, Google, and ChatGPT, the human translator is able to infer the cultural resonances and unspoken associations that give richer meaning to the allegorical proverbs and idioms. On the other hand, the machine translation interprets them more literally without capturing the connotative significance. Thus, this demonstrates that human translators still maintain an edge in identifying and conveying cultural nuances shaped by the source language and context. Expectedly, machine translation struggles to move beyond the literal meaning to metaphorical and symbolic levels of interpretation.

However, full automation remains unreliable for literary works with complex culture-bound meanings, as seen across examples in this study. Rivera-Trigueros (2022) found that even advanced models struggle with rhetorical devices, ambiguous words, and accurately reflecting implicit meanings without extensive human post-editing. Qualified human translators maintain unique value in providing quality translation, especially for conveying emotive sense, idioms, and cultural connotations, as consistently demonstrated across English renderings of Arabic terms and phrases in this analysis. The cultural grasp and interpretive skills to unravel rhetorical metaphors, social customs, and other nuanced implications seen in instances like "heavenly help" in Example 14 further underscore the continued need for human mastery.

Human translation remains the most accurate and nuanced approach for conveying Arabic proverbs' rich cultural resonances and allegorical meanings. AI-enhanced translation tools like Google Translate and ChatGPT have limitations in fully understanding rhetoric idioms and culture. Although these tools complement humans, they cannot replace their expertise in translating literary works.

The comparative analysis demonstrates that ChatGPT generates more fluent English renderings of Arabic cultural connotations than Google Translate. Furthermore, ChatGPT is limited to communicating elementary metaphorical meaning surrounding certain allegorical turns of phrase and idiomatic expressions. However, as supported across scholarly discourse on machine translation technologies, considerable gaps persist in contrast to human mastery for precisely conveying rhetorical devices and sociocultural conceptual significances shaped by the original Arabic linguistic frameworks. However, in line with previous studies like Muhmmed (2022), ChatGPT still struggles with accurately capturing the cultural meaning and richer implications of Arabic allegorical phrases and idioms. Although it shows some improvements over Google Translate, ChatGPT lacks human experts' real-world knowledge, linguistic skills, creativity, and cultural awareness. Just as teachers and educationalists should seek new methods and techniques in teaching literature, translators and translation scholars must continue exploring innovative approaches to convey the richness of allegorical language and culture-bound rhetorical devices when rendering Arabic texts into English (Abushihab et al., 2023). As noted in examples like fasting customs or terms of endearment, ChatGPT fails to interpret cultural references and misses connotative meanings shaped by Arabic contexts. Although readable, its translations lack the depth, artistry, and attention to culturally specific tones achieved by qualified human literary translators. This was consistent with limitations found in studies by Elsheemi (2014), Rabadi (2012) and Obeidat and Mahdi (2019). The elaborate employment of metaphorical language and culturally-symbolic imagery by early Arabic literary critics to evaluate the aesthetic qualities of poetry reflects a broader tradition of allegorical resonance within Arabic expressive forms (Al Kaabi, 2020).

The researchers conclude that ChatGPT is useful in complementing human translation but still cannot attain the expertise of professionals in conveying allegorical phrases and idioms. More breakthroughs are needed in contextual AI to match human mastery of metaphorical, idiomatic and culture-bound Arabic text. Another point is often overlooked is the vague in translation. Vague translation creates uncertainty in interpreting intended meanings. Machine translation approaches demonstrate limitations in conveying sociocultural conceptual depths encoded in Arabic allegorical rhetoric during the translation process. Without human discernment of cultural nuances, computational models struggle to move beyond surface literal meanings to reflect connotative, symbolic significances that give life to Arabic literary works (Ismail et al., 2023).

VIII. Conclusion

This comparative corpus-based study of human versus AI-based machine translation aimed to shed light on the differences in conveying cultural references when translating cultural extracts with cultural connotations from the Arabic culture into English. The results revealed that human translation demonstrated greater accuracy and depth in conveying core cultural meanings shaped by Arabic cultural imagery and symbolism. The human translators were better able to capture culturally nuanced metaphors involving sleep, luck, time, and other abstract concepts. In contrast, machine translation often interpreted the terms with cultural connotations more literally, failing to transfer the allegorical significance. In addition, the results revealed that human translation proved superior in preserving cultural connotations tones. The human translation was able to create associations that enrich the meaning of proverbs. The most compelling note is that the human translations reflected sensitivity to the Arabic terms' humorous, ironic, and playful undertones. These features were lost in literal machine translations. The results also showed that ChatGPT performed Google Translate in rendering the cultural reference. This might be due to the fact that ChatGPT has a better understanding of the contextual clues that Google Translate.

IX. Recommendations

Based on the findings, certain recommendations can be made to enhance translation quality further and advance the field. Students in translation programs should receive training in AI translation tools and in-depth education on cultural meanings. This will equip the next generation of translators for computer-assisted human translation, combining technological productivity and human expertise. Additionally, AI researchers should increase collaboration with linguists, anthropologists, literary scholars, and cultural experts to identify challenges and opportunities for improving machine translation of allegorical, symbolic language steeped in cultural contexts. Professional translators can pragmatically employ AI tools for efficiency gains in their workflow but should diligently post-edit machine translations of literary works to fix inevitable errors and improve readability, rhetoric, and localization. More comparative corpus studies on human versus machine translation need to be conducted across languages, text genres, and time periods. Rigorous comparative analysis will reveal limitations of current AI technologies and corpus deficiencies while guiding progress in machine learning and knowledge representation for translation. With thoughtful integration of human expertise and AI capabilities, the field of translation can continue advancing, bringing people together across cultures.

X. Limitations and Future Research

Although the current study has contributed to the translation of literary works and provided insights into human and machine translations, some limitations are acknowledged. The study focused on one literary type and work, which limited the generalizability of the finding or other genres and similar works. Besides, the current study did not address the translation methods used by humans or machine translations. Accordingly, future studies may focus on other literary genres and include various literary works to make findings more generalizable. In addition, literary translation researchers need to focus on the strategies employed by human and machine translation when translating linguistic and cultural aspects of the source text.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank the Chancellor of Mohammed Bin Zayed University for Humanities (MBZUH), his Excellency Dr. Khalifa Mubarak Al Dhaheri. This work was supported in part by a grant from MBZUH.

References

[1] Abdel-Hafiz, A. (2003). Pragmatic and linguistic problems in the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's The Thief and the Dogs. *Babel*, *49*(3), 229–252. https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.49.3.04abd

[2] Abu Hamda, E., Ismail, I., & Bsharat, T. (2021). Understanding quantitative and qualitative research methods: A theoretical perspective for young researchers. *International Journal of Research*, *8*(2), 71-87. DOI: 10.2501/ijmr-201-5-070

[3] Abushihab, I., Abu Qattam, M., & AlQbailat., N. (2023). The Impact of Using Novels in the EFL Classroom: A Pragmatic Outlook. *Social Science Journal*, *13*(3), 2164-2170.

[4] Afzaal, M., Imran, M., Du, X., & Almusharraf, N. (2022). Automated and Human Interaction in Written Discourse: A Contrastive Parallel Corpus-based Investigation of Metadiscourse Features in Machine-Human Translations. *SAGE Open*, *12*(4). https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221142210.

[5] Al Kaabi, M. (2020). *Iikhtizaal alnaqd aladabii lilshi'r walshuaraa eabar alssoorah albayaniyah mafradaat wajumal* [Abstracting literary criticism of poetry and poets through metaphorical image: Vocabulary and sentences]. *Palestinian Journal of Open Education*, *11*(21), 33-57.

[6] Albir, A. H., & Alves, F. (2009). Translation As A Cognitive Activity. In *Munday, J. ed. The Routledge Companion to Translation Studies.* Routledge, pp.54-73. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203879450-11

[7] Alhamshary, Y. (2021). On Translating Culture-Bound Expressions in Naguib Mahfouz' s the Thief and the Dogs" Allasu Walkalab": A Comparative Study in Arabic-English Translation. *Wadi Al-Nil Journal For Humanitarian, Social and Educational Studies and Researches*, 137-188. doi: 10.21608/jwadi.2021.73469.1029
[8] Aljabri, S. (2021). Translation of Culture-Specific Items from English into Arabic in Ernest Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea. *SKASE Journal of Translation and Interpretation, 13*(2), 1-21.
[9] Battah, M. (2023). Translating Cultural Bound Terms (Cbts) From the Zuqaq El Midaq (Midaq Alley) By Naguib Mahfouz: Challenges and Strategies. *Journal of Namibian Studies: History Politics Culture*, *33*, 3979-3990.
[10] Chu, C., & Wang. R. (2018). A Survey of Domain Adaptation for Neural Machine Translation. In *Proceedings of the 27th International Conference on Computational Linguistics*, pages 1304–1319, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. Association for Computational Linguistics.
[11] Costa-Juss, M. R., Rapp, R., Lambert, P., Eberle, K., Banchs, R. E., & Babych, B. (2016). Hybrid approaches to machine translation. In *Theory and applications of natural language processing*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-21311-8.
[12] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
[13] Demitry, N. S. W. D. (2018). The Translation of Figurative Language and Culture-Specific Items in Two Novels by Naguib Mahfouz: The Thief and the Dogs and Miramar: A Comparative Study. *CDELT Occasional Papers in the Development of English Education*, *64*(1), 295-323.
[14] Dowaidar, I. M. (2016). The Translation of Humor in Naguib Mahfouz Al-Qahira Al-Jadida (Cairo Modern): A Case Study. *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts*, *76*(8), 61-104.
[15] Garg, A., & Agarwal, M. (2018). *Machine translation: a literature review.* arXiv preprint arXiv:1901.01122.
[16] Ismail, I. A., Bsharat, T. R. K., & Amirbayeva, D. (2022). Vague language: A critical reading. *Research, Society and Development*, *11*(10), e587111033309. https://doi.org/10.33448/rsd-v11i10.33309
[17] Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
[18] Lefevere, A. (1992). *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame.* Routledge.
[19] Lihua, Z. (2022). The Relationship between Machine Translation and Human Translation under the Influence of Artificial Intelligence Machine Translation. *Mobile Information Systems*, *2022*, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1155/2022/9121636
[20] Lotfipour-Saedi, K. (1992). Analysing Literary Discourse: Implications for Literary Translation. *Meta*, *37*(2), 193–203. https://doi.org/10.7202/004016ar
[21] Mehawesh, M. I. (2023). Human Translation vs. Machine Translation in the Naguib Mahfouz's Novel Palace Walk: A Case Study. *Mutah Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (MJHSS)*, *38*(2), 13-33.
[22] Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
[23] Obeidat, A., & Sepora, T. (2019). Collocation translation errors from Arabic into English: A case study of Naguib Mahfouz's novel "Awlad Haratina". *International Journal of Humanities, Philosophy and Language*, *2*(7), 129-138.
[24] Omar, A., $ Gomaa, Y.A. (2020). The Machine Translation of Literature: Implications for Translation Pedagogy. *Int. J. Emerg. Technol. Learn*., *15*, 228-235.
[25] Pandian S, L., Kadhirvelu, K. (2012). Machine Translation from English to Tamil using Hybrid Technique. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, *46*(16), 36-42.
[26] Rivera-Trigueros, I. (2021). Machine translation systems and quality assessment: a systematic review. *Language Resources and Evaluation*, *56*(2), 593–619. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10579-021-09537-5.
[27] Shintemirova, M. (2023). Translation of Metaphors in Official and Automatic Subtitling and MT Evaluation. *Journal of Computational and Applied Linguistics*, *1*, 77-93.
[28] Thai, K., Karpinska, M., Krishna, K., Ray, B., Inghilleri, M., Wieting, J., & Iyyer, M. (2022). *Exploring document-level literary machine translation with parallel paragraphs from world literature*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2210.14250.
[29] Toral, A., & Way, A. (2018). What Level of Quality Can Neural Machine Translation Attain on Literary Text?. In: Moorkens, J., Castilho, S., Gaspari, F., Doherty, S. (eds) *Translation Quality Assessment. Machine Translation: Technologies and Applications*, *vol 1*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91241-7_12
[30] Toral, A., Way, A. (2015). Machine-assisted translation of literary text. *Translation Spaces*, *4*(2), 240–267. https://doi.org/10.1075/ts.4.2.04tor
[31] Toral, A., Wieling, M., & Way, A. (2018). Post-editing effort of a novel with statistical and neural machine translation. *Frontiers in Digital Humanities*, *5*(9), 1-11. DOI: 10.3389/fdigh.2018.00009
[32] Wang, H., Wu, H., He, Z., Huang, L., & Church, K. (2022). Progress in machine translation. *Engineering*, *18*, 143–153. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eng.2021.03.023
[33] Yousef, T. (2012). Literary translation: Old and new challenges. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, *13*(1), 49-64.

Mouza H. Al-Kaabi holds a Ph.D. in Arabic Language and its literature in 2015. Her research interest is discourse analysis in accordance with argumentative theories, classical rhetorical methodology, and language teaching and proficiency. Over ten years of experience in academic work: various administrative positions as department head, college deputy dean, and director of the Center of Excellence in Arabic Language. She has overseen several committees, including quality assurance and academic affairs.

Naji M. AlQbailat holds a PhD in Computational Linguistics from UC3M, Spain, 2020. He is a language expert with over 24 years of experience in teaching, managing and developing language programs. He is currently serving as the director of Language Center at Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan, where he had already been given the same position twice.

He has held various positions in his career including a coordinator of Teletandem Arabic and English exchange program at Georgetown University, Lecturer of Arabic for Speakers of Other Languages at Middlebury College, and Assistant Dean for Practicum and Development at Princess Alia University College.

Throughout his career, he has shown a commitment to improving language education and has made significant contributions to the field. He is also a Social Media Interaction Analyst and has extensive experience in using technology in language teaching and learning.

Amjad Badah is a Ph.D. researcher in Translation Studies. He works as a freelance trainer for research writing and publication for postgraduate students and academics from different Arab universities. Additionally, he serves as consultant for academic writing and publication matters. Amjad's research interests revolve around the fields of Translation Studies, Critical Discourse Analysis, Language Teaching, and E-learning.

Islam A. Ismail, from Palestine, is a Ph. D. researcher in English Language Education. Ismail does research on writing, learning during COVID-19, integration technology in education, curriculum development, and honing teachers' teaching quality in ESL classrooms. He brings his experience as a trainer for young researchers, giving regular sessions about research methodology, and he works as a proofreader in academic English field. He aims to find innovative and effective ways to facilitate language acquisition and proficiency.

Khalid Hicham, born in Beni Mellal city, Morocco. Third year PhD student. Applied linguistics, Sultan my Slimane University, Beni Mellal, Morocco. Currently 3rd year PhD 2022/2023.

A member in the Gendarmerie Royal corps. Got diplomat of English instructor in the Royal Armed Forces School of Languages. Taught English subjects to social workers and kindergarten trainees. Currently teaching End of Studies Projects subject to 6th semester BA student.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 719-726, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.04

Needs Analysis of English Skills for Logistics Business Among Thai University Students

Prathomwat Suraprajit
Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University, Thailand

Pimpisa Chanted
Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University, Thailand

Nipapat Pomat*
Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University, Thailand

***Abstract*—Logistics plays a vital role in driving the global economy forward. Within this profession, English serves as the primary means of communication. However, not all logistics personnel, especially those for whom English is a second language, find it easy to use. The aim of this research is to conduct a needs analysis for English skills in the logistics industry. A questionnaire was distributed to 156 Thai logistics management students and employed Google Forms together with Microsoft Excel for quantitative analysis. The findings revealed the following: 1) The four core skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and vocabulary were reported extremely important, while grammar was rated as important. 2) The most frequently utilized English skill was reading, the skill most desired to improve was speaking, the skill that lacked the most was grammar, and the skill requiring the greatest development in their future were reading, listening, speaking, and writing, respectively. The implications of this study are significant for the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses.**

***Index Terms*—English for logistics business, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), course development**

I. Introduction

A. Background

English, as one of the most widely spoken languages worldwide, is utilized by individuals for various purposes. Firstly, it serves as a means for academic communication, known as English for Academic Purposes (EAP). EAP is particularly valuable for students and educators in higher education institutions located in non-English-speaking countries, as it helps them address challenges and obstacles encountered during the learning and teaching processes. Secondly, English is employed for specific purposes, commonly referred to as English for Specific Purposes (ESP). ESP is a needs-based approach that determines the specific language skills that should be emphasized or focused on to facilitate children's success. By providing learners with opportunities to engage with English in contexts that they comprehend and find intriguing, ESP enables them to naturally acquire the language. In this manner, ESP opens doors for learners to develop their English proficiency in a meaningful and captivating manner.

In Thailand, where English is taught as a foreign language to some extent, having a strong command of the English language is crucial for achieving optimal job performance. Furthermore, English proficiency serves as a crucial tool for Thai employees to accomplish their objectives in the global labor market. As highlighted in the comprehensive report on English language usage in professional settings (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2016), English is the primary language for international business transactions, irrespective of whether countries have English as their native or non-native language. This holds true for Thailand, which stands as a prominent player among the top-performing upper-middle-income economies (Logistics Performance Index, 2018). However, the significance of English extends beyond individual employees to encompass companies as well. The report reveals that English proficiency is considered important by over 95% of employers in countries where English is not the official language. In the logistics sector, a crucial component of transportation and distribution, 77% of employees whose first language is not English acknowledge the importance of English for their respective businesses (Logistics Performance Index, 2018).

Attaining proficiency in English is a significant milestone in achieving effective communication in the language. However, numerous studies have highlighted the challenges and difficulties faced by Thai employees across all four language skills. For instance, research has shown that listening skills pose challenges (Sanjit, 2016; Tamtani, 2019; Jeharsae, 2014; Jampa & Denis, 2016), speaking skills encounter obstacles (Srisuwan & Kardkarnklai, 2014; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014), reading skills present difficulties (Boonruk, 2019), and writing skills raise concerns

* Corresponding Author.

(Rajprasit et al., 2015; Youngyusensin, 2015). These findings shed light on the areas where Thai employees encounter specific language-related challenges and highlight the need for further attention and support in developing these skills.

Despite the widespread use of English as a medium of communication across various domains, including the logistics industry, there is a noticeable absence of an English for logistics course that is built upon a comprehensive needs analysis derived from learner data. This is an urgent matter that needs attention. The demands and requirements of learners, gathered through direct engagement with actual users, serve as the authentic resources for developing an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course that aligns with their expectations. While previous studies have conducted needs analyses in the logistics field with logistics professionals (Youngyusensin, 2015; Phuyathip, 2019), the investigation into the specific needs of learners in the field seems to have been overlooked. Consequently, there is a need for data collection directly from learners, ensuring the extraction of authentic insights from real users. Subsequently, the development of a well-tailored ESP course becomes imperative to address these identified needs effectively.

B. Limitation

1. The participants in this study are students who are currently pursuing a degree in logistics management at a public university in Thailand.
2. The information collected in this study exclusively originated from individuals who actively participated in an English for logistics course at the tertiary level.

C. Significance of the Study

The findings from the present study could prove valuable when designing an English course tailored specifically for students in higher education with a focus on English for logistics business.

II. Literature Review

A. Needs Analysis

(a). Definition of Needs Analysis

Needs analysis encompasses the essential items that humans require for their survival and well-being. It can be classified into two categories: target needs, which are the goals individuals strive to achieve, and learning needs, which are the necessary task learners must undertake to acquire knowledge (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). To put it simply, the distinction between these two types of demands lies in the former relation to what the learner must do in the desired environment, while the latter pertains to what the learners must do to facilitate learning. According to Brown (1995), needs analysis involves a systematic process of gathering and evaluating both subjective and objective information, aiming to define and validate a curriculum that effectively meets students’ language learning requirements within the specific institutional context that influences the learning and teaching environment.

(b). The Purpose of Needs Analysis

In 1970, Gagne emphasized the aims of needs analysis, which included enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of current courses, providing support for both content and instructional techniques in existing courses, as well as designing new courses. Needs analysis is considered a vital component in the systematic development of a curriculum as it collects information to determine the course objectives (Brown, 1995). Additionally, Richards (2001) proposed several practical applications of needs analysis in language instruction. These applications include assessing the specific language skills required for various positions such as sales manager, tour guide, or university student; evaluating the effectiveness of an existing course in meeting the needs of prospective students; identifying students within a group who would benefit the most from training in particular language skills; recognizing important shifts in direction as perceived by a reference group; identifying gaps between students’ current abilities and what they need to be able to do; and gathering information about specific challenges experienced by learners.

(c). Theories of Needs Analysis

Many researchers have classified needs analysis into different categories (Berwick & Johnson, 1989; Brindley, 1989; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Richards, 1990; Robinson, 1991; Nunan, 1999). Firstly, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguished between target needs and learning needs. Target needs refer to what the learner must accomplish in the target environment and encompass necessities, deficiencies, and desires. Learning needs, on the other hand, pertain to the actions the learner must undertake to facilitate learning. Secondly, Berwick and Johnson (1989) distinguished between perceived and felt needs in their needs analysis. Perceived needs are objective sets based on others' learning experiences, and they include normative, actual, and objective demands. The other type of need is felt needs, which are the learner's own needs, such as feelings, ideas, and assumptions. Then, Brindley (1989) and Robinson (1991) categorized needs analysis into objective and subjective needs. Objective needs revolve around factual information about learners, such as language proficiency while attending courses, perceived language difficulties, and the demand for language in real-world communication situations. Subjective needs, on the other hand, are identified through concrete and observable data collected about the learner or the situation, including the language learners need to acquire and their current proficiency and skill level. Richards (1990) further classified needs analysis into situational requirements and communicative requirements. Situational needs encompass the general parameters of a language program, such as teacher expectations, teaching styles, and teaching techniques. Communicative needs, on the other hand, focus on the specific context in which learners will use the target language, including their role in the target situation, necessary language skills, future interactions and language tasks, and the required level of language proficiency in the target situation. Furthermore, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) differentiated between outsiders and insiders in their analysis of requirements. Outsiders' requirements pertain to objective/perceived needs based on known and verifiable information, while insiders' requirements relate to subjective/felt needs, which encompass cognitive and emotional aspects. Nunan (1999) divided requirements analysis into content needs and process needs. Content needs involve the selection and organization of themes, language, functions, ideas, and vocabulary while process needs encompass the selection and sequencing of learning activities and experiences.

(d). Needs Analysis in ESP Course

In order for an ESP course to succeed or be effective, it is needed to conduct a needs analysis. According to Robinson (1991), needs analysis plays a vital role in ESP courses. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) further emphasized that each language training should be grounded in a needs assessment. The work of Carter and Nunan (2001) showed that needs analysis was a critical component of an ESP strategy particularly in terms of course design. Needs analysis encompassed various aspects of ESP course development, including course design, material selection, pedagogical techniques, assessment, and evaluation, as highlighted by Chatsungnoen (2015). Although it originated in the 1920s, needs analysis gained significant importance in the field of ESP during the 1960s (West, 1994).

(e). Definition of Needs Analysis in the Present Study

In the current study, the initial perspective on needs analysis is that it serves as a crucial phase within the development cycle of an ESP course. It has been included in this study with the aim of using the results to guide the identification of English language skills necessary in the logistics industry, while also contributing to the creation of an English for logistics course. The needs analysis conducted in this study intends to explore the participants' thoughts on the need for improved knowledge and application of English in logistics-related contexts. To summarize, the present study defines needs analysis as the process of assessing the requirements for a more comprehensive understanding of an English for logistics course.

(f). The Model of Needs Analysis Used in the Present Study

The methodology for conducting the needs analysis in this study draws upon the framework proposed by Hutchinson and Waters (1987). The objective is to evaluate the English language requirements of Thai university students who are specializing in logistics management. The focus is on identifying the specific needs of the learners within the target setting, encompassing their needs, uses, lacks, and wants. Furthermore, the analysis takes into consideration the content of English for logistics textbooks, as well as insights and recommendations from previous studies conducted in similar fields.

B. Previous Studies

Youngyuensin (2015) and Phuyathip (2019) conducted studies focusing on needs analysis within the field of logistics. Youngyuensin's (2015) study revealed that participants ranked writing as the most challenging skill, closely followed by speaking. The participants expressed a need to enhance their English proficiency, particularly in business writing, grammar, and vocabulary, to order to perform their job responsibilities effectively. It emphasized the importance of considering learners' needs when designing training courses to ensure successful and efficient performance among staff members. On the other hand, Phuyathip (2019) investigated the English language needs and challenges faced by logistics professionals working at a multinational logistics firm in Thailand. The study concluded that respondents sought improvement in all four language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Additionally, they identified the need to acquire logistics-specific technical terms, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to excel in their work. Moreover, they encountered difficulties in applying these core English abilities in their professional contexts. Previous research studies highlighted the necessity of conducting an English needs analysis specifically tailored to the logistics sector, focusing on the demands of professionals rather than students. Consequently, the present study aims to bridge this gap by examining the needs of students majoring in logistics.

III. Methodology

A. Participants

For the current study, a total of 156 Thai junior students who are pursuing a major in logistics management were included. These students are enrolled in the English for Logistics Business course, which is offered at a public university in Thailand. Prior to joining this special electing course, the students have successfully completed and passed the fundamental English courses provided by the university. They are actively participating in the study to enhance their understanding of the language requirements associated with various logistical situations or tasks, encompassing the four language skills of speaking, listening, writing, and reading.

B. Research Instrument

Drawing inspiration from Hutchinson and Water (1987), the questionnaire was carefully developed to examine the English language skills needed in the field of logistics. The questionnaire consisted of four categories – needs, uses, wants, and lacks – and employed a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 to gather data. To minimize misinterpretation, the questionnaire was presented in Thai language and divided into five sections. The first section aimed to explore the English language skills needed by Thai university students majoring in logistics management. Participants were asked to express their specific requirements in areas such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, English grammar, and English vocabulary. The items in this section were closed-ended, and participants were instructed to select their preferred rating (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree) to indicate their needs.

The second section focused on the utilization of English language skills in the classrooms. Participants were asked to reflect on how they employ English in various capacities, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, English grammar, and English vocabulary. The items in this section were also closed-ended, and participants were required to indicate their preferred ranking to illustrate their usage.

Moving on to the third section, the questionnaire aimed to uncover the desired English language skills expressed by the participants. This section allowed participants to articulate their preferences for skills such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, English grammar, English vocabulary, and intercultural communication. Similar to the previous sections, the items were closed-ended, and participants were instructed to indicate their preferred ranking to denote their desires.

The fourth section investigated the lack of English language abilities among the participants. They were given the opportunity to voice their views on the areas in which they felt deficient, including speaking, listening, reading, writing, English grammar, English vocabulary, and intercultural communication. The items in this section were closed-ended, and participants were requested to indicate their preferred ranking to convey their deficiencies.

Lastly, section five explored the English language skills that participants anticipated needing in the future. This section allowed them to express their future skill requirements, covering speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The items in this section were closed-ended, and participants were asked to indicate their preferred ranking to signify their future needs.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection took place in the classroom. Once the lecture finished, the participants were requested to share their perspectives on each statement by filling out questionnaires using the Google Form application. To ensure complete understanding, the researcher reads out all the survey items aloud for the participants and clarifies some points that the participants do not understand clearly.

D. Data Analysis Procedure

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed descriptively using Google Forms, a versatile platform designed for creating online forms and surveys with various question types. This tool allows for real-time evaluation of results to determine the frequency usage. Subsequently, the data was converted into mean scores and standard deviations.

IV. RESULTS

TABLE 1
ENGLISH SKILLS NEEDED AMONG THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAJORING IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT (N=156)

No.	The needed skills informed by participants	Mean	SD
1	Listening is necessary skill	4.83	0.51
2	Speaking is necessary skill	4.81	0.57
3	English vocabulary is necessary skill	4.74	0.61
4	Reading is necessary skill	4.70	0.54
5	Writing is necessary skill	4.56	0.74
6	English grammar is necessary skill	4.08	0.93

In Table 1, the English skills required by the participants were displayed. It was observed that listening was identified as the most crucial skill, followed by speaking, vocabulary, reading, writing, and grammar. Moreover, English grammar was regarded as a highly necessary, whereas the rest were considered extremely important.

TABLE 2
THE USE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AMONG THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAJORING IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT (N=156)

No.	Used skills among participants	Mean	SD
1	Reading skill	3.87	0.89
2	English vocabulary skill	3.78	1.05
3	Listening skill	3.69	1.05
4	Writing skill	3.34	1.15
5	Speaking skill	3.30	1.20
6	English grammar skill	3.16	1.16

Table 2 provided insights into the utilization of English language skills among the participants. It indicated that reading was the most frequently employed skill, followed by vocabulary, listening, writing, speaking, and grammar. Additionally, reading, vocabulary, and listening were rated as highly used, while writing, speaking, and grammar were rated moderately used.

TABLE 3
ENGLISH LANGUAGE WANTED BY THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAJORING IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT (N=156)

No.	Wanted skills reported by the participants	**Mean**	**SD**
1	Speaking skill	4.74	0.53
2	Listening skill	4.72	0.51
3	Vocabularies in logistics industry	4.65	0.66
4	Reading skill	4.5	0.83
5	Writing skill	4.48	0.78
6	Intercultural skills	4.42	0.77
7	English grammar	4.30	0.84

Table 3 illustrated the desired English language skills expressed by the participants. The results revealed that speaking was identified as the most deficient skill, followed by listening, vocabulary, reading, writing, intercultural, and grammar. Furthermore, speaking, listening, and vocabulary were rated as having a very high need, while writing, intercultural competence, and grammar were considered to have a high level of need.

TABLE 4
LACK OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AMONG THAI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAJORING IN LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT (N=156)

No.	**Lack skills reported by participants**	**Mean**	**SD**
1	English grammar skills	4.16	0.95
2	Speaking is skills	4.09	0.98
3	Writing skills	4.02	1.00
4	Intercultural skills	3.87	1.01
5	Listening skills	3.82	1.05
6	English vocabularies in logistics business	3.64	1.03
7	Reading skills	3.44	1.09

Table 4 highlighted the lack of English language skills. The findings indicated that grammar was identified as the most lacking ability, followed by speaking, writing, intercultural, listening, vocabulary, and reading. Furthermore, grammar, speaking, writing, intercultural competence, listening, and vocabulary were rated as having a significant shortage, while only reading was considered to have a moderate level of need.

TABLE 5
ENGLISH SKILLS NEEDED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN THE FUTURE (N=156)

No.	**Task**	**Mean**	**SD**
1	Understanding minutes of meeting (R)	4.75	0.57
2	Understanding presentation by reading (R)	4.73	0.59
3	Understanding ordering via email (R)	4.72	0.59
4	Understanding the detail or information in the meeting (L)	4.72	0.61
5	Understanding the discussion of report by listening (L)	4.71	0.60
6	Understanding presentation by listening (L)	4.71	0.60
7	Giving a comment/an opinion at meeting (S)	4.71	0.64
8	Giving presentation (S)	4.71	0.68
9	Understanding the advice or instruction via phone (L)	4.70	0.63
10	Understanding the written report by reading (R)	4.69	0.63

According to Table 5, the learners expressed their priority to understand meeting minutes, followed by comprehending presentations through reading, understanding ordering via email, grasping the information during meetings, comprehending the discussion of the report by listening, understanding presentation through listening, providing comments or opinions in meetings, giving presentations, and comprehending advice or instructions over the phone. Moreover, students were required to engage in passive learning by reading and listening to the relevant matters outlined in items 1-6 and 9-10. Additionally, as illustrated in items 7-8, they were expected to actively participate in discussion through speaking.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

A. Skills Needed for Logistics Management Students

Based on the finding of this study, the most needed skill was listening which aligns with previous research conducted by Niamsuwan (2017) on the English language needs of aircraft heavy maintenance mechanics. Notably, Chatsungnoen (2015) also highlighted the significance of listening skills in an occupational context, specifically in the ESP program for food science technology. This underscores the importance of incorporating listening-focused exercises and activities in English language training programs for logistics management majors. By allocating resources to enhance listening skills, universities can better prepare their students to navigate the challenges and needs of the logistics industry.

Furthermore, students ranked listening skills higher than other abilities across various aspects. Listening plays a vital role in facilitating learning as it enables students to comprehend and respond to information provided by lecturers, classmates, and others. The research findings of Sanjit (2016), Tamtani (2019), Jeharsae (2014), Jampa and Denis (2016) also support the significance of listening skills in the ESP environment. Developing listening skills not only strengthens communication skills, but also fosters emotional intelligence and promotes critical thinking.

Hence, students recognized the need to improve their listening skills as it directly impacts their academic success, communication proficiency, and future careers. However, it is worth noting that was no significant difference in the average importance rating between speaking (4.81) and listening (4.83), suggesting that both skills should be concurrently emphasized. On the other hand, grammatical structure was ranked as the least needed skill with an average of 4.08, but it was still represented at a high level. It suggests that listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading, writing, and grammar must all be prioritized in the language classroom because they were ranked from "high" to "very high".

B. Frequently Skills Used by Logistics Management Students

In general, the students perceived reading to be the most valuable English language skill. The high average score suggests that the majority of logistics students prioritize reading as a crucial skill for their studies and professional growth. By being proficient readers, these students can effectively access and comprehend a wide range of written materials related to logistics, including industry journals, research papers, technical documents, and business reports. Logistics management programs may include a variety of tactics and exercises into their curriculum to help students improve their reading abilities. Assigning relevant reading materials, participating in group discussions or debates on logistical themes, and offering help on good reading approaches and comprehension tactics are some examples.

Based on classroom activities and learning experiences, it is probable that reading abilities were discovered most frequently in all environments where English was used. This statement implies that pupils who have a high degree of English language competency gain the most from their reading abilities, which can also improve their analytical and critical thinking capabilities. According to the findings, the top three most utilized abilities are reading, vocabulary understanding, and hearing, with levels ranging from "low" to "high". As a result, frequent usage and required abilities are crucial, and these skills should be prioritized in classroom activities. Additionally, grammar is the least used skill, which reflects the current teaching strategies for L2 teachers that grammar should not be taught explicitly in order to pass an exam but should be able to be used in everyday situations.

C. Wanted Skills for Logistics Management Students

Regarding the findings of this study, it was found that most of the respondents need to improve their speaking. Students think that speaking skills will enable them to express themselves more courageously, participate in social activities, encounter new people, and even succeed in their careers. In this part, the result from the aspect of wanted skills is different from the top three needed and used skills in the earlier parts. It's interesting that the skills that are most wanted are not the ones that are most necessary. This suggests that students' attitudes toward studying English should consider both their wants and needs for their future professions and personal requirements. In addition, this finding indicates that students place a significant emphasis on improving their oral communication abilities in English within the context of logistics management. The relatively high mean score for speaking suggests that most logistics students recognize the importance of this skill and desire to improve their spoken English proficiency. This highlights their understanding that strong speaking skills can enhance their productivity and career prospects in the logistics industry.

D. Lack of English Language Skills for Logistics Management Students

The result has shown that grammar was the area where the most English language proficiency was lacking, followed by speaking, writing, intercultural communication, listening, and vocabulary. And the least lack of English language skills was in reading skills, which were represented by "medium". Even though grammatical focus was listed as the least needed skill in Part 1, it became the aspect that students really concerned themselves with, and they evaluated themselves with a low level of grammatical proficiency. However, it is not the point that they would like to improve the most based on the result from Part 3.

E. The English Language Skills Needed to Improve in the Future

The top-five needs that the participants prefer to develop in the future are 1) to understand the minutes of the meeting the most, followed by 2) to understand the presentation by reading, 3) to understand ordering via email, 4) to understand the detail or information in the meeting, and 5) to understand the discussion of the report by listening. These top-five needs fall under reading and listening skills, which are related to passive learning. The result clearly shows that students see the clear picture about the scenarios of using English and “meeting” becomes the situation that they face quite often, and it requires all of four main skills for effective meeting.

F. Suggestion

The most and least skills in terms of need, usage, want, lack, and scenario of using English were presented differently for each of the researched skills concerning learning the English language. However, the average of each scope was presented from medium to high. So, all skills should be practiced, and it is linked to the design of the curriculum in Thailand for L2 students who need to learn various skills in the language classroom, but the focused practice of each skill can be managed by the mean score or range. In addition, the top three English usage scenarios include meeting, presenting, and emailing, which could be included in the classroom activities to boost those mentioned English language skills.

REFERENCES

[1] Berwick, R. (1989). Needs Assessment in Language Programming: From Theory to Practice. In R. K. Johnson (Ed.), *The Second Language Curriculum* (pp. 48-62). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524520.006

[2] Boonruk, S. (2019). Problems in Business English Reading for Comprehension of Weekend Business English Students at Phranakhon Rajabhat University. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. Retrieved January 14, 2023, from http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3438228

[3] Brindley, G. (1989). The Role of Needs Analysis in Adult ESL Programme Design. In R. Johnson (Ed.), *The Second Language Curriculum* (pp. 43-78). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[4] Brown, J. D. (1995). *The Elements of Language Curriculum: A Systematic Approach to Program Development*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

[5] Cambridge English Language Assessment. (2016). *English at Work: global analysis of language skills in the workplace*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

[6] Carter, R. & Nunan, D. (2001). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[7] Chatsungnoen, P. (2015). *Needs analysis for an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for Thai undergraduates in a Food Science and Technology programme*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Massey University).

[8] Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[9] Gagne, R. M. (1970). *Conditions of Learning*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

[10] Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press.

[11] Jampa, S., & Denis, K. (2016). A study of English communication problem between non-Thai and Thai co-workers in Lutheran Church in Mukdahan and Ubon Ratchathani Areas. *International Journal of Research-Granthaalayah, 4*(1), 131-137.

[12] Jeharsae, F. (2014). *English oral communication problems and strategies used by Thai employees in an international workplace to communicate with native and non-native English speaking customers* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Srinakharinwirot University.

[13] *Logistics Performance Index*. (2018). Retrieved January 11, 2023, from https://www.tilog-logistix.com/image/download/WTLF_Logistics_Performance_Index_Dr_Chanin_Presentation.pdf

[14] Niamsuwan, P. (2017). *A study of needs analysis of English language for aircraft heavy maintenance mechanics.* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.

[15] Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching & learning.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

[16] Phuyathip, M. (2019). *Needs and problems analysis of English language for logistics professionals at an international logistics company in Thailand*. [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.

[17] Pratoomrat, P., & Rajprasit, K. (2014). Exploring current situations and corporate needs of English language usage in workplace: Thai professionals’ voices to Tertiary Education. *Veridian E-Journal, Silpakorn University*, *7*(4), 28-47.

[18] Rajprasit, K., Pratoomrat, P., & Wang, T. (2015). Perceptions and Problems of English Language and Communication Abilities: A Final Check on Thai Engineering Undergraduates. *English Language Teaching*, *8*(3), 111-120.

[19] Richards, J. C. (1990). *The language teaching matrix*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[20] Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667220

[21] Robinson, P. (1991). *ESP Today: A Practitioner’s Guide*. New York: Prentice Hall.

[22] Sanjit, W. (2016). *A Study of English Communication Problems of Thai Employees in a Multinational Company*. [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.

[23] Srisuwan, L., & Kardkarnklai, U. (2014). English Usage and Problems of Industrial Pharmacists at Two Large Multi-National Pharmaceutical Manufacturers in Thailand. *Asian Social Science, 10*(22), 142-155.

[24] Tamtani, M. (2019). English Listening Difficulty of Passenger Service Officers, State Railway of Thailand. *Journal of Liberal Arts Rangsit University*, *14*(2), 111-126.

[25] West, R. (1994). Needs analysis in Language Teaching. *Language Teaching*, *27*, 1-19. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444800007527

[26] Youngyuensin, N. (2015). *Needs analysis in English communication skills among Thai employees of Yusen Logistics (Thailand) Co., Ltd.* [Unpublished master’s thesis]. Thammasat University.

Prathomwat Surapajit is an assistant professor at Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University. He is interested in English teaching and English for specific purposes focusing on logistics business.

Pimpisa Chanted is a full time lecturer at Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University. She is interested in English for careers focusing on airline services.

Nipapat Pomat is a full time lecturer at Faculty of Management Sciences, Kasetsart University. She is interested in English teaching.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 727-736, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.05

An Investigation Into Short-Term Memory Training in Interpreting Course at a University in Vietnam

Nguyen Thi Dieu Ha
Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Economics – Technology for Industries, Vietnam

***Abstract*—Short – term memory (STM) is extremely crucial in an interpreter's task since the message must be conveyed quickly from the source language to the target language. Hence, the interpreter must have high concentration once he gets involved in the interpreting process. STM is often ignored in interpreting modules since students are required to self – practice at home and other necessary skills are more focused. However, several language schools still embed STM activities in the course due to students' need analysis. This paper aims at evaluating STM training in interpreting subject at a university in Viet Nam. Besides, the students' perception of STM is also investigated. To collect data for analysis, the researcher used semi-structure interviews with 20 students at intermediate and advanced levels in English. The results of the study indicated that STM had positive effects on students' interpretation and the majority of students showed their positive attitudes toward STM training.**

***Index Terms*—short – term memory, short-term memory training, interpreting, investigation**

I. Introduction

Interpreting or oral translation has a long history and plays a vital role in facilitating communication between language speakers from different parts of the world. Having emerged for a long time, interpreting is the common language to assist those who do not share the same language. Interpreters would be individuals who are raised in a bilingual environment whose parents live in the border areas of two nations. The first interpreting task was implemented in diplomatic tasks by Egyptian Pharaohs while carrying out the mission of cooperation with counterparts across Asia, Europe and Africa (Su, 2019). It was also documented that slaves or royal members could play the roles of interpreters. However, the development of interpreting has flourished as a profession since the 20th century. World War I has been marked as the pioneer event of conference interpreting when the Peace Conference was held in Paris with the participation of various nations (Baigorri-Jalón, 2005). Since then, interpreting has been employed in all aspects of life ranging from the administration to military. Today, interpreting is trained in parallel with language education at foreign language institutions.

Learners would be equipped with necessary skills and STM is not an exception in the interpreting training courses. STM is of great importance in assisting interpreters to gain the initial speech before it is analyzed and switched to the target language. A good STM is required if interpreters want to conquer the interpreting process (Lu & Chen, 2013). Hence, regular STM trainings should be practiced so that the interpreters would be familiar with various categories of words, especially the terminologies in other sectors. However, Rasouli (2022) claims that teachers and instructors have ignored training students' STM when it comes to interpreting subject which results in students' competency of oral translation. Instead, students are asked to focus more on listening, note-taking, and switching the source language into the target language.

Teaching consecutive interpreting in Vietnam is practiced at several universities with English majors. In the context of School of Languages and Tourism – Hanoi University of Industry, skills like listening comprehension, memorizing, note-taking and presentation are more focused to train students because these skills are necessary for interpreters (T. M. T. Nguyen & Nguyen, 2023). In contrast, by unofficially interviewing the teachers who are responsible for teaching interpreting subjects at School of Foreign Languages, Thai Nguyen University, the researcher has noticed that apart from other skills, STM activities are incorporated in each interpreting lesson to boost students' capacity of memory before an oral translation is produced. The current study is driven with two following research questions:

- *To what extent does STM affect third-year English majors in learning interpreting?*
- *How do students respond towards the use of STM in learning interpreting?*

II. Literature Review

A. Interpreting

The term interpreting or oral translation is believed to appear earlier than written translation. Interpreting is defined as an activity taking place once an individual interpret what he/she hear from the source language to the target language through utterance (Phelan, 2001). In a different sense, interpretation is described as verbal translation which involves the process of encoding and decoding the speech (Petrescu, 2014). According to Jungwha (2003), interpreting can be broadly referred to as the comprehension of spoken language and the expression of such insight into another language. Although different scholars hold various opinions on interpreting, the similarity between these is connected to the switching information from source language to target language.

When it comes to the use of technical language, such as when interpreting or translating, people frequently use the term "translation" to refer to both processes interchangeably. These phrases, however, are different and should not be used synonymously. According to Munday et al. (2022), there are two distinct occupations with distinct natures, functions, and skill requirements that deal with different linguistic mediums. Translation specifically refers to "an operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another language" (Catford, 1965). Therefore, translation involves dealing with the written medium of language and is not executed in real-time. When a written message needs to be rendered into another written language, a translator, rather than an interpreter, is employed. Conversely, interpreting refers to the verbal form of translation in which spoken utterances or written texts are rendered orally. Pöchhacker (2014, p. 11) defines interpreting as "a form of Translation in which a first and final rendition in another language is produced on the basis of a one-time presentation of an utterance in a source language". Interpreting is characterized by being performed in real-time and for immediate use. It is essential to note that the final product of interpreting is always in the spoken medium of the target language, regardless of whether the source text was oral or written.

Being aware of the similarities and differences between translation and interpreting, it is a shortage if the various types of interpreting are not discussed. Types of interpreting are perhaps more diverse than written translation based on the purpose of the interpretation tasks. While Phelan (2001) divides interpreting into 10 categories consisting of conference interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, whispered interpreting, bilateral interpreting, sight language interpreting, telephone interpreting, television interpreting, and video conferencing interpreting, Q. H. Nguyen (2007) mentioned 5 main types of interpreting which are whole speech interpreting, community interpreting, court interpreting, escort interpreting, and sight interpreting. Nevertheless, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting are the most common types being explored by researchers.

In consecutive interpreting, the work of interpreter will finish after the speaker because he/she has to listen to the speech and take note at the same time before delivering the speech in the target language (Phelan, 2001). Several skills are essential in consecutive interpreting including memory, concentration, understanding, note-taking and public speaking. Among these skills, note-taking is believed to be the most important one as the interpreter could not remember all information provided by the speaker without jotting down the note. Practitioners often use symbols and abbreviations to construct their own notes for the recalling process.

Simultaneous interpreting is thought to be tougher than consecutive interpreting in a sense that interpreters have to listen to the speech and interpret for the audience at the same time (Phelan, 2001). Hence, note-taking would be impossible in this type of interpreting. Unlike consecutive interpreting, special devices in the booth are necessary such as headphones with micro and a monitor of volume, mute buttons, unmute buttons and relay button. The function of the relay button is to allow interpreters to listen to an interpretation from another booth at the conference room. Besides these special devices, interpreters can use high tech applications for the search of terminological words/phrases in a fast way. The maximum time for simultaneous interpreters is 30 minutes because of the high level of concentration meaning a pair of interpreters are often ordered in one booth to support one another.

Sight interpreting is another type of interpreting which consists of reading a document and orally rendering its content (Naseri, 2017). In this mode, the interpreters are asked to articulate everything presented in the text, including signatures, seals, dates, and numbers. Additionally, the interpreter would go beyond the context by specifying the location of the message in the text, such as the upper left corner of the right margin. Moreover, the interpreters can evaluate and convey whether the text is legitimate to the audience. Phelan (2001) has described that sight interpreting can occur in various setting like business meetings or court proceedings. It is true that time to examine the document in detail required by the interpreter during sight interpreting is appropriate.

B. Short – Term Memory

STM represents various memory systems which are responsible for holding onto small pieces of information or memory chunks for a brief period of time, typically lasting up to 30 seconds (Cascella & Khalili, 2023). The capacity of time duration in STM is from 15 to 30 seconds which involves the process of rehearsal in the brain (Shiffrin, 1973).

Encoding and decoding are the two important stages in the process of STM (Shiffrin, 1973). There are three primary coding methods in STM: acoustic coding, visual coding, and semantic coding. Acoustic or phonemic coding involves remembering and understanding information heard. Visual coding entails storing information as images rather than sounds, particularly applicable to nonverbal items. Semantic coding involves assigning meaning to information, connecting it to abstract concepts. These characteristics indicate that STM operates independently of sensory and long-term memory stores. The following chart shows these coding types:

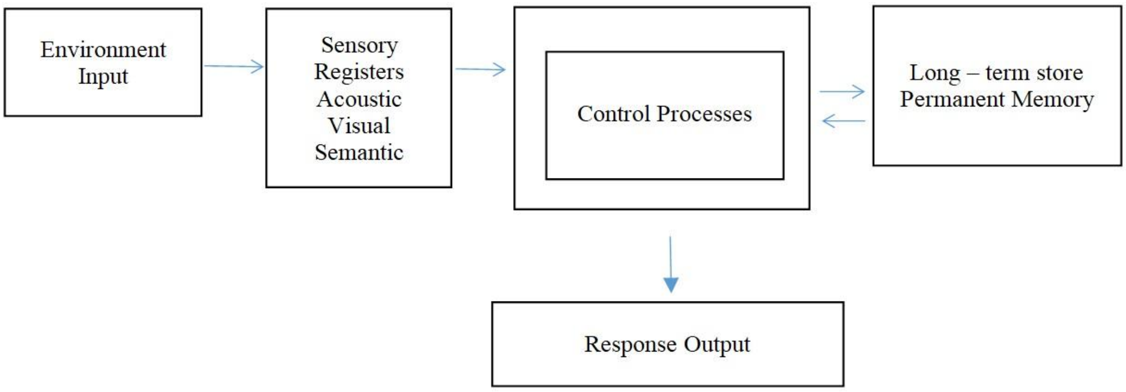


Figure 1. Information Processing Model (Shiffrin, 1973)

According to the model, STM is obviously considered as a temporary storage in the brain which is also referred to as working memory (WM). However, the different feature between STM and WM is that WM is able to keep the information in a temporary time that manipulation and update can occur (Logie, 2003). Similarly, Lu and Chen (2013) agree that WM play role as a maintenance system for visual information which is beneficial for further tasks.

In addition, the above model also shows the interaction between STM and long – term memory (LTM). Following this model, both STM and LTM are active when receiving input from the surrounding. Before being switched to STM, the information is categorized at various forms such as sensory registers, acoustic, visual, or semantic ones. After STM is activated for a certain amount of time, the information will be either moved to LTM or response output based on the current situation. For instance, in interpreting process, output will be produced after the STM stage for the urgent need of audience. In contrast, such information will be transferred to LTM stage when students must revise the lesson for exams.

Although STM plays a supportive role in producing effective oral translation, several exercises aiming at strengthening it are proposed by Robert (2014). One commonly employed exercise is shadowing which is extensively used in interpreting courses, particularly simultaneous interpreting. Within this exercise, the interpreters repeat the speakers' words verbatim in the same language, compelling these words to store and recall different sounds, words, and information in a certain amount of time. Another exercise for practicing STM is listening for gist which is designed to aid the interpreters in recalling information later. The interpreters will listen to a descriptive or narrative text of about 100 words and try to respond to "WH" questions. Next comes visualization or creating mental images exercise. Mnemonic devices are recommended to visualize description and later facilitating recall. There is no doubt that visualization plays a useful role in interpreting course because sometimes the interpreters may need to describe what a witness has observed in court interpreting. Finally, another type of memory training is called segmentation, where the interpreters will break down the chunks of information into smaller, and more manageable parts. This method enhances the retention and recall of the information, so interpreters find it easier to do their job.

Regarding interpreters, STM is of great importance in dealing with lots of situations where memory is the key component to produce the oral translation. The brain's part which is responsible for controlling the utterance as well as comprehension will be activated at the highest mode during the process of interpreting. Hence, it would be more stressful when interpreters have to sit in the booth to carry out the simultaneous interpreting job (Bratel et al., 2020).

STM does play a vital role in the interpretating process. Specifically, STM processes speech sounds to get an insight into the overall message and assist the storage and recall of input information (Robert, 2014). When STM is poor, there is a risk of eliminating redundant words such as qualifiers, modifiers, subordinate clauses, and even entire sentences. Inadequate STM also causes serious consequences resulting in saturation. This happens when the source and target languages exhibit significant syntactic differences. Hence, interpreters are forced to store a substantial amount of information for expanding periods before reformulating the information. This saturation can also lead to the lack of sufficient memory capacity to successfully complete the task. Furthermore, the higher the information density is found in the source language, the more challenging it becomes for the interpreters to memorize all the information chunks.

III. METHODOLOGY

The participants in the current study were 90 third – year students at a language school in Viet Nam, who were asked to fill out questionnaire. Then 10 random students from these participants were chosen to take part in individual interviews. The reason for selecting these students was because they were enrolled in the module of interpretating with the experience of using STM in interpreting from source language to target language. To gather data, the researcher developed a questionnaire to determine students' perspective and attitude toward using short – term memory. In the study, interviews were mostly conducted by interviewer's personal experience in using short – term memory in interpreting and other related references. The interviewees were expected to share some thoughts about their usage of short – term memory if it was useful or not.

The research involved two main phases with questionnaire being distributed first and semi-structured interview came afterward. First, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to 90 students who were enrolled in the interpreting subject. Students were guided how to answer all the questions in the questionnaire before spending time to dig into each question. These questions examined students' opinions on different aspects of STM and students' own evaluation on the effectiveness of STM in the course. Then, the researcher used simple sample method to withdraw 10 students from the participants in the quantitative phase to conduct semi-structured interviews so these individuals would provide deeper thinking about the benefits as well as the strains of STM. A private and quiet place was chosen to interview each participant individually. The researcher recorded all the interviews with the agreement of the participants.

To analyze the data collected from the questionnaire, a method of mathematical statistics was employed. Descriptive statistics were used to facilitate the grouping and visual presentation of the research findings. With regard to the semi-structured interview, the researcher transcribed the utterance and wrote down the codes before grouping these into themes.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Results From Quantitative Phase and Discussion

(a). Students' Confidence in Using Short – Term Memory

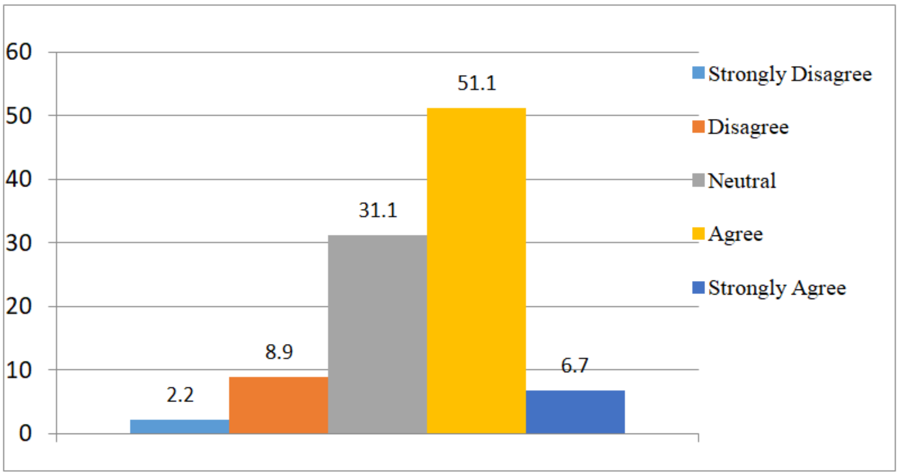


Chart 1. Students' Confidence in Using STM
(I feel more confident in learning Interpretating when using STM.)

It is evident from the chart that 51.1% of the students expressed agreement with the idea that utilizing STM techniques enhanced their self – confidence in learning environments. A smaller percentage of 6.7% explicitly acknowledged experiencing increased confidence while employing STM in the classroom. Nevertheless, a significant portion, one-third of the students, remained uncertain when being asked about this subject. Additionally, less than 10% of the participants disagreed when questioned about the statement.

(b). Students' Self-Evaluation on Enthusiasm in Practicing Short – Term Memory

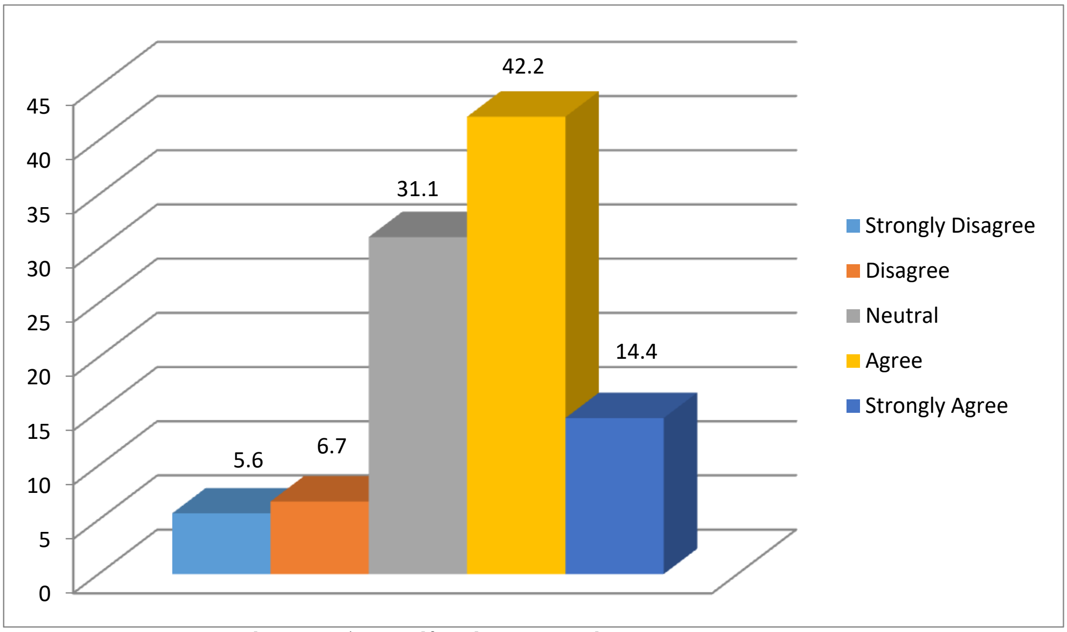


Chart 2. Students' Self-Evaluation on Enthusiasm in Practicing STM
(I am interested in STM practice the most in the class of learning interpretation.)

The chart indicates that 56.6% of students showed a strong preference for applying STM in the interpretation practice process. In comparison to the initial chart, the percentage of students maintaining a neutral stance on the improvement of confidence and enjoyment remained consistent at 31.1%. Despite these positive indicators, 12.3% of students did not focus on the process of practicing STM.

(c). Students' Memorization Capability After Learning Short – Term Memory

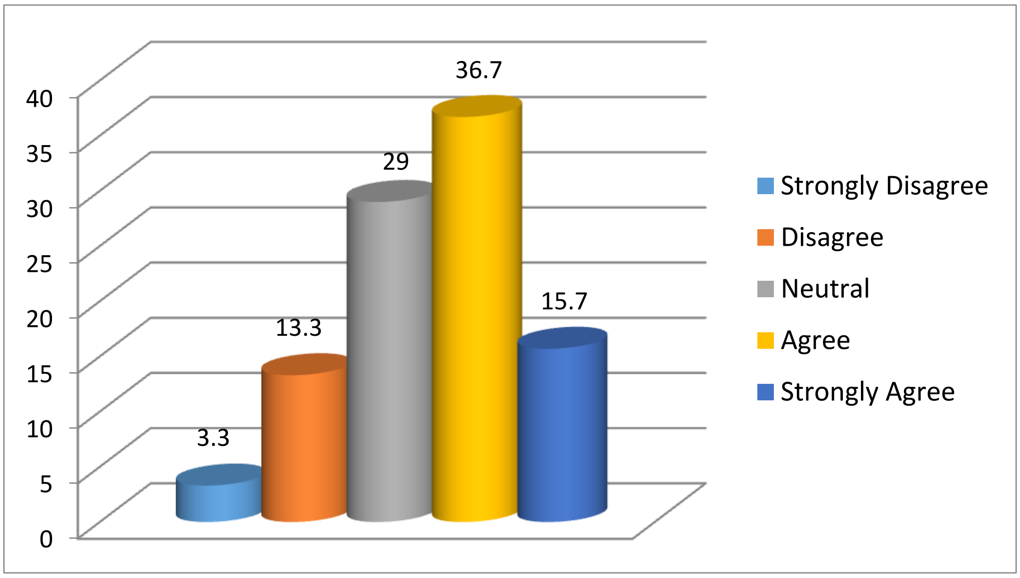


Chart 3. Students' Memorization Capability After Learning STM
(I am able to remember information better than before I learned to improve my STM.)

Undoubtedly, 52.4% of students expressed that their memory's capacity has been remarkably improved. However, the percentage of students who showed their disagreement with this statement was 16.6%, whereas, 29% of them were not sure if they could remember information better than before practicing their STM or not.

(d). Student's Ability in Repetition

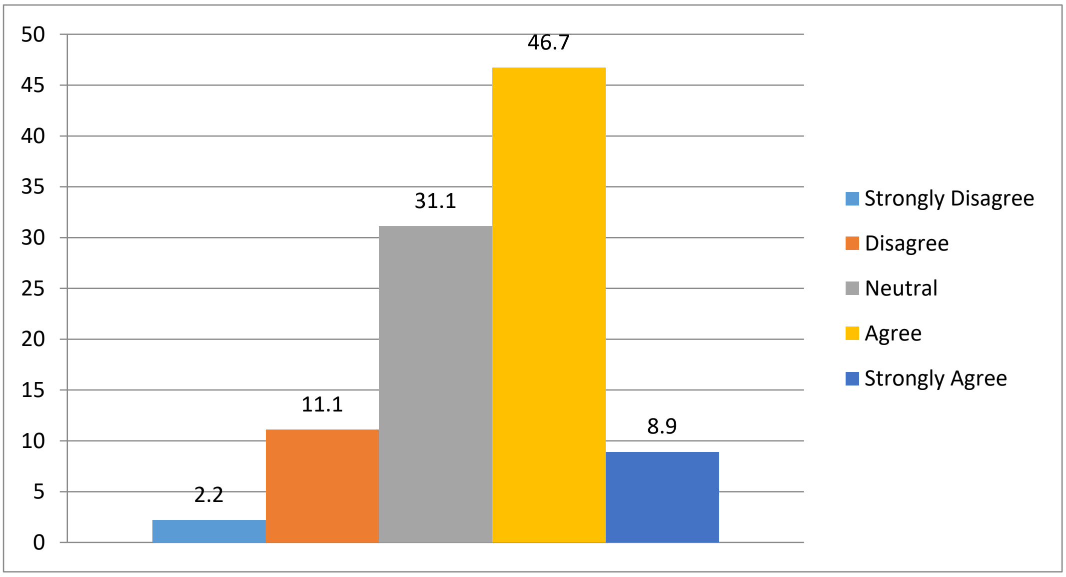


Chart 4. Student's Ability in Repetition
(I can repeat the information faster than I was before I practiced using STM.)

As can be seen from the column chart, more than half of participants (51.6%) thought that they could repeat utterances more quickly than the period when they did not get involved in STM practice process. Similarly, one third of students hesitated about the idea of getting progress in repeating information immediately. However, 13.3% of them kept the negative attitude toward this statement.

(e). Students' Ability in Interpreting Sentence by Sentence

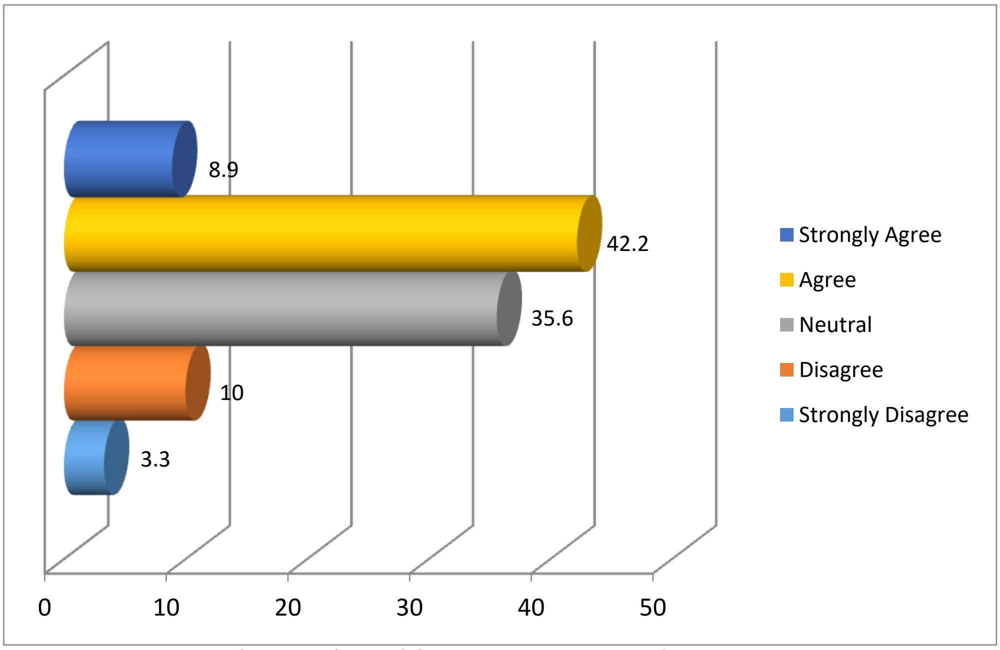


Chart 5. Students' Ability in Interpreting Sentence by Sentence
(I am able to interpret sentence by sentence faster than I was.)

It can be clearly seen that the percentage of students who showed signs of improvement in interpreting speed was 51.1% in which 8.9% of those that strongly agree. In contrast, 13.3% of students did not state that they could interpret sentences faster than themselves before learning interpreting while 35.6% of those who did not know whether they do better or not.

(f). Students' Self-Evaluation in Learning New Vocabulary and Structures

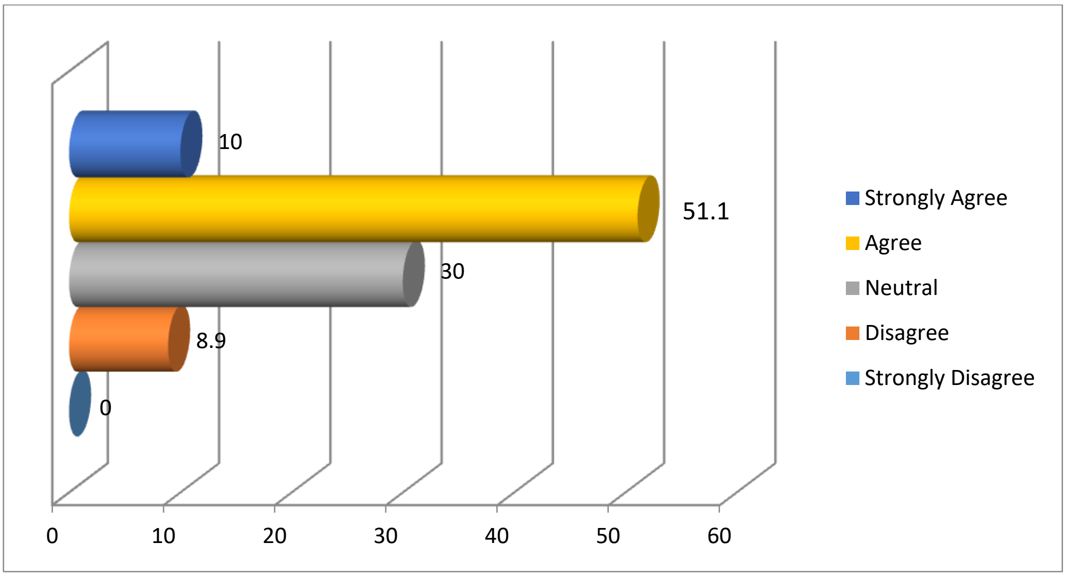


Chart 6. Students' Self -Evaluation in Learning New Vocabulary and Structures
(I find it's easier to learn new vocabulary and structure equivalence via practicing STM.)

When being asked about vocabulary and structures, there were 61.1% of students indicated that STM practicing was a good way to learn English new words and structures. Nevertheless, 30% of them showed that they were neutral. There were 8.9% of the students in the class expressed the negative opinion about this statement.

(g). Students' Self -Evaluation on Improvement in Other English Skills

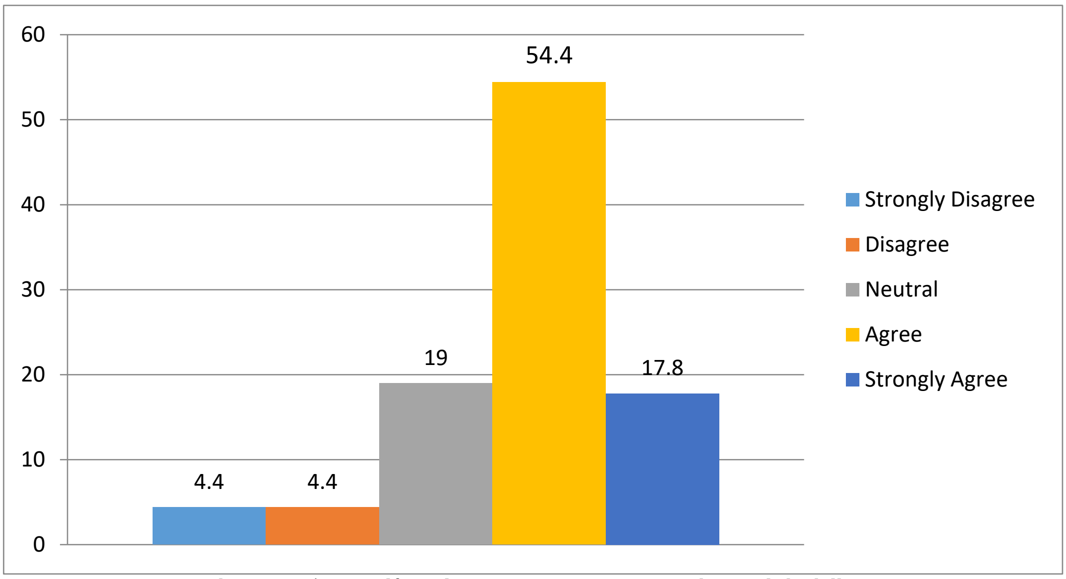


Chart 7. Students' Self -Evaluation on Improvement in Other English Skills
(Practice using STM helps me improve other English skills such as listening, speaking, writing etc.)

The chart's figures showed that the total proportion of students who thought practicing STM memory assists them to enhance other English skills were 72.2%. Although 19% students kept their neutral opinion about this statement, the figure for disagreement was 8.8% in which there was half disagreed and half of them expressed strongly disagree with the idea.

(h). Students' Self-Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Short-Term Memory

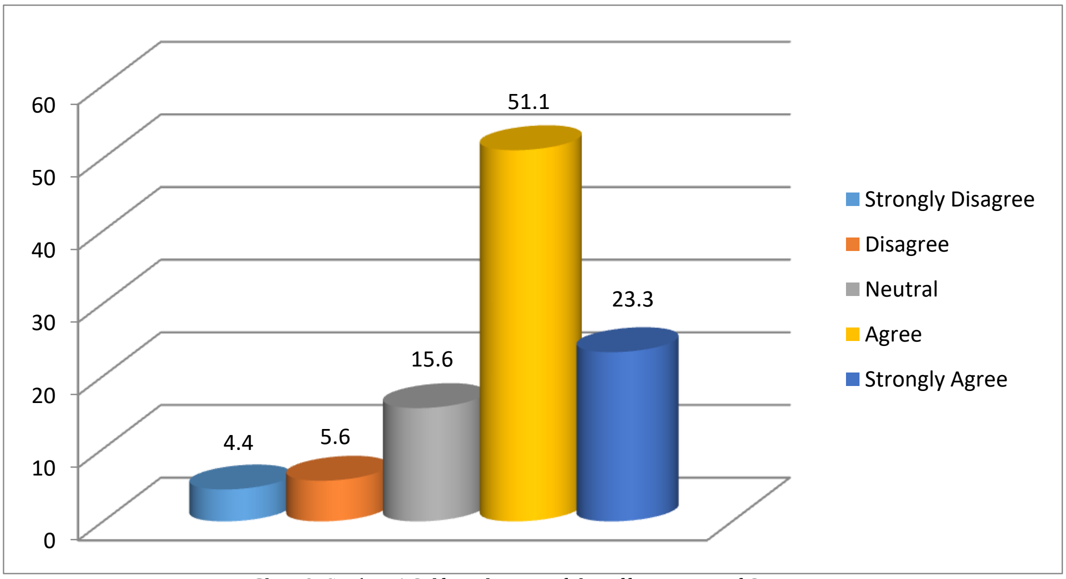


Chart 8. Students' Self-Evaluation of the Effectiveness of STM
(Overall, I find learning short – term memory in interpretation 1 helps me improve my interpretation skills.)

The chart shows that nearly 75% of participants agreed that their interpretation skills have been improved significantly via a process of using STM. However, 10% of students could not take advantage of using STM in learning Interpretating. On the other hand, there were no comments coming from 15.6% of students on whether STM helped them or not in interpreting.

The results from the quantitative phase in this study are similar to the findings of Lu and Chen (2013). Regarding the similarity, both studies show that STM training improves interpreting skills. In addition, STM is reported to improve students' interpreting quality by the two studies. Compared to the procedure of information processing proposed by Shiffrin (1973), it is clear that students are aware of the importance of STM via various listening activities through audio and video files. In the interpreting process, the sense of audition and vision are extremely crucial since these assist students to move to the remained stages in the interpreting process.

B. Results Collected From Interview and Discussion

(a). Motivation

One interviewee in the current study believed that both STM and LTM motivated him to master and gain confidence in the subject. The excerpt below showed his opinion:

> From my point of view, I think STM makes me practice more and it is kind of easier that LTM and STM helps me improve my English skills especially my listening skills and it also makes me confident in communication when I speak to some foreigners. But sometimes STM which is used in a short time, and I have to speak immediately after the sentence. And, I have to remember a lot some kind of statistics or numbers. It is too difficult to remember. In general, STM is also a good preparation for me to be more confident in the next subjects. (S1)

Simultaneously, a student felt the improvement in interpreting flexibility when working with STM. The script below illustrated her opinion:

> At first, I felt it was difficult to learn, but I have realized that it's very useful for me. I can improve my listening skill and interpreting skill and learn more vocabulary. Besides, it is extremely useful for me to prepare well for Interpretation 2. Thanks to learning short – term memory, my memory is better and better so that I can remember more things very quickly. Learning Short – term memory helps me know how to interpret flexibly and naturally than before. I hope that the teacher will give us more methods and assign more homework for students so that we can practice at home.

(b). Inspiration and Accent Recognition Challenge

Inspiration and accent recognition challenge are the good and bad point mentioned by one participant. She said:

> Well, practicing STM brings huge benefits which I can change my brain everyday so I can remember better. It can help me have a good mind for the next term preparation. However, a big problem of STM is I am quite unfamiliar with various accents of different people. It's quite difficult to understand what they are talking about. Another problem is the speed. It's quite challenging and hard. (S8)

Additionally, there was one student asserting that she encountered the problem of listening which negatively resulted in her STM. She shared:

> Among the four skills in English, I find listening the most difficult one. I have tried my best to practice

> listening, but I still struggle with various accents. Thus, my STM in listening and interpreting is not good. I don't know what to do. (S6)

Apart from listening, public speaking skills were proposed to be as important as STM. One student stated:

> I find that learning short – term memory is very interesting and effective. Personally, I am very interested in practicing it. After learning short – term memory in Interpretation 1, I can remember many new words and I also feel more confident when I interpret a story or a text. To improve STM, I practice through stories or texts, listen to more videos and list things on a piece of paper. However, it's sometimes very hard for me to interpret immediately due to new words.

The result of the interview indicates that in general, short – term memory assists students a lot in not only interpreting but it also improves other related skills such as speaking and listening competence. Short – term memory training plays a vital role for students to study interpreting. The training brings some benefits for students' minds which helps them memorize things better than it used to be. However, students admitted that they have had difficulties in practicing short – term memory as the accent and fast-speaking speed of speakers. In conclusion, thanks to short – term memory training process, students' English proficiency has been improved. It is considered as a base in which they can prepare better for the next subjects.

V. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the collected data, it is concluded that the third – year English students at a language school in Viet Nam are interested in STM training and willing to improve their memory as much as possible. From the students' opinion, not only interpretation skills but also other English skills such as listening, speaking skills have been improved via training STM. This is true because listening and speaking are the most essential skills for interpreters which decide the success of the job. For example, students are good at listening but in public speaking, they are not able to convey the message to the audience completely. Moreover, most students confirmed that their teachers played a vital role in helping them practice STM in the class via videos or mp3 files. This, perhaps, is the useful method which captivates students' attention and inspires them to enjoy the lesson. In addition, it is recommended that teachers design more worksheet activities to keep students busy like bees; thus, the motivation would be activated at the maximum level. However, there were a few students who still struggled with STM since they had some problems with listening skills as well as the speakers' voice was so unfamiliar, and the speed was extremely fast. To deal with this problem, it is suggested that teachers should incorporate more listening audio or video files with various accents for familiarization. Besides, students must spend more time listening to these accents extensively; for example, playing a TED TALK video on YouTube while cooking would be a solution for this issue. This would also be beneficial for them to get to know various people in different corners of the world speak English as well as remember a lot of information; hence, students' interpreting skills will also be improved. It is hoped that the findings of the current study will contribute to the field of interpreting in general and STM in particular.

References

[1] Baigorri-Jalón, J. (2005). Conference interpreting in the first international labor conference (Washington, D. C, 1919). *Meta, 50*(3), 987–996. https://doi.org/10.7202/011609ar.

[2] Bratel, O., Kostiuk, M., Bratel, S., Okhrimenko, I., & Filonenko, V. (2020). Short-term memory training of students during foreign language learning. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *8*(4), 1596–1604. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.080453.

[3] Cascella, M., & Khalili, Y. Al. (2023). Short-Term Memory Impairment. *National Library of Medicine*. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK545136/#_article-28986_s2_

[4] Catford, J. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. Oxford University Press.

[5] Jungwha, C. (2003). The interpretive theory of translation and its current applications. *Interpretation Studies*, *3*(December), 1–15.

[6] Logie, R. H. (2003). Spatial and Visual Working Memory: A Mental Workspace. *Psychology of Learning and Motivation - Advances in Research and Theory*, *42*, 37–78. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0079-7421(03)01002-8.

[7] Lu, L., & Chen, Y. (2013). A Survey of Short-term Memory in Consecutive Interpreting Course. In X. Shao (Ed.*), Proceedings of the 2013 International Academic Workshop on Social Science* (pp. 671–674). Atlantis Press. https://doi.org/10.2991/iaw-sc.2013.148

[8] Munday, J., Ramos Pinto, S. & Blakesley, J. (2022). *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and applications*. 5th ed. Routledge: London and New York.

[9] Naseri, M. (2017). *The Importance of Memory and Notetaking in the Process of Interpreting*. Department of English, Kabul University.

[10] Nguyen, Q. H. (2007). *Interpreting Techniques English − Vietnamese, Vietnamese − English*. Ho Chi Minh Publisher.

[11] Nguyen, T. M. T., & Nguyen, T. H. (2023). Factors affecting the quality of consecutive interpretation at multi-media rooms: From lectures' perspective. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, *39*(2), 149-163.

[12] Petrescu, C. (2014). Teaching Interpreting. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 116*, 3266–3270. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.745.

[13] Phelan, M. (2001). The Interpreter's Resource. *Multilingual Matters LTD*. http://www.multilingual-matters.com. Retrieved on 8th January 2023.

[14] Pöchhacker, F. (2014). *Introducing Interpreting Studies*. Routledge: London and New York.

[15] Rasouli, F. (2022). The Impact of Developing Short-Term Memory on the Interpretation Performance of Students. *Cihan University-Erbil Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, *6*(1), 64–68. https://doi.org/10.24086/cuejhss.v6n1y2022.pp64-68.
[16] Robert G. Crowder. (2014). *Principles of Learning and Memory*. Psychology Press.
[17] Shiffrin, R. M. (1973). Information persistence in short-term memory. *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *100*(1), 10-12.
[18] Su, J. (2019). The Evolution and New Dynamics of Interpreting Studies. *US - China Foreign Language*, *17*(7), 311–317. https://doi.org/10.17265/1539-8080/2019.07.001
[19] Zulfikar, Z., Aulia, C. T., & Akmal, S. (2020). Exploring EFL Students' Problems in Listening To English News Broadcasts. *Language Literacy: Journal of Linguistics, Literature, and Language Teaching*, *4*(2), 340–352. https://doi.org/10.30743/ll.v4i2.2940

Nguyen Thi Dieu Ha is currently a lecturer of English at Faculty of Foreign Languages, University of Economics – Technology for Industries, Viet Nam. She earned her bachelor degree in English Language Teaching at Thai Nguyen University and the degree of Master of Applied Linguistics majoring in TESOL at La Trobe University, Australia. She holds the degree of Ph,D in English Language and Literature at Batangas State University, The Philippines. Her interests include Curriculum Development, Language Testing and Assessment and Semantics Studies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 737-745, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.06

Omani Student's Awareness and Application of Reading Strategies in the IELTS-Based Reading Exams

Kodhandaraman Chinnathambi
Preparatory Studies Center, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra, Oman

Latha Anandan
Preparatory Studies Center, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra, Oman

Nancy Dalangbayan
Preparatory Studies Center, University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra, Oman

***Abstract*—Students who know the exam format and the reading strategies of the IELTS or IELTS-based reading exams are at an advantage. They can quickly locate answers that are not explicitly stated in complex texts. Consequently, they get good scores, which help students secure a place in higher education. According to the British Council report, Omani students score below Band 5 in IELTS reading exams. Similarly, not many Omani students score high in the IELTS-based reading exams at the branches of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS), Oman. Hence, this study seeks to answer the research questions of whether Omani students studying at level four are aware of the reading exam format and apply general and task-based reading strategies in the IELTS-based reading exams. The study adopted a quantitative research method, and data was collected from students (N=78) studying at level four in the preparatory studies center of UTAS-Ibra. This study is significant because it has implications for students, teachers, and policy-makers. The study findings confirm that students are aware of the exam format and apply general and task-based reading strategies in the IELTS-based reading exams.**

***Index Terms*—awareness, IELTS-based reading exam, Omani students, reading comprehension, reading strategies**

I. INTRODUCTION

The IELTS (International English Language Testing System) is a widely used test for education and migration. Researchers have conducted extensive research to establish its validity, recognizing it worldwide for academic placements and migration purposes (Williams et al., 2011). In Oman, like many other countries, a good IELTS score is essential to secure a place in higher education and the job market. In addition, English plays a predominant role in sectors such as tourism and healthcare (Al-Issa, 2020). Therefore, Omani students require assistance to achieve the required band score to secure a place in higher education. Additionally, newly qualified Omani English teachers, who are expected to have reached a band score of 4.5-5.0 by the start of their undergraduate English major program, still require assistance to achieve the desired band 6 (Holi et al., 2020). Nevertheless, it is essential to determine the factors that affect Omani students' performance in IELTS or IELTS-based exams.

Studies reveal that, of the four skills, Omani students face more difficulty in reading skills. According to Wahyono (2019), developing reading skills is crucial for comprehending information conveyed through written materials. It also plays a vital role in the decision-making of one's personal and professional life. However, reading comprehension plays a crucial role in IELTS and IELTS-based reading tests concerning band scores. According to the IELTS Handbook (2007), test-takers must read three passages of 1500-2500 words. In this section, 38-42 questions should be answered in 60 minutes, and the difficulty level of texts and tasks increases throughout the paper. In addition to time, other factors contribute to the difficulty level of reading skills, such as the absence of decoding, fluency, and vocabulary skills. Along these lines, the need for more awareness of reading exam format, general reading strategies, and task-based reading strategies decreases the chances of scoring the required band score in reading exams.

In Oman, the University of Technology and Applied Sciences conducts IELTS-based exams at level 4 in the preparatory studies center. The administration uses the results in decision-making concerning students' admission to a bachelor's degree. Consequently, the percentage of students who score above 75% to get admission to a Bachelor's degree is only some. The critical reason for this is Reading skills. According to the British Council, most Omani students score below band 5 in IELTS exams. Likewise, the level 4 students score less than the required marks in the reading skill. As a result, they score less than 75% and fail to take advantage of the opportunity to study for a Bachelor's degree. This is mainly because most students are from a rural background and have few opportunities to use the English language in their everyday social context (Chinnathambi et al., 2021, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c, 2023). Only a few research studies have been carried out concerning this in UTAS branches in Oman. Hence, this study aims to fill the research gap. The study results are significant because they affect the stakeholders and policy-makers. This study provides an overview of students' awareness of the general IELTS-based reading format, general reading strategies, and task-based reading strategies.

II. Literature Review

Reading and understanding texts are critical academic as well as professional skills. According to Meniado (2016), reading comprehension is one of the most fundamental study skills at higher levels of learning. Ahmadian et al. (2016) pointed out that the reader actively constructs meaning and tests hypotheses based on their background knowledge of the content and language system. Similarly, Ghanizadeh, Pour, and Hosseini (2017) stated that reading comprehension encompasses the ability to read the lines and between the lines. This implies the need to enhance critical thinking skills, crucial in achieving positive performance results in high-stakes tests such as IELTS. According to Fahim et al. (2010), a significant positive relationship exists between critical thinking and reading comprehension. Bachman and Palmer (1996) and Rogers and Harley (1999), as cited by Mui and Quyen (2021), posited that competent and critical reading and thinking strategies need to be sufficiently used in order to be successful or to achieve the best possible score in the test (IELTS). Ghanizadehli et al. (2017) analyzed the impact of critical thinking's two subcomponents using two tools: 1. The reading comprehension part of the 2015 academic IELTS exam. 2. The Watson and Glaser Critical Thinking Assessment, Form A. Based on the study results, they claimed a positive relationship between IELTS reading scores and EFL learners' inference-making and evaluation of an argument. Among the two variables, inference-making is the more important predictor of IELTS reading achievement. Hosseini et al. (2012) explored the relationship between critical thinking, reading comprehension, and reading strategies of English University students in Iran. They inferred from the results of their study that there was a significant positive relationship between readers' critical thinking ability and reading strategy use and that, along with critical thinking ability, cognitive and affective strategies appear to be the best predictors of reading comprehension.

Mui and Quyen's (2021) study using multiple methods (e.g., broad survey questionnaire, interview) revealed a close correlation between reading strategies and the test takers' performance. It concluded that test-taking strategies develop test performance in one way or another. Similar studies conducted by Motallebzadeh (2009), Zare and Othman (2013), and Zare (2013) showed a significant correlation between reading strategies and reading test performance.

A study on the relationship between students' choice of reading strategies and their task-based test performance conducted by Motallebzadeh (2009) showed a significant correlation between participants' IELTS scores and the reading strategies used: 'remember the content of the text' and 'when encountering difficulty'. Marjerison et al. (2020) found that high-scoring participants employed expeditious reading strategies to find information, and more thorough reading strategies to find answers to question tasks. Also, a good grasp of reading question type and question format is beneficial to understanding its contents (Yathip & Chanyoo, 2022) and using the most appropriate strategy. Nosrati (2015) conducted a study on IELTS reading test-taking strategies. His study showed that candidates used 15 strategies classified into three stages: Pre-reading, Reading, and Post-reading. Based on the results, he (Nosrati) posited: "Test-takers used certain strategies differently, depending on the type of task".

The role of metacognitive reading strategies and reading motivation in improving reading comprehension has gained recognition recently. Ahmadian et al. (2016), using the think-aloud procedures, found a significant difference between the high-scoring and low-scoring IELTS candidates using compensation and meta-cognitive strategies. The former used the strategies mentioned above more frequently than the latter. Meniado (2016) claimed that no significant relationship exists between the students' use of metacognitive reading strategies and their reading comprehension performance. He inferred that the respondents moderately use metacognitive reading strategies when reading academic texts. He further implied that moderate use can be ascribed to students' unawareness of metacognitive reading strategies. Should reading strategies be explicitly taught? Familiarity with the steps to go about any academic task type is crucial for achieving better reading comprehension test performance. Fahim et al. (2010) recommended including critical reading strategy training in reading preparatory courses and other EFL reading programs. Teaching reading strategies has helpful effects on the students' reading comprehension (Jamshidi & Moghaddam, 2013; Soleimani et al., 2014; Lofti & Ghafournia, 2017). Test preparation programs should consider dynamic Assessment (DA) (Shobeiry, 2021). This recommendation was based on the pretest-treatment-posttest quasi-experimental research that was conducted within Poehner's (2008) framework for integrating assessment and instruction in promoting learners' abilities and used Mokhtari and Richard's (2002) awareness for reading strategy questionnaire, which was administered at the beginning and the end of the study. The study showed a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, and the former outdid the latter in reading comprehension development.

Personality traits play a significant role in reading strategies and reading comprehension classes (Haradasht et al., 2021). Based on their experimental study on the effect of collaborative strategic reading (CRS) and metacognitive reading strategy (MRS) on extrovert and introvert EFL learners' reading comprehension, Haradasht et al. (2021) claimed that introverts with MRS would do better than extrovert with MRS, introvert and extrovert with CRS, and those who were conventionally taught reading comprehension.

According to Zare and Othman (2013), there were significant differences between male and female ESL learners' use of reading strategies. On the other hand, Zare (2013) revealed no significant difference in the use of reading strategies between male and female EFL learners. Despite the differences, both studies found that reading strategies positively correlated with reading comprehension achievement. The two research studies were conducted in the same year and location. However, they generated conflicting results, hence the vagueness in the relationship between language learning strategies and Gender, which entails further studies.

III. Methodology

A. Research Questions

1. Are Level 4 Omani students aware of the format of the IELTS-based reading examination?
2. Do Level 4 Omani students employ general and task-specific reading strategies when tackling IELTS-based reading exams?

The study has formulated six null hypotheses to answer the research questions of whether Level 4 Omani students are aware of the exam format, general reading strategies, and task-based reading strategies in the IELTS-based reading exams.

1. There is no awareness of the IELTS-based reading exam format among level 4 Omani students.
2. There is no effective application of general and task-based reading strategies in the IELTS-based reading exams by Level 4 Omani students.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female opinions regarding awareness of IELTS-based reading exams and the application of general and task-based reading strategies.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean score of the two factors.
3. There is no significant difference between Gender and location.
4. There is no correlation between factors of reading strategies.

B. Method

The study adopted a quantitative research method. As this method was suitable to answer the research question, a self-prepared questionnaire was distributed via Moodle to students to collect numerical data.

C. Participants

The survey was conducted with students from the General Foundation Program (GFP) at the English Language Centre, University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Ibra in the Sultanate of Oman. A total of 78 Level Four students from the Sharqiyah region participated in the survey. All participants shared similar regional, cultural, and educational backgrounds. The population was found to be normally distributed based on the Shapiro-Wilk normality test.

D. Research Instruments

To collect data for the study, a self-prepared questionnaire with close-ended questions was used. The questions were based on classroom experience and aimed to answer the research questions. A random sampling method was applied to collect the data. The questionnaire was validated and proven reliable before it was distributed to the study participants. The collected data was analyzed and interpreted using the Scientific Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

E. Terms and Definitions

CS-Sentence Completion; GS-General Reading Strategies; LA-Level of Awareness; MC-Multiple Choice Questions; MH-Match the Headings to the Paragraphs; SA-Short Answer Questions; SC-Summary Completion; TF-True or False or Not Given.

IV. Results

TABLE 1
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF MALE AND FEMALE RESPONDENTS (GENDER)

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	55	70.51
	Female	23	29.49
	Total	78	100

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS HAVING DIFFERENT AGE CATEGORY

		Frequency	Percent
	18	11	14.10
	19	31	39.74
	20	32	41.03
	Above 20	4	5.13
	Total	78	100

TABLE 3
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS FROM DIFFERENT LOCATIONS

		Frequency	Percent
Location	North Sharqiyah	46	58.97
	South Sharqiyah	32	41.03
	Total	78	100

TABLE 4
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
CS	7.025641	1.947188
GS	21.397436	4.396988
LA	17.551282	4.189187
MC	7.320513	1.970520
MH	10.923077	2.627375
SA	7.333333	1.806674
SC	14.179487	3.379632
TF	13.974359	3.290973
Total	99.705128	18.958676

TABLE 5
QUARTILES OF RESILIENCE OF RESPONDENTS

Factor	Percentile 25(Q1)	Median (Q2)	Percentile 75 (Q3)
Resilience	86.25	99	114.75

Based on the score in Table 5, the factors are converted into Low, Moderate, and High levels and are presented in the following tables.

TABLE 6
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Low	20	25.64
	Moderate	38	48.72
	High	20	25.64
	Total	78	100.0

According to the Shapiro-Wilk normality test, the population is normally distributed (W = 0.9868, p-value = 0.6028)

TABLE 7
MEAN SCORE ON STATEMENTS ON LEVEL 4 STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF READING STRATEGIES

Statements on Students' Awareness of the L4 Reading Exam	Mean	SD	t value	P value
LA1	3.34	1.23	2.47	< 0.001**
LA2	3.32	1.35	2.09	< 0.001*
LA3	3.61	1.05	5.12	< 0.001**
LA4	3.82	1.11	6.50	< 0.001**
LA5	3.44	1.10	3.60	< 0.001**

According to Table 7, the mean score of all five statements related to students' awareness of the L4 reading exam is above the standard value (μ) of 3. The data in the table shows that the probability (p-value) is less than 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 1% significance level. The result indicates that students' awareness of the general rule of taking IELTs IELTS-based reading exam is above average, which means students face the exam with more confidence as they are aware of the general rule. The result in the table signposts that students are well prepared before taking the exam. Based on the t value, the Level 4 Reading exam has two reading passages (LA 3), and the Level 4 Reading exam has a total of 25 questions to answer (LA 4); significantly, the awareness level of these two statements is very high which is 5.12 and 6.50 respectively. Overall, the result shows that students are continuously instructed to pay close attention to the format of the reading exam, which is essential to completing the task efficiently and effectively.

TABLE 8
MEAN SCORES ON STATEMENTS ON L4 STUDENT'S APPLICATION OF READING STRATEGIES

Statements on Reading Strategies	Mean	SD	t value	P value
CS1	3.60	1.06	5.01	< 0.001**
CS2	3.42	1.15	3.23	< 0.001**
GS1	3.61	1.04	5.18	< 0.001**
GS2	3.73	0.96	6.70	< 0.001**
GS3	3.58	1.04	4.84	< 0.001**
GS4	3.32	1.15	2.44	< 0.001**
GS5	3.70	1.03	6.02	< 0.001**
GS6	3.43	1.08	3.53	< 0.001**
MC1	3.69	1.03	5.90	< 0.001**
MC2	3.62	1.11	4.96	< 0.001**
MH1	3.69	1.01	6.05	< 0.001**
MH2	3.66	1.08	5.40	< 0.001**
MH3	3.56	1.13	4.38	< 0.001**
SA1	3.60	1.04	5.07	< 0.001**
SA2	3.73	1.05	6.13	< 0.001**
SC1	3.57	1.13	4.49	< 0.001**
SC2	3.65	1.00	5.75	< 0.001**
SC3	3.51	1.10	4.11	< 0.001**
SC4	3.43	1.05	3.66	< 0.001**
TF1	3.73	1.01	6.35	< 0.001**
TF2	3.58	1.09	4.74	< 0.001**
TF3	3.24	1.09	1.96	0.053
TF4	3.41	1.17	3.07	< 0.001**

Note: ** denotes significance at a 1% level

According to Table 8, the mean score of all statements related to general and more specific strategies to be followed during the L4 reading exam is above the mean standard value (µ) of 3. The data in the table shows a probability (p-value) less than 0.001 in most cases. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 1% significance level. However, one result, TF3, shows that the null hypothesis is accepted at a 5% significance level. However, its mean score is above the mean value. Based on the t value, except one, all other values range from high to very high. This connotes that students benefit significantly from applying the reading strategies while answering the L4 reading exam. The scientific result suggests that a high awareness and application level can help students succeed in the L4 reading exam.

TABLE 9
SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER AND FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ACHIEVING SUCCESS IN THE L4 READING EXAM

Factors	Gender				t value	P value
	Male		Female			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Sentence Completion	6.74	1.78	7.69	2.18	1.84	0.07
General Reading Strategies	20.70	3.68	23.04	5.51	1.86	0.07
Level of Awareness	17.56	4.23	17.52	4.17	0.04	0.96
Multiple Choice	7.12	1.90	7.78	2.08	1.34	0.18
Match Headings	10.69	2.33	11.47	3.21	1.21	0.22
Short Answer	7.00	1.69	8.13	1.84	2.61	<0.01**
Summary Completion	13.65	3.21	15.43	3.50	2.17	<0.05*
True or False	13.56	3.10	14.95	3.57	1.72	0.08
(Total)	97.05	16.49	106.04	23.02	1.69	0.09

Note: 1. ** denotes significance at a 1% level
2. * denotes significance at a 5% level

From the data given in Table 9, for all factors except two factors (short answer and summary completion), the p-value is more than 1% and 5% level of significance, so the null hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there are no significant differences in the opinions between male and female students. Thus, the factors mentioned in the table help them achieve success in the L4 Reading Exam. However, the p-value is less than 1% and 5% significance level in two cases, so the null hypothesis is rejected. The data shows significant differences between male and female students. Based on the mean score, the female students followed the strategy better than the male students. This difference is because female students are more vigilant in using the strategy to find answers.

TABLE 10
SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MEAN OF TWO FACTORS

Two Factors	Mean	SD	t-Value	P-Value
GSAvg CSAvg	21.39744 7.025641	4.396988 1.947188	34.768	<0.001**
GSAvg LAAvg	21.39744 17.55128	4.396988 4.189187	8.3504	<0.001**
GSAvg MCAvg	21.39744 7.320513	4.396988 1.97052	37.696	<0.001**
GSAvg MHAvg	21.39744 10.92308	4.396988 2.627375	29.731	<0.001**
GSAvg SAAvg	21.39744 7.333333	4.396988 1.806674	36.118	<0.001**
GSAvg SCAvg	21.39744 14.17949	4.396988 3.379632	19.06	<0.001**
GSAvg TFAvg	21.39744 13.97436	4.396988 3.290973	21.248	<0.001**
CSAvg MHAvg	7.025641 10.92308	1.947188 2.627375	15.43	<0.001**
CSAvg MCAvg	7.025641 7.320513	1.947188 1.97052	1.4869	0.14
CSAvg SAAvg	7.025641 7.333333	1.947188 1.806674	1.692	0.09
CSAvg SCAvg	7.025641 14.17949	1.947188 3.379632	24.94	<0.001**
CSAvg TFAvg	7.025641 13.97436	1.947188 3.290973	22.06	<0.001**
MHAvg MCAvg	10.92308 7.320513	2.627375 1.97052	16.48	<0.001**
MHAvg SAAvg	10.92308 7.333333	2.627375 1.806674	14.36	<0.001**
MHAvg SCAvg	10.92308 14.17949	2.627375 3.379632	9.83	<0.001**
MHAvg TFAvg	10.92308 13.97436	2.627375 3.290973	10.41	<0.001**
SAAvg SCAvg	7.333333 14.17949	1.806674 3.379632	20.84	<0.001**
SAAvg TFAvg	7.333333 13.97436	1.806674 3.290973	22.19	<0.001**

The Table 10 shows that the mean scores of CSAvg and MCAvg and CSAvg and SAAvg show that the difference between them is statistically insignificant. This is confirmed by the p-value, which is above the significance value of 0.05%. On the other hand, the mean score of all other pairs shows a statistically significant difference; this results in a p-value of 0.01. The mean score of the general strategies (GSAvg) is more significant than all other factors. This indicates that students are aware of and apply the general strategies more often than others. Also, the mean scores of CSAvg, MCAvg, and SAAvg are almost equal. However, the mean scores of MHAvg, SCAvg, and TFAvg are greater than CSAvg. This difference in mean score suggests that students are more aware of matching the headings, summary completion, and true or false or not given questions than sentence completion questions.

TABLE 11
SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO GROUPS

Factor	Group	North Sharqia	South Sharqia	F Value	P Value
LA	Gender Location Gender*Location	16.59 (4.18) 17.42 (4.43)	18.91 (3.99) 17.66 (4.00)	0.0000 3.2087 0.9741	0.99 0.07 0.32
GS	Gender Location Gender*Location	20.46 (3.75) 21.71 (5.59)	21.04 (3.63) 25.11 (4.98)	5.0631 2.0364 1.7190	0.02 0.15 0.19
CS	Gender Location Gender*Location	6.84 (1.83) 7.28 (2.39)	6.60 (1.75) 8.33 (1.73)	4.0337 0.0976 1.7491	0.48 0.75 0.19
MC	Gender Location Gender*Location	6.93 (2.12) 7.50 (2.44)	7.39 (1.55) 8.22 (1.39)	1.8778 1.3780 0.0724	0.17 0.24 0.78
MH	Gender Location Gender*Location	10.25 (2.19) 10.71 (3.47)	11.30 (2.42) 12.66 (2.50)	1.6713 4.9701 0.4776	0.20 0.02 0.49
SA	Gender Location Gender*Location	6.96 (1.53) 7.85 (1.74)	7.04 (1.94) 8.55 (2.00)	6.8084 0.4011 0.4910	0.01 0.52 0.48
SC	Gender Location Gender*Location	13.53 (3.27) 15.07 (3.47)	13.82 (3.20) 16.00 (3.67)	4.6902 0.3893 0.1405	0.03 0.53 0.70
TF	Gender Location Gender*Location	13.59 (3.43) 14.64 (4.16)	13.52 (2.66) 15.44 (2.55)	2.9332 0.0577 0.2748	0.09 0.81 0.60

Table 11 shows that the p-value of LA, CS, MC, and TF regarding Gender, location, and interaction between Gender and location is above 5% significance, which results in accepting the null hypothesis. However, a significant difference is seen in Gender for factors GS, SA, and SC. In these cases, the p-value is less than 0.01% and has a 0.05% significance level. In the case of MH, the p-value of location is less than 0.05% significance. Looking at GS, SA, and SC, male and female students of North Sharqiyah and South Sharqiyah differ in their opinions. The p-value confirms that female students understand and execute these strategies more significantly than male students. On the other hand, location and interaction between Gender and location do not show any differences in their opinions since the confidence interval is above 5%.

TABLE 12
CORRELATION BETWEEN FACTORS OF READING STRATEGIES

Factors of Reading Strategies	CS	GS	LA	MC	MH	SA	SC	TF
Sentence Completion (CS)	1.000	0.57**	0.32*	0.60**	0.55**	0.63**	0.66**	0.53**
General Reading Strategies	0.57**	1.000	0.55**	0.71**	0.71 **	0.67**	0.65**	0.71**
Level of Awareness	0.32*	0.55**	1.000	0.56**	0.50**	0.32*	0.45**	0.48**
Multiple Choice	0.60**	0.71**	0.56**	1.000	0.68**	0.60**	0.70**	0.72**
Match Headings	0.55**	0.71**	0.50**	0.68**	1.000	0.55**	0.55**	0.63**
Short Answer	0.63**	0.67**	0.32*	0.60**	0.55**	1.000	0.51**	0.59**
Summary Completion	0.66**	0.65**	0.45**	0.70**	0.55**	0.51**	1.000	0.69**
True or False	0.53**	0.71**	0.48**	0.72**	0.63**	0.59**	0.69**	1.000

Note: ** denotes significance at a 1% level

As shown in Table 12, there are three types of correlation between the factors. The table shows a strong positive correlation (values above 0.7), moderate positive correlation (values from 0.5 to 0.69), and low positive correlation (values from 0.49 to 0.3). In addition, the correlation is statistically significant. This result reveals that the low positive correlated factors need more attention.

V. DISCUSSION

The study is significant because the results reveal the awareness level of seventy-eight students studying at Level Four concerning the IELTS-based reading exam format and the application of general reading strategies and task-based reading strategies while taking the test. The study findings show that students are aware of and employ specific strategies to help them deal with reading comprehension difficulties. The general reading strategies and task-based reading strategies stated in this study are consistent with various other studies (e.g., Ahmadian, Poulaki & Farahani, 2016; Wahyono, 2019), The study results also suggest that students highly benefit from the application of reading strategies and do better in reading exams. This confirms Mokhtari and Richard's (2002) study findings that students who are aware of reading strategies can perform better than others. However, the test of ‘significance of the difference between gender and factors contributing to achieving success in Level four reading exam’ shows a significant difference between male and female students. Female students apply the reading strategies more than male students and perform better in exams. This confirms the study results of Zare and Othman (2013) that there were significant differences between male and female ESL learners’ use of reading strategies. Overall, the study shows that Omani students are aware of the exam format, general reading strategies, and task-based reading strategies. However, the mean score of the 'sentence completion question' is low compared to the mean scores of other factors. Hence, it is recommended to give more opportunities for students to apply the strategies related to this task in classroom practices.

While this study successfully achieved its goals, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The research was conducted with a sample size of only 78 students, which means that the findings cannot be generalized to all Omani students who take the IELTS-based reading test. Therefore, it is possible that these results may not accurately reflect the experiences of other Omani students in similar situations. Another limitation of the study is the methodology. The study adopted a quantitative research method only. Qualitative or mixed methods should be used to check the validity of the results. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct similar studies in other higher education institutes to derive a valid conclusion that can be generalized.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study aimed to investigate whether Omani students studying at level four are aware of the IELTS-based reading exam format and apply the general and task-based reading strategies in the IELTS-based reading exams. Based on the study findings, Omani students studying at level four in the UTAS-Ibra are aware of the format of the IELTS-based reading exam, and they highly benefit from applying the general and task-based reading strategies while taking the exam. Hence, the practice of creating awareness among students regarding the exam format and reading strategies should be sustained. It is recommended that similar studies be conducted in other higher educational institutions to make policy-related decisions.

Acknowledgements

The research project that led to these results was funded by the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation, Sultanate of Oman, the Block Funding Program. Research Contract No. (MoHERI/BFP/UTAS/2022).

References

[1] Ahmadian, M., Poulaki, S., & Farahani, E. (2016). Reading strategies used by high- and low-scoring IELTS candidates: A think-aloud study. *Theory and practice in language studies*, *6*(2), 408-416.

[2] Al-Issa, A. S. (2020). The language planning situation in the Sultanate of Oman. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *21*(4), 347-414.

[3] Chinnathambi, K., Anandan, M. L., & Bharathi, B. T. (2021). Teachers’ perception of online teaching during Covid-19: A study at UTAS-Ibra, Oman. *Journal of University of Shanghai for Science and Technology*, *23*(6), 91–107.

[4] Chinnathambi, K., Anandan, L., & Ayari, C. M. Y. (2022a). Online Teaching and Online Assessment: A Critical Study. *ECS Transactions*, *107*(1), 4099–4106.

[5] Chinnathambi, K., Anandan, L., Domalaon, D. V., & Gino, V. (2022b). Teachers’ Perceptions of Virtual Learning Platforms during Covid-19: A Study at Utas-Ibra, Oman. *ECS Transactions*, *107*(1), 4107-4112.

[6] Chinnathambi, K., Al Harthi, J., & Anandan, L. (2021). Students' Perceptions of the Use and Efficacy of Error Correction Symbols on Written Drafts: A Study at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences Ibra, Oman. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ) Proceedings of KUST, Iraq Conference 2022, (1)*, 31–43.

[7] Chinnathambi, K., Bani Orabah, S S., Rani, S. S., & Anandan, L. (2023). Omani Students’ Satisfaction with Independent Learning Tools during Covid-19. *Arab World English Journal (AWEJ)* special issue on Communication and Language in Virtual Spaces, January 2023:363-373.

[8] Fahim, M., Bagherkazemi, M., & Alemi, M. (2010). The Relationship between Test Takers' Critical Thinking Ability and Their Performance in the Reading Section of TOEFL. *Journal of Language Teaching & Research*, *1*(6), 830-837.

[9] Ghanizadeh, A., Pour, A. V., & Hosseini, A. (2017). IELTS academic reading achievement: The contribution of inference-making and evaluation of arguments. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*, *2*(2), 1-21.

[10] Holi, A. L. İ., Al Washahi, Q., & Alhassan, A. A. (2020). Unpacking the challenges and accommodation strategies of Omani English-Major students on IELTS academic reading tests. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *16*(3), 1621–1636.

[11] Hosseini, E., Khodaei, F. B., Sarfallah, S., & Dolatabadi, H. R. (2012). Exploring the relationship between critical thinking, reading comprehension, and reading strategies of English university students. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, *17*(10), 1356–1364.
[12] IELTS Handbook. (2007). *Prepare for IELTS skills and strategies: Book two; Reading and Writing*—the University of Cambridge, ESOL Examinations: Cambridge University Press.
[13] Jamshidi, P., Moghaddam, M. Y., & Branch, G. (2013). The effect of Iranian EFL learners' awareness of reading comprehension strategies on their reading motivation. *International Journal of English Language Education*, *1*(1), 162–178.
[14] Lotfi, Z., & Ghafournia, N. The Effect of Reading Processing Tasks on the Iranian IELTS Candidates' Reading Scores. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, *4*(1), 67-75.
[15] Marjerison, R. K., Liu, P., Duffy, L. P., & Chen, R. (2020). An exploration of the relationships between different reading strategies and IELTS test performance: IELTS test taking Strategies-Chinese students. *International Journal of Translation, Interpretation, and Applied Linguistics (IJTIAL)*, *2*(1), 1–19.
[16] Meniado, J. C. (2016). Metacognitive Reading Strategies, Motivation, and Reading Comprehension Performance of Saudi EFL Students. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(3), 117-129.
[17] Motallebzadeh, K. (2009). The Relationship between Choice of Reading Strategies and Performance on Task-Based Language Tests. *Journal of English Language Studies*, *1*(1), 45-62.
[18] Nosrati, V. (2015). Reading test-taking strategies in general training IELTS. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, *6*(5), 134–142.
[19] Nourzad Haradasht, P., Saeidi, M., & Ahangari, S. (2020). The comparative effect of collaborative strategic reading and metacognitive reading strategies on extrovert and introvert EFL learners' reading comprehension. *Journal of English Language Pedagogy and Practice*, *13*(27), 129-149.
[20] Ph ị T. M. (2017). *IELTS reading test-taking strategies employed by high score candidates in academic training module: Chiến thuật làm bài đọc IELTS được sử dụng bởi những th ísinh đạt điểm cao trong kỳ thi học thuật IELTS. Luận văn ThS. Khoa học gi áo dục: 601401* (Doctoral dissertation, H.: Trường Đại học Ngoại ngữ).
[21] Shobeiry, M. (2021). The effect of dynamic assessment on Iranian IELTS students' metacognitive awareness for reading strategy and reading development. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*, *79*, pp. 8–19.
[22] Soleimani, H., Zandiye, K., & Esmaeili, S. (2014). The effect of instructed reading strategy on reading performance of Iranian IELTS test takers. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, 5*, 248-257.
[23] Wahyono, E. (2019). Correlation between students' cognitive reading strategies and reading comprehension. *Jurnal Studi Guru dan Pembelajaran*, *2*(2), 256-263.Doi. org/10.30605/jsgp.2.3.2019.61
[24] Williams, R. S., Ari, O., & Santamaria, C. N. (2011). Measuring college students' reading comprehension ability using cloze tests. *Journal of Research in Reading, 34*(2), 215–231. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9817.2009. 01422.x
[25] Yathip, C., & Chanyoo, N. (2022). Characteristics of the IELTS Reading Comprehension: Implications for Development of EFL Reading Comprehension Instruction. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(4), 798–808.
[26] Zare, P. (2013). Exploring reading strategy use and reading comprehension success among EFL learners. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, *22*(11), 1566–1571.
[27] Zare, P., & Othman, M. (2013). The relationship between reading comprehension and reading strategy use among Malaysian ESL learners. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, *3*(13), 187-193.

Kodhandaraman Chinnathambi is a Lecturer in English at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Ibra, Oman. He received his PhD in Canadian Literature from the University of Madras, India. He is a member of the Board of Directors of TESOL Oman. Also, he is the Editor of the Oman Journal of ELT. His area of interest includes ELT, Theory, and Literature. ORCID ID: 0000-0002-1289-9290

Latha Anandan is a Lecturer in English at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences-Ibra, Oman. She received her M.A. and M.Phil. from the University of Madras and CELTA from the British Council, Oman. Her area of interest includes ELT, Literature, and Feminism. ORCID ID: 0000-0003-33849-6654

Nancy Dalangbayan is an English Lecturer at the Preparatory Studies Center, University of Technology and Applied Sciences - Ibra, Sultanate of Oman. She earned her Master of Arts in Teaching English as a Second Language (MA-TESL) from Manuel L. Quezon University (MLQU), Quezon City, Philippines. She has been in the teaching profession for 34 years.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 746-753, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.07

Case Study of Innovative Second Language Learning Activities for Saudi Women Undergraduates Learning English

Danya Shaalan[*]
Department of Applied Linguistics, College of Languages, Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—Gardner described second language (L2) instrumental motivation, where the learning goal is practical application, and Dörnyei described L2 motivation based on the learner's vision of their future, ideal L2 self. In the Arabic-speaking Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Vision 2030, a new countrywide strategic plan, emphasizes English mastery for business and provides new vocational avenues for women. KSA women now have instrumental L2 motivation for occupational purposes but lack models on which to base their future ideal L2 selves. While they face additional barriers to L2 acquisition due to an ineffective L2 learning environment (L2LE), and societal features that dissuade Saudis from interacting with each other in English, educational technology such as the Padlet could be used to surmount those obstacles. This case study presents an innovative, student-centered use of Padlet to teach speaking strategies (SSs) to an L2 female KSA higher education class while avoiding direct L2 dialogue and maintaining L2 motivation (n = 33). Students were provided an instructor-led lesson and offered the choice of either using the Padlet or doing a similar individual audio activity. Thirty students participated in five SS lessons, and by the third lesson, Padlet was the activity of choice, with 97%, 83% and 77%, choosing it over the audio activity for lessons three through five, respectively. Qualitative responses consistently supported that the Padlet was successful at increasing student-centered collaborative applied peer learning in this female KSA higher education classroom without requiring direct interaction in the L2, and keeping L2 motivation levels high.**

***Index Terms*—educational technology, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, English as a second language (ESL), higher education, L2 motivation**

I. Introduction

Mastery of a second language (L2) requires long-term study, and this presents a challenge to human motivation (Dörnyei, 2009; Gardner, 2000). Gardner (2000) researched L2 motivation in second language acquisition (SLA) of French in learners who sought to integrate into the French-speaking region of Canada. He identified one type of motivation as "instrumental", referring to the motivation to master the L2 for practical purposes, such as attending school or working in the L2 (Gardner, 2000). He also observed that L2 learners who were more interested in intellectual, cultural, and social integration into the L2 community sustained higher L2 motivation, and he termed this "integrative" motivation (Gardner, 2000).

In another line of L2 motivation research led by Dörnyei (2009), motivation toward SLA was ultimately a function of identity, in that those who have formulated a clear vision of their "future L2 self" will be more motivated to achieve L2 mastery. Dörnyei's line of research indeed demonstrated that those who have a strong vision of their ideal future L2 self can sustain long-term L2 motivation more easily than those who have a conflicted, unclear, or unformed future vision of their ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009). These findings of instrumental and integrative L2 motivation identified by Gardner (2000), as well as L2 motivation arising from the clarity of the vision of the ideal L2 self as proposed by Dörnyei (2009), have been replicated by many researchers in various L2 learning populations, including English as a second language (ESL) learners in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) (Al-Musnad, 2018; Al-Qahtani, 2017; Ryan, 2009; Teimouri, 2017).

In recent years, KSA's society has undergone a rapid transformation, and occupational opportunities are opening for KSA women who speak English. Women in KSA entering the workplace today are in this completely novel social environment, and while they may have instrumental motivation, and they have no models on which to base their vision of a future ideal L2 self. This and other current barriers to KSA women acquiring L2 English will be described here.

A. English Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

KSA is an Arabic-speaking country, but English has been taught in public schools since the 1950s (Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). The curriculum is standardized by the KSA Ministry of Education (MoE), but the manner in which the curriculum is delivered is up to instructors and local programs (Alrabai, 2018). This includes the curriculum for ESL

[*] Corresponding Author.

taught in higher education at Saudi's universities, such as at the College of Languages (CoL) at Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahaman University (PNU), a large woman's university in Riyadh (Almansour, 2015).

Education levels below higher education in KSA since the 1950s have been divided into pre-primary (age under six years), primary (grades one through six), intermediary (grades seven through nine), and secondary (grades ten through twelve) (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Shaalan, 2021). The schools are separated by gender, but they follow the same curriculum (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Each school year in Saudi has two terms, with an English as a foreign language (EFL) class taught each term, and a final assessment at the end of the school year (Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Alyami, 2016). Therefore, before entering higher education, Saudi public education students have had many years of exposure to ESL learning from this MoE-standardized L2LE (Shaalan, 2021).

When KSA women enter the higher education L2LE (such as the language learning programs at the CoL at PNU), due to their prior consistent exposure to ESL learning in earlier education, they are expected to have a high level of L2 English proficiency (Shaalan, 2021). However, studies of the L2 proficiency of KSA college-level female English learners has been shown to be lower than expected for a variety of reasons (Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022; Shaalan, 2021). These include exposure to ineffective L2LEs, as well as the conflicted role speaking English plays in Saudi culture and society (Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022; Ali et al., 2019; Shaalan, 2021).

B. Vision 2030 and L2 English Proficiency

In 2016, KSA's government began implementing Vision 2030, a new national strategic plan (Sabir & Zenaidi, 2019; *Saudi Vision 2030*, 2020). Vision 2030 set forth many country-level goals, such as developing industries outside the energy sector, internationalizing business practices through standardization (including using English in business transactions), and facilitating a greater role for KSA women in the labor market (Sabir & Zenaidi, 2019; Saudi Vision 2030, 2020; Swaantje, 2018).

Although women in KSA have been learning L2 English in primary school and higher education alongside their male counterparts, until recently with Vision 2030, KSA women had limited basis on which to form a clear future ideal L2 self speaking English as described by Dörnyei (2009). Traditionally, in KSA, women were not allowed to serve in certain occupations, but under Vision 2030, KSA continues to open more labor positions to women, so this situation is changing rapidly (Swaantje, 2018). Studies show that one strong motivation currently for women in KSA to master L2 English is instrumental, in that they want to take advantage of these new opportunities in the labor force (Shaalan, 2021). Al-Mubireek (2020) found in a study of female Saudi higher education students in Dammam that career tracks motivated L2 English learning differently, and this was consistent with a finding reported by Al-Oliemat (2019), who studied students at the same college and found them to be high in instrumental English L2 motivation.

C. Use of Educational Technology for L2 Acquisition

In their review of articles published 2014 to 2019 reporting studies of technology used in language learning in higher education, Shadiev and Yang (2020) reported that the most commonly-studied technology identified in articles in that time frame was games (12% of the articles reviewed), followed by online video (in 9% of the articles) and collaborative writing, meaning the use of collaborative writing tools such as Google Docs, blogs, and other web-based word processing (also in 9% of the articles). Games were largely focused on developing different language skills, such as vocabulary learning, pronunciation, and listening and speaking skills (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). Online video was found to be used in multiple ways in language learning, such as leveraging enhanced open educational resources (OER) by incorporating several TED talks into an ESL college-level course curriculum in Taiwan to increase multicultural competence (Lin & Wang, 2018; Shadiev & Yang, 2020).

Of note is that another 12% of the articles reviewed included an "unidentified technology"; what this category included was not further described in this article (Shadiev & Yang, 2020). It likely included educational technologies that could not be easily classified into one class or another, such as video conferencing technology (Shadiev & Yang, 2020; Vitta & Al-Hoorie, 2020). However, as shown in a meta-analysis of studies of the efficacy of using a flipped classroom in L2 education, some technologies that facilitate the L2 flipped classroom are not easy to classify (Vitta & Al-Hoorie, 2020). The authors reviewed studies of L2 flipped classroom approaches that included video as well as interactive technology, but noted that only one of the 56 studies they reviewed was in the African context, and technology utilization and uptake may be quite diverse across countries as well as age demographics (Vitta & Al-Hoorie, 2020). For example, ChatGPT is a new artificial-intelligence (AI) tool that can generate text answers in response to questions, and this was used in an exploratory study of L2 teaching learning in the context of a one-week L2 practicum (Yan, 2023). As it would be difficult to classify ChatGPT into one of the categories in the language learning review, it is likely that this larger category includes technological approaches intended to improve L2 learning that do not neatly fit into a particular category due to their many options for application.

Padlet software is an educational collaborative social media page available by web link that can be made to display decorative text-boxes (available at padlet.com). As described by Shuker and Burton (2021), Padlet allows the sharing of information or conducting conversations easily, with one use being the creation of a virtual "wall" where users can pin "boards" as posts for sharing relevant content. More advanced uses are available, including the creation of maps and visual timelines (Shuker & Burton, 2021). Padlet is a very basic tool that has been adapted for use in higher education in different ways, including assessing writing skills through Padlet posts (Jong & Tan, 2021), teaching scientific information to dentistry and bioscience students through curated “walls” (Mehta et al., 2021), and encouraging peer interaction through posting in a business data science course (Zainuddin et al., 2020). In ESL, Padlet has been successfully used to increase student motivation to write and increase collaborative writing in the L2 (Dollah et al., 2021; Rashid et al., 2019). Because of its multiple functions, it is unclear how Padlet would have been classified in the review article described; it might have been seen as a collaborative writing tool, or it may have been placed in the “unidentified technology” category (Shadiev & Yang, 2020).

D. Saudi Cultural Barriers to L2 Acquisition

In addition to the limitations placed on them by the L2LE, KSA girls and women learning L2 English in the classroom must contend with cultural barriers against practicing English dialogues with their peers. Culturally, Saudis avoid speaking to one another in English, because this behavior is seen a either boastful, or else denying of the Saudi culture, although under Vision 2030, Saudis have been expressing a more positive view of English speaking in general (Albahlal, 2019; Alrabai, 2016; Faruk, 2013; Mahboob & Elyas, 2014). While attitudes are slowly changing, Saudis generally avoid using English when in KSA, even with English-speaking non-Saudis as part of service encounters (Alrabai, 2016; Faruk, 2013). Therefore, the main situation in which Saudis could practice the L2 English they are learning in the primary and higher-education classrooms would be in a workplace setting interacting with international coworkers (Albahlal, 2019).

Theoretically, this situation could negatively impact the L2 motivation and learning experience of students at PNU. The female ESL students at PNU CoL may feel challenged with respect to L2 motivation because only recently, women have been afforded greater participation in the workforce, so they have few role models on which to base the formulation of a potential ideal future L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009; Sabir & Zenaidi, 2019). Further, while they may exhibit instrumental motivation through wanting to use English in a future occupation, without having selected a specific target English-speaking community in which to integrate, these ESL students at PNU do not benefit from integrative motivation (Gardner, 2000; Shaalan, 2021).

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, research on KSA women studying in a higher education L2 English program in Dammam revealed they feel ill-prepared to learn English at the university level, lack the ability to practice their English both inside and outside the classroom, experience a teacher-centered rather than student-centered L2LE which they believe is ineffective, and think they are learning L2 topics that are not pertinent (Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022; Ali et al., 2019). These findings are consistent with the results of a mixed-methods study of ESL students majoring in English at PNU CoL, where participants reported they did not have the opportunity to practice their L2 English skills due to cultural barriers as well as continuous exposure to an L2LE that was not student-centered (Shaalan, 2021).

Saudi higher education students’ aversion to practicing L2 English in the classroom by speaking with each other and the teacher can be classified as a type of speaking anxiety (Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022; Ali et al., 2019; Shaalan, 2021). Speaking anxiety in the L2 classroom has long been identified as a barrier to L2 mastery in general, as it decreases the student’s willingness to communicate (WTC) (Botes et al., 2020; Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019), while communicating using the L2 in the classroom through interaction with the instructor and other students is a main vehicle through which to gain L2 mastery (Dewaele, 2019; Khajavy et al., 2018; Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019). Therefore, in addition to experiencing the L2 motivational challenges described, ESL learners at PNU’s CoL also face the challenge of mastering the L2 without actually practicing it with their classmates in the classroom due to decreased WTC arising from cultural barriers rather than speaking anxiety (Albahlal, 2019; Shaalan, 2021).

The aim of this research was to leverage technology to develop an innovative, evidence-based approach to teaching English speaking strategies (SSs) to Saudi L2 English language learners at PNU that involves in-class interaction about the L2, but not through L2 dialogue, and keeps their L2 motivation high. SSs help learners formulate contextual responses to particular situations in the L2 (e.g., “what to say when you are giving in”), offering a way for the learner to practice formulating spontaneous speech in the L2 within a topical scope (Uyun, 2022). Generally, SSs are taught in the L2 classroom by having students practice SSs with each other in the L2, but given the cultural barriers in KSA, this teaching approach cannot work at PNU. This case study presents an innovative, student-centered use of the Padlet technology to teach SSs to an L2 English higher education class in KSA without using direct L2 dialogue and while maintaining their L2 motivation levels.

II. METHODS

A. Learning Context

Although this teaching module has been used several times, data were collected from the undergraduate “Listening and Speaking” class taught by the author from the Fall 2022 term class at PNU. For this class, five SSs were selected from a textbook to be taught over the course in five different classes. For each SS, an in-person lesson was given. First, the instructor delivered an in-class PowerPoint presentation about the SS. Next, the instructor led a group discussion, encouraging the class to formulate SSs consistent with the current lesson. For example, for the SS for “looking on the bright side”, students were given the following scenario:

Your friend just learned that she did not get a promotion at work. She was really looking forward to it. So, what would you tell her to look on the positive/bright side?

The in-class discussion provided the students the opportunity to formulate their own SS responses in the L2 to the scenario presented. It also provided the instructor the opportunity to present several key phrases associated with the SS (such as "The good news is…" and "But, on the bright side…") in context so that students could practice using them in the subsequent learning activity.

B. Padlet and Audio Learning Activities

At this point, the instructor-led activity was concluded, and students were asked to choose one of two learning activities: the Padlet activity, or the audio activity. Students who participated in either learning activity were given a passing grade for participation in the learning activity, regardless of whether they chose the Padlet or the audio activity.

Figure 1 shows how the Padlet software was used in the study (see Figure 1).

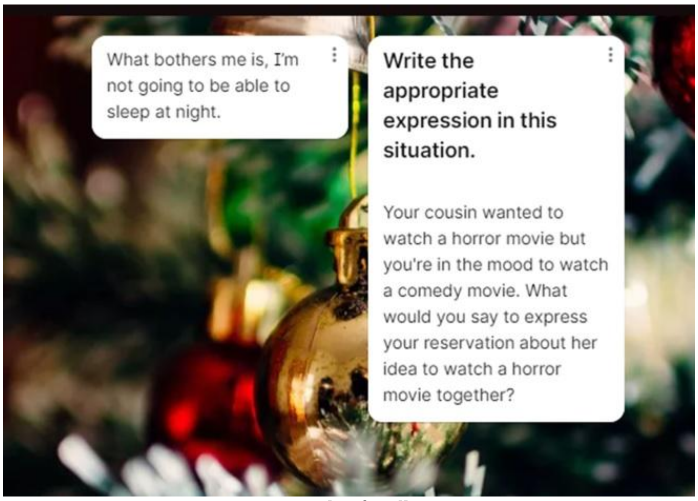


Figure 1. Example of Padlet Activities

As can be seen in Figure 1, in the Padlet software, for each SS lesson, the instructor posted a text box with a SS scenario onto the Padlet wall (see Figure 1), then put students into small groups of two or three individuals. Since the students use electronic tablets in class, the instructor then sent the link to the Padlet to the students via a messaging app for them to retrieve on their tablets and participate. Each small group was assigned to develop a SS for the scenario, then post it in the form of a response on the Padlet (see Figure 1 for one example). After about ten minutes, all groups had posted their responses, and the instructor provided them another ten minutes to read all the responses on the Padlet and choose their favorite. Next, the instructor facilitated a large group discussion about which responses were regarded as favorites. The instructor encouraged students to provide their rationales and debate their favorite answers to increase their critical thinking skills. Finally, they were asked to vote on their favorite response, and the votes were tallied, with the winner announced.

If the student chose the audio instead of the Padlet activity, the student was provided the scenario considered in the Padlet activity, asked to create a response, and record it as a spoken response as an audio file as homework. This audio file was then provided to the instructor electronically for grading.

C. Data Collection

To gauge which was the preferred learning activity – the Padlet or the audio activity – data were collected as to which learning activity was chosen by each student for each SS lesson. The five SS lessons were presented in the following order: 1) Requesting the main point, 2) What to say when you are giving in, 3) Looking at the bright side, 4) Giving and receiving compliments, and 5) Expressing reservations and acquiescing.

Next, an anonymous survey was sent by SurveyMonkey to the students (n = 33) in January 2023, over a month after the class was over. The survey asked the student if they remembered which SS lessons used the Padlet (and included three SSs that were not taught), which lesson activity helped them learn the SS the best (the Padlet, the audio activity, or they worked equally), and their level of agreement with ten Likert-scale items about their experience using the Padlet. They were also provided an open text box for comments.

III. Results

The total class size for this evaluation was 33, with 30 participating in all five SS lessons (90%). Additionally, 28 participated in the follow-up survey (response rate 85%). Over the course of the five lessons, Padlet became the preferred learning activity (see Figure 2).

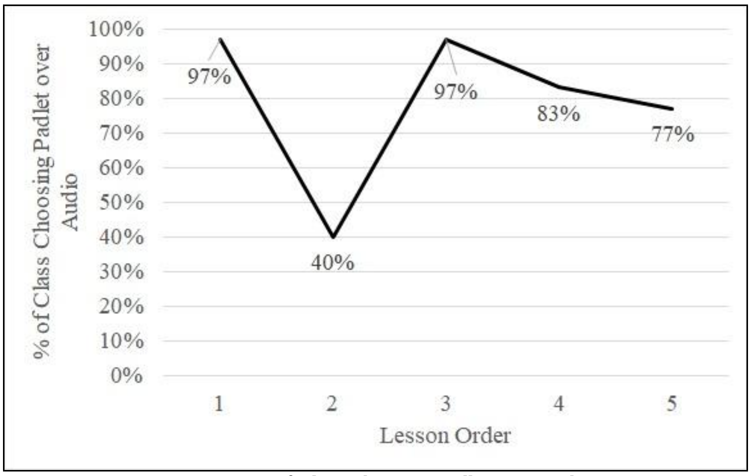


Figure 2. Percentage of Class Choosing Padlet Activity by Lesson

As can be seen in Figure 2, while almost the entire class (97%) participated in the Padlet over the audio activity in the first lesson, this dropped to 40% for the second lesson. However, after that, for the next three lessons, Padlet was the preferred learning activity, with 97% choosing it for the third SS lesson, 83% choosing it for the fourth, and 77% choosing it for the fifth. In terms of which activity helped the student learn the SS best, over one third (39%) reported the Padlet helped them learn best, and the remaining (61%) reported that the Padlet and audio activity worked equally well (with none reporting that the audio activity helped them learn better than the Padlet).

Next, students were asked to rate ten items on their level of agreement on a five-point Likert scale, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=somewhat agree, and 5=strongly agree. Table 1 shows the items and a distribution of their responses.

TABLE 1
LEARNER ATTITUDES TOWARD PADLET LEARNING ACTIVITY

% Disagree	% Agree	Statement
0%	100%	It was easy to move around the Padlet to see posts by other groups.
0%	100%	Using the Padlet helped me communicate with the other students.
0%	100%	Reading the answers from the other groups on the Padlet helped my learning.
0%	100%	Using the Padlet made learning fun.
0%	100%	It was fun to read the answers from the other groups on the Padlet.
0%	100%	It was easy for my group to post on the Padlet.
0%	96%	Using the Padlet helped me learn how to use the speaking strategy.
0%	96%	It was fun to choose our group’s favorite Padlet post.
4%	92%	It was easy for my group to read other groups’ posts on the Padlet.
0%	84%	I find the Padlet attractive to look at.

Note: "% agree" refers to the percentage rating the statement as 4=Somewhat Agree or 5=Strongly Agree. "% disagree" refers to the percentage rating the statement as 2=Somewhat Disagree or 1=Strongly Disagree.

As shown in Table 1, 100% of respondents agreed (i.e., gave a rating of 4 or 5) with six of the ten items, indicating that they felt the Padlet was easy to navigate and use, helped communication with other students, and made learning fun. Fewer (96%) agreed that using the Padlet helped them learn the SS, and 4% actually disagreed (i.e., gave a rating of 1 or 2) with the statement, “It was easy for my group to read other groups’ posts on the Padlet”.

In the survey, students were presented eight SS lessons, five of which used the Padlet and three which did not (and were not taught in the class), and asked which of these SS lessons used the Padlet. For the first SS presented that was not taught, “expressing possibility”, 61% of respondents reported remembering this being a lesson that used the Padlet. For “agreeing and disagreeing” and “asking for someone’s opinion”, the other two SS’s that were not taught, 71% remembered each lesson using the Padlet.

Seven students provided comments in the open text-box, and their responses were consistent with the quantitative results. Many expressed that the Padlet was helpful to their learning through peer communication, social problem-solving, and having fun:

> Just wanted to say that I enjoyed it so much and for me it was really useful and a fun way to learn and communicate! (Participant 4567)
>
> One of the best courses ever! I'm missing it almost every time because you get to interact with the other students by seeing their answers and get to know each other more and learn new stuff, most importantly you practice what just learned! (Participant 9145)
>
> Thank you, using the Padlet made it easy for me to talk to girls and make new friends. (Participant 9112)

However, it was also clear that some respondents had difficulty remembering the Padlet or connecting it with the SS lessons:

> Thank you Ms. actually I don't remember well about lessons we used Padlet in, so I'm sorry I couldn't answer precisely in every question. (Participant 0341)
>
> There's nothing more I can add to my experience with Padlet, the lessons and the course. (Participant 7897)

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

Evidence collected showed that for the author's Fall 2022 "Speaking and Listening" class at PNU, incorporating the Padlet represented an innovative, student-centered method for teaching SSs in the Saudi higher education classroom without introducing the cultural discomfort associated with direct L2 dialogue. In four out of the five lessons, as the course continued on, more than three-fourths of the class continued to choose the Padlet learning activity over the audio activity. This preference for the Padlet was consistent with survey responses, where learners indicated they enjoyed using the Padlet, and that it facilitated peer problem-solving and cooperative learning. This is also evidence of L2 motivation, in that the students reported being very engaged in peer learning, even if not interacting in the L2 directly. However, the learners apparently did not connect Padlet learning with the specific SSs taught using the Padlet, in that over half remembered using the Padlet to learn three SSs that were not taught in the class. This suggests that their memory was more about the learning experience and context, rather than the specific information or skills learned. Also, some learners expressed difficulty reading the Padlet, and 15% did not agree that it was attractive to look at. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in the clarity of Padlet's graphical display.

Although this study's results showed the Padlet lessons led to intense student engagement around SSs, other studies of Saudi English language learners at PNU and other Saudi universities show that learners continue to experience speaking anxiety and challenges with WTC (Alrabai, 2022; Kashmiri, 2019; Shaalan, 2021). The previous study set at PNU mentioned earlier demonstrated that while learners appeared generally to have developed distinct ideal future L2 selves, they experienced extreme L2 speaking anxiety for using English in KSA (especially with other Saudis) arising from cultural norms (Shaalan, 2021). In the studies set at the college in Dammam described earlier, ESL students expressed anxiety about speaking in class, and frustration with lack of culturally-appropriate learning activities (Al-Hassaani & Al-Saalmi, 2022; Al-Mubireek, 2020). This cultural discomfort with communicating with Saudi peers in the L2 in the classroom presents a significant challenge to the motivation of these learners, as communication in the L2 with classmates is considered extremely effective in helping the learner master the L2 (Dincer & Dariyemez, 2020; Teimouri et al., 2019). The opposite effect was observed by Teimouri and colleagues (2019) who reviewed the literature on how L2 speaking anxiety negatively impacts L2 achievement through reduced WTC.

However, Teimouri and colleagues (2019) also found that the positive effects of the learner's aptitude, motivation, and working memory could counterbalance the negative effect of anxiety leading to reduced WTC. As Saudi English learners experience reduced WTC only with Saudi English speakers, a superior approach to overcome this cultural challenge might be to have an enhanced role for English-speaking foreigners in the "Listening and Speaking" course. ESL programs globally prefer native English speakers as instructors, and although it has not been shown that they are more competent, a general expectation is that non-native English instructors are less prestigious and supportive of speaking with proficiency and correct pronunciation (Dincer & Dariyemez, 2020; Levis et al., 2016).

Incorporating native English speakers from outside of KSA into the curriculum to interact directly in the L2 with the Saudi learners would likely be more effective than the Padlet activity for teaching SSs, as the learner would be provided the spontaneity of speech interaction in the L2 which is missing from the Padlet activity. A collaboration between a Taiwanese and Japanese university used one-to-one videoconferencing as a way of increasing WTC in ESL classrooms, with student response so enthusiastic that 60% of students spontaneously engaged in additional extracurricular ESL practice outside the program (Walzem, 2020). With the opportunities afforded by Skype and other modern videoconferencing apps, L2 interaction with a foreigner could be another alternative to the Padlet for increasing opportunities for practicing interacting in the L2 for Saudi learners (Alhamed, 2021). However, as demonstrated in this case study, the Padlet was an effective tool to use in the classroom setting to increase the learners' use of the L2, and was more convenient than requiring access to non-Saudi English speakers.

While this case study demonstrated a successful use of the Padlet technology for encouraging learning of English SSs in higher education ESL learners in KSA, an important limitation is that the findings have a very narrow window of application, as the learning activities were uniquely tailored to the educational and cultural needs of L2 English learners in KSA. The educational technology used in this case study represents two basic tools – the Padlet and the audio file - that were adapted for teaching SSs to higher education students learning L2 English in KSA, and it is not clear how effective these tools would be if adapted in a different way to different scenarios. It is also not clear from these findings whether male KSA L2 English learners would have the same attitudes toward the Padlet as the female learners in this study, as male KSA L2 English learners may prefer different learning strategies than female learners (Ali et al., 2019; Al-Qahtani, 2015). Finally, further research would likely show that while activities like the Padlet can improve L2 learning in the KSA ESL classroom, they cannot serve as a replacement for actually practicing speech in the L2.

In conclusion, this case study represents an innovative approach to teaching SSs using the Padlet activity in a higher education KSA classroom to facilitate the student-centered learning of L2 speech and increase L2 motivation. While direct interaction in the L2 with international speakers might be preferable as a learning approach, the Padlet and audio activities represent basic technological tools that can be commandeered for creative learning activities in the L2 classroom.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Monika Wahi for her scientific assistance with this manuscript.

REFERENCES

[1] Albahlal, F. (2019). Motivational and self-identity changes experienced by Saudi EFL students in USA. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *6*(1), Article 1. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from http://jallr.com/~jallrir/index.php/JALLR/article/view/960

[2] Alhamed, N. (2021). Integrating technology into ESL adult learning in an academically-oriented learning environment. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, *26*. Retrieved June 4, 2023, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1315150.

[3] Al-Hassaani, A. M. A., & Al-Saalmi, A. F. M. Q. (2022). Saudi EFL learners' speaking skills: Status, challenges, and solutions. *Arab World English Journal*, *13*(2), 328–338. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1357803

[4] Ali, J. K. M., Shamsan, M. A., Guduru, R., & Yemmela, N. (2019). Attitudes of Saudi EFL learners towards speaking skills. *Arab World English Journal*, *10*(2), 353–364. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1275272

[5] Almansour, S. (2015). The challenges of international collaboration: Perspectives from Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University. *Cogent Education*, *2*(1), 1–13. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2015.1118201

[6] Al-Mubireek, S. (2020). An Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) of English language learning among students across genders, tracks, and proficiency levels at a leading Saudi university. *Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, *24*(3), 26–50. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://buff.ly/45ENGLL

[7] Al-Musnad, B. I. (2018). The role of motivation and attitude in second language learning: A study of Arabic language learning among foreign female nurses in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *5*(1), Article 1. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from http://jallr.com/index.php/JALLR/article/view/774

[8] Al-Oliemat, A. (2019). Motivation and attitudes toward learning English among Saudi female English majors at Dammam University. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, *7*(1), 121–137. Retrieved May 28, 2023, from https://buff.ly/3WN80pY

[9] Al-Qahtani, A. (2015). *Relationships between intercultural contact and L2 motivation for a group of undergraduate Saudi students during their first year in the UK* [Doctoral dissertation]. University of Leeds. Retrieved September 12, 2022, from http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/8279/

[10] Al-Qahtani, A. (2017). The L2 Motivational Self System and religious interest among Saudi military cadets: A structural equation modelling approach. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *7*(5), 86–94. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://buff.ly/3MOyi6W

[11] Alrabai, F. (2016). Factors underlying low achievement of Saudi EFL learners. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *6*(3), 21–37. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v6n3p21

[12] Alrabai, F. (2018). Learning English in Saudi Arabia. In C. Moskovsky & M. Picard (Eds.), *English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia: New insights into teaching and learning English* (pp. 102–119). Routledge. Retrieved August 1, 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327034885_Learning_English_in_Saudi_Arabia

[13] Alrabai, F. (2022). Modeling the relationship between classroom emotions, motivation, and learner willingness to communicate in EFL: Applying a holistic approach of positive psychology in SLA research. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. Retrieved July 2, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2053138

[14] Alrashidi, O., & Phan, H. (2015). Education context and English teaching and learning in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: An overview. *English Language Teaching*, *8*(5), 33–44. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n5p33

[15] Alyami, R. (2016). *A case study of the Tatweer School System in Saudi Arabia: The perceptions of leaders and teachers* [Doctoral thesis]. University of Reading. Retrieved June 4, 2023, from https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/59581/1/19000042_%20Alyami_thesis.pdf

[16] Botes, E., Dewaele, J.-M., & Greiff, S. (2020). The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale and academic achievement: An overview of the prevailing literature and a meta-analysis. *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning*, *2*(1), Article 1. Retrieved June 20, 2022, from http://jpll.org/index.php/journal/article/view/botesetal

[17] Dewaele, J.-M. (2019). The effect of classroom emotions, attitudes toward English, and teacher behavior on willingness to communicate among English foreign language learners. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *38*(4), Article 4. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927x19864996

[18] Dincer, A., & Dariyemez, T. (2020). Proficient speakers of English as a foreign language: A focus-group study. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, *8*(1), 83–99. Retrieved June 4, 2023, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1245819

[19] Dollah, S., Sehuddin, M. F., & Sakkir, G. (2021). Motivating EFL learners to write using Padlet application. *ELT Worldwide: Journal of English Language Teaching*, *8*(2), Article 2. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.26858/eltww.v8i2.21169

[20] Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 Motivational Self System. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9–42). Multilingual Matters.

[21] Faruk, S. (2013). English language teaching in Saudi Arabia: A world system perspective. *Scientific Bulletin of the Politehnica University of Timişoara Transactions on Modern Languages*, *12*(1), 73–80. Retrieved June 20, 2022, from https://buff.ly/3Ncrd1p

[22] Gardner, R. (2000). Correlation, causation, motivation, and second language acquisition. *Canadian Psychology*, *41*(1), 10–24. Retrieved May 24, 2022, from https://doi.org/10.1037/h0086854

[23] Jong, B., & Tan, K. H. (2021). Using Padlet as a technological tool for assessment of students writing skills in online classroom settings. *International Journal of Education and Practice*, *9*(2), 411–423. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://buff.ly/3OPhrU5
[24] Kashmiri, H. A. (2019). *Communication challenges: Saudi EFL speaking skills and strategies to overcome speaking difficulties* [Masters Thesis] Taif University. Retrieved October 30, 2022, from https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/c4vyr/download
[25] Khajavy, G. H., MacIntyre, P. D., & Barabadi, E. (2018). Role of the emotions and classroom environment in willingness to communicate: Applying doubly latent multilevel analysis in second language acquisition research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *40*(3), 605–624. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263117000304
[26] Levis, J. M., Sonsaat, S., Link, S., & Barriuso, T. A. (2016). Native and nonnative teachers of L2 pronunciation: Effects on learner performance. *TESOL Quarterly*, *50*(4), 894–931. Retrieved June 4, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.272
[27] Lin, Y.-J., & Wang, H.-C. (2018). Using enhanced OER videos to facilitate English L2 learners' multicultural competence. *Computers & Education*, *125*(1), 74–85. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://www.learntechlib.org/p/200879/
[28] Mahboob, A., & Elyas, T. (2014). English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. *World Englishes*, *33*(1), 128–142. Retrieved July 20, 2020, from https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12073
[29] Mehta, K. J., Miletich, I., & Detyna, M. (2021). Content-specific differences in Padlet perception for collaborative learning amongst undergraduate students. *Research in Learning Technology*, *29*, 1–19. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.25304/rlt.v29.2551
[30] Oteir, I. N., & Al-Otaibi, A. N. (2019). Foreign language anxiety: A systematic review. *Arab World English Journal*, *10*(3), 309–317. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1271725
[31] Rashid, A. A., Yunus, M. M., & Wahi, W. (2019). Using Padlet for collaborative writing among ESL learners. *Creative Education*, *10*(3), Article 3. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2019.103044
[32] Ryan, S. (2009). *Self and identity in L2 motivation in Japan: The ideal L2 self and Japanese learners of English.* In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), Motivation, language identity and the L2 self (pp. 120–143). Multilingual Matters.
[33] Sabir, A., & Zenaidi, K. (2019). Saudi Arabia reforms: The changing face of Saudi women at workplace with a Vision of 2030. *American Journal of Management Science and Engineering*, *4*(1), 1–7. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajmse.20190401.11
[34] *Saudi Vision 2030.* (2020). Retrieved May 28, 2023, from https://vision2030.gov.sa/en
[35] Shaalan, D. (2021). *The association of second language learning motivation and target-like article production in English-major female Saudi students: A sociolinguistic approach* [Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Sussex. Retrieved July 4, 2023, from http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/98503/
[36] Shadiev, R., & Yang, M. (2020). Review of studies on technology-enhanced language learning and teaching. *Sustainability*, *12*(2), 1–22. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://buff.ly/3IUWnrB
[37] Shuker, M.-A., & Burton, R. (2021). Educational technology review: Bringing people and ideas together with 'Padlet.' *Journal of Applied Learning and Teaching*, *4*(2), 121–124. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://journals.sfu.ca/jalt/index.php/jalt/article/download/425/363
[38] Swaantje, M. (2018). *Saudi women and their role in the labour market under Vision 2030* [Bachelor of arts thesis]. Lund University. Retrieved June 4 2023, from https://buff.ly/3NbWGkc
[39] Teimouri, Y. (2017). L2 selves, emotions, and motivated behaviors. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *39*(4), 681–709. Retrieved August 2, 2021, from https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263116000243
[40] Teimouri, Y., Goetze, J., & Plonsky, L. (2019). Second language anxiety and achievement: A meta-analysis. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *41*(2), 363–387. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263118000311
[41] Uyun, A. S. (2022). Teaching English speaking strategies. *Journal of English Language Learning*, *6*(1), Article 1. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.31949/jell.v6i1.2475
[42] Vitta, J. P., & Al-Hoorie, A. H. (2020). The flipped classroom in second language learning: A meta-analysis. *Language Teaching Research*, 1362168820981403. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820981403
[43] Walzem, A. (2020). 1-to-1 videoconferencing as an ESL super-tool: The practice of intercultural language exchange in the classroom. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Education and Society*, *2*(2), Article 2. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://myjms.mohe.gov.my/index.php/ijares/article/view/9650
[44] Yan, D. (2023). Impact of ChatGPT on learners in a L2 writing practicum: An exploratory investigation. *Education and Information Technologies*. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11742-4
[45] Zainuddin, N. M. M., Azmi, N. F. M., Yusoff, R. C. M., Shariff, S. A., & Hassan, W. A. W. (2020). Enhancing classroom engagement through Padlet as a learning tool: A case study. *International Journal of Innovative Computing*, *10*(1), Article 1. Retrieved May 29, 2023, from https://doi.org/10.11113/ijic.v10n1.250

Danya A. Shaalan is currently an Assistant Professor in the Applied Linguistics Department in the College of Languages at Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She recently completed her doctoral studies in linguistics at Sussex University in the United Kingdom. Her doctoral research focused on the connection between female Saudi higher education students' motivation and second language acquisition (SLA) and identity, and used sociolinguistic methods. Her research interests include improving SLA in Saudi women in higher education through the optimization of curriculum and improvement of teacher training and knowledge.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 754-762, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.08

Translatability of Arabic Cultural References to English: A Case Study of *The Queue* Novel

Abdelrauof Meqbel AH Alharahsheh
School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor 11800, Penang, Malaysia

Mohamed Abdou Moindjie
School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor 11800, Penang, Malaysia

Debbita Tan Ai Lin
School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor 11800, Penang, Malaysia

***Abstract*—Cultural references are phrases and words embedded within a source text that refer to entities, persons, or even ideas that are not present in the target language and culture or are significantly different in terms of sociocultural equivalents. Translating cultural references into a language where translated texts are interpreted through the prism of cultural norms presents a substantial challenge. The objective of this study is to investigate the translatability of cultural references in Arabic literary texts; it describes the presence of textual and matricial operational norms portrayed in the translator's translation procedures and shifts. The analysis focuses on one Arabic novel, Basma Abdel Aziz's *The Queue*, and follows Toury's (2012) theory on translation norms. After a comprehensive examination of "The Queue," data were methodically underscored, classified, and analysed. The findings emphasize the translator's key role in addressing cultural disparities between Arabic and English societies through selected translation methods, ensuring adherence to the target language's norms despite significant linguistic and cultural gaps. According to this study, the acceptability of the target text is enhanced not only because of cultural requirements but also because of language norms, which prevail over translation choices that can be applied by the translator.**

***Index Terms*—cultural references, literary translation, translation shifts, translation norms**

I. Introduction

Significant advancements in the field of translation studies have highlighted the critical role of translators as social agents. The descriptive and target-oriented approach, proposed in the 1970s by Even Zohar, has received more attention from translation scholars than the prescriptive model of defining translation based on equivalence difficulties (Munday, 2016). To put it differently, the importance of the overall sociocultural context of the translation process has replaced the ongoing issues concerning translation methods (literal or free) with the emergence of the cultural focus (Hatim, 2014). In contrast to the traditional view of translation practitioners, who concentrate on translation applications and processes, recent attitudes concerning descriptive translation studies focus on determining translation relationships between the original text and the translated text. Holmes (1988) developed the main conceptual framework of translation studies by highlighting translation and translating. Munday (2016) states that Holmes has helped to bridge the gap between practice and theory in the translation field by introducing a systematic approach to translation studies. Holmes grouped translation research into three types: theoretical, descriptive, and applied (Toury, 2012). The current study falls into the second category of Holmes' (1988) diagram, in other words, a descriptive and target-oriented approach. It is motivated by the cultural norms and translation issues that may arise when cultural references in Arabic novels are translated into a completely different language and culture such as English.

Researchers in descriptive translation studies have a shared interest in the social role of translators and their impact on the translation process. Therefore, the aim of a translator when translating two different cultures is to appropriately handle the influence of translation norms (Alkharashi, 2016). To put it another way, translation is a norm-governed activity in which translators can be directed by the social, cultural, historical, and literary systems of the target language (TL), and the translation outcomes must conform to the demands of the receiving community. Translation, in other words, reflects facts about the target culture and target language, which can influence the translator's behaviour (Toury, 2012). Translation norms and descriptive translation studies, according to Snell-Hornby (2006), are commonly used concepts in cultural studies and literary texts. However, an understanding of the overall context of translation is required to determine what is included and excluded during the translation process. This can be revealed by identifying the tendency of the target language (TL) and the constraints toward the cultural loads of the source text (ST). Shifts in translation studies, according to Hanna (2014), necessitate revisiting theoretical and practical translation issues. Shifts, modifications, and inadequate meanings may occur in cases of context and cultural mismatches. These modifications can occur as a result of the incompetence or reluctance of the translators to render the intended meaning of the source language as required by the target language's local cultural norms (Asghar, 2015). The objectives of this study are:

a. To describe the translation procedures used by the translator of *The Queue* and

b. To evaluate the impact of translation procedures as translational operational norms.

The significance of this research is supported by a review of the literature, which indicates a knowledge gap in the language and translation norms of cultural references from Arabic to English. According to the related literature review, no research has been conducted on the translation procedures of cultural references from Arabic into English as operational translation norms in The Queue. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to bridge some gaps in our understanding of the translatability of Arabic cultural references and translation norms. This study intends to add new insights regarding translation procedures, translation shifts, and operational translation norms for cultural references to linguists, translators, interpreters, scholars, and freelance translators.

II. Related Literature

A. *Translation Norms*

Generally speaking, norms are recognized social standards or illustrations of acceptable conduct shared by members of a particular community. Concerning the acceptability and adequacy of both the translation process and the translated material, translational norms reflect the prevailing beliefs and attitudes of a society at a given time (Toury, 2012). Translation, according to Schäffner (2010), goes beyond decoding language symbols; it is about recontextualizing the source text to fit the cultural norms of the target language. This underscores the significance of the target language's normative role and culture in the translation process. Alharahsheh et al. (2023) further elaborate that translation involves the simultaneous application of norms from both the target text and culture, as well as those of the source text. Thus, translations inherently blend elements from both poles, resulting in a synthesis that reflects the interplay between source and target cultures. Toury (2012) distinguishes between source adequacy norms and target acceptability norms as the two categories of initial norms. Furthermore, Toury distinguishes between operational and preliminary norms. Preliminary norms are associated with the prevailing translation policy in a specific community, while operational norms direct the translator's decisions regarding translation methods. Translational norms play multifaceted roles in translated literature, as elucidated by Alharahsheh et al. (2023) and Adwan and Abuorabialedwan (2019). Toury (1995) contends that translation operates within normative frameworks, where translators prioritize either fidelity to the source text (adequacy) or adaptation to the target culture or language (acceptability). Toury's approach involved analysing passages from both source and target texts to understand translators' decision-making processes and refine translation standards (Munday, 2016).

B. *Cultural References*

Authors incorporate cultural references into their literary works to mirror the socio-cultural backgrounds of their respective cultures. However, translators face significant challenges in handling these expressions, as they frequently lack direct equivalents in the target culture due to their complex connections to various social and cultural contexts (Olk, 2013). This underscores the intricacies involved in translating cultural references across different languages and cultures. When translators overlook or disregard Arabic cultural references, they risk creating misunderstandings and confusion among the target readership, as highlighted by Faiq (2016). This potential for confusion arises from the distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds of Arabic and English, with Arabic being a Semitic language and English belonging to the Indo-European family (Bawardi, 2016). Even when the plot or setting of a narrative appears unfamiliar to the author's own culture, the various elements of the text remain interconnected. As Newmark (1988) points out, translation involves conveying the intended meaning of a text into another language, which can be challenging for readers from different cultural backgrounds. To effectively translate cultural references into the target language, literary translators must possess a deep understanding of both the source and target cultures (Qutait, 2020). This understanding is crucial for employing appropriate translation techniques that accurately convey the intended meaning of the source text and resonate with the target language readers.

C. *Translation Procedures of Cultural References*

Translation methods include a variety of strategies and techniques for transferring a text from the source language (SL) to the TL. According to Schaffner (2010), the translation method is decided prior to the start of the translation process, and translation norms are considered. General translation strategies have been categorized differently by various researchers. For instance, adequacy and acceptability are introduced by Toury (2012), while Venuti (2017) discusses domestication and foreignization. Similarly, Aixelà (1996) notes that translation techniques either preserve the original source language or replace it with information in the target language to make it seem natural. Several scholars have proposed various translation techniques for translation activities. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) propose the two techniques of direct translation and oblique translation: The former is concerned with borrowing, calque, and literalism, whereas the latter addresses transposition, modulation, equivalence, and adaptation.

Moreover, Daz Cintas and Remael (2007) offered a similar category in terms of cultural reference translation strategies: transposition, lexical reproduction, compensation, loan, calque, explicitation, substitution, omission, and addition. Pedersen (2005) offered seven extralinguistic cultural reference translation strategies: official equivalent, retention, specification, direct translation, generalization, substitution, and omission. Similar proper name strategies have been created by Leppihalme (2011), who calls them “realia”: Calque, cultural adaptation, superordinate word, explicitation, addition, and omission are examples of direct transmission. An additional taxonomy of translation strategies was offered by Ranzato (2015), which included 11 techniques: lexical recreation, compensation, removal, official translation, calque, explicitation, generalization by hypernym, concretization by hyponym, and creative addition. Most of the above-mentioned methods and procedures require the use of shifts.

D. Translation Shifts

Translation shifts are described by Catford (1965) as departures from formal correspondence that occur when moving from the source text to the target text. Catford divides translation shifts into two categories: level shifts and category shifts. Grammatical and lexical mismatches are examples of level shifts. When the translator attempts to provide terms for the lack of grammatical equivalents, level shifts occur. Conversely, category shifts occur when a noun’s category is substituted with an adjective. Vinay and Drabelnet (1995) introduce translation procedures as shifts; they define “transposition” as a translation strategy that entails switching out one word class for another without altering the message’s meaning (p. 36). However, Catford’s shift is more comprehensive than Vinay and Darbelnet’s idea of transposition because it applies only to one of the latter’s subsystems, class shift.

A translated text does not solely, or even mostly, reveal changes in the small linguistic details. Alterations in the intended meaning of cultural allusions are examples of macrolinguistic shifts caused by translation. Rather than differences between the SL and TL systems, these developments are mostly the result of differences in the textual and conceptual norms that define the two cultures to which these languages belong (Al-Khafaji, 2006). As a result, the study of translation shifts has expanded recently to cover both linguistic and textual/cultural modifications to translated works. Translation-induced macrolinguistic alterations include changes to the intended meaning of cultural references. These types of changes are caused by variations between the SL and TL systems and more by the two cultures in terms of varied textual and discursive norms. The translated information can be explained effectively by pointing out that it is primarily present in the target language and culture (Toury, 2012). Obligatory and optional shifts are caused by discrepancies between the SL and TL linguistic systems, such as when the translator wants to use one-word class in place of another. Despite the fact that obligatory norms are regarded as a vital component of the study of norms in translation studies, optional alteration norms are significant because they accurately illustrate and reflect the conclusions that translators can reach during the translation process. Therefore, comparative translation studies can focus closely on optional alterations (Al-Khafaji, 2006).

III. Previous Studies

Fouad and Sadikhan (2019) investigated how the translation of Mohammed Khodair’s short story, *The Swing*, altered over time. They aimed to determine the procedures used in translating culturally unique terms from the source text into the target language and whether these terms have changed. Translation shifts, according to Fouad and Sadikhan (2019), are the changes that occur when a text is translated into a new language due to variances between the two languages or the translator’s decisions. According to these researchers, translation shifts are an unavoidable phenomenon, especially when encountering culturally different terminology that is difficult to translate without using shifts. The adjustments presented in their article have been made to ensure that the TT is more appealing and natural to TT readers. Translation shift is an independent translation technique, and various translation approaches – including foreignization, transliteration, paraphrasing, and omission – have been employed to influence shifts and attain naturalness.

Considering the influence of translation norms in the target language and culture, Alwazna (2014) argues that employing a balance between retaining cultural distinctiveness and adapting to the target audience's expectations is essential. This approach is particularly important when translating aspects of Arabic culture into English.He underscores the profound influence of the norms and expectations of the target language and culture on the translation process, observing the prevalent use of domestication strategies to cater to English-speaking readers' preferences. Alwazna advocates for a balanced approach, utilizing both domestication and foreignization techniques in cultural translation to convey meaning accurately. He warns against the exclusive reliance on either method, as it could compromise the integrity of the source text or disrupt the coherence of the target culture. Additionally, Al-Adwan and Abuorabialedwan (2019) explored semantic repetition in Arabic short stories, shedding light on how translation norms influence the treatment of such literary devices, guiding translators within the boundaries of cultural and linguistic expectations.

IV. Methodology

This research is a qualitative study. It adopts this method to describe qualitatively the way in which the translator of *The Queue* handles cultural references and to trace the regular behaviour of the translator in the decision-making process, focusing on the translation procedures used. This research is descriptive and only qualitative due to the fact that, according to Creswell (2009), qualitative research can be conducted to explore and understand the behaviour of social groups concerning a social issue. According to Holmes (1988), descriptive research is divided into qualitative, quantitative, and mixed studies, and Creswell (2009) adds that these research designs serve as blueprints for investigations that must include critical components such as philosophical assumptions, research methodology, and specific research procedures. Mandal (2018) delineates the core disparities between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Qualitative studies seek to depict a situation, phenomenon, problem, or event, often utilizing nominal or ordinal variables. This method is chosen for exploring new topics, specific samples, or when existing theories do not apply. Conversely, quantitative research emphasizes quantifying variation within a subject, relying on quantitative variables and analysing magnitude. These distinctions guide researchers in selecting the suitable methodology based on research goals and the topic's characteristics.

According to Holmes (1988), translated text can be analysed based on three orientation categories: product, process, and function. This study is a product-oriented one that provides a description of translations of Arabic cultural references to English in *The Queue*. It encompasses the translatability of cultural elements from the source text to the target text of the novel. The study is done manually by using nonprobability sampling related to purposive sampling. A qualitative approach can be considered the basis for corpus analysis, especially in the description of the regular patterns in which the translation is described as a product and its influence on the receiving culture (Saldanha & O'Brien, 2014). Both the source text and the target text are thoroughly examined to identify the data. Then, data related to the cultural aspects of translatability are collected and analysed manually for convenience. The data on translating cultural references, which are identified, collected, categorized, and analysed, include 227 items. Since Toury (2012) did not propose specific translation procedures or techniques in his theory of translation norms, the data are compared to identify translation shifts by analysing translation procedures.

V. Findings and Discussion

The findings of the English translation norms and translation shifts regarding Arabic cultural references in *The Queue* using Toury's (2012) translation norms theory are presented in Table 1. The results indicate that the translator of *The Queue* used a variety of translation procedures to depict the cultural material. Based on the mapping of both texts, it is discovered that operational rules for translation shifts such as modulation, explicitation, synonymy, borrowing, literal translation, deletion, addition, and adaptation procedures are used in the TT to ensure the text's acceptability in the recipient language and culture. This study indicates that *The Queue* translator uses translation shifts governed by operational norms to make *The Queue's* cultural content acceptable and understandable to the target reader. The results are thoroughly examined and discussed in the following section.

TABLE 1
TRANSLATION PROCEDURES IN *THE QUEUE* NOVEL

Translation procedure	Frequency	Percentage
Deletion	11	4.8%
Addition	20	8.8%
Synonymy	21	9%
Modulation	67	29.5%
Explicitation	34	14.9%
Literal translation	40	17.6%
Borrowing	29	12.7%
Adaptation	5	2.2%
Total	227	100%

A. Operational Norms in Translating ACRs in The Queue

To determine the prevalent matricial operational norms affecting the translation of *The Queue*, the researcher used Toury's methodology of text-pair analysis, in which a description is given to the replaced and replacing texts. Arabic cultural references in *The Queue* were examined, and each was investigated in a different part that provided contextual information for the SL and TT. Toury (2012, p. 83) outlines two sections within operational norms: matricial norms and textual linguistic norms. Matricial norms involve structuring the entire target text, allowing translators to adjust text elements through actions such as omission, addition, rearrangement, or relocation. These translation operations, or shifts, as described by Toury (2012), provide insights into translators' consistent behaviours, thereby revealing the overarching translation norms guiding the translation process.

B. Translation Procedures in The Queue

The translation shift is common throughout *The Queue*, in which the translator employs translation procedures, modified lexical fragments, word order, and cultural features to ensure their acceptability for the intended reader. Toury focuses on segmentation modification via the matricial operational norms process, in which the translator alters the divisions of the TT, relocates some portions, and deletes and occasionally inserts detailed information. The English edition of *The Queue* comprises 226 pages. Matricial norms, as mentioned above, are concerned with the operations that a translator uses to regulate the process of translation through segment manipulations such as omission, addition, or repositioning of sentence or paragraph parts in the TT. After conducting a comparison between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) of The Queue novel, it is found that the translator of the novel used various types of translation procedures represented by addition, deletion, modulation, literal translation, adaptation, and borrowing.

C. Segment Manipulation by Addition

This section focuses on the additive segments as a translation procedure in which the translator of *The Queue* adds to the text for coherence and clarity. The translator contributed this new information to the TT to get closer to the intended reader. The example below illustrates the process of adding information.

اختفى الحاكم القديم من المشهد، وراحت البوابة تنظم الكثير من الامور، وتضع القيود والضوابط اللازمة لتسيير المصالح والاشغال (ص.41).

As the ruler faded from the public eye, it was the Gate that increasingly began to regulate procedures, imposing rules and regulations necessary to set various affairs in motion. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 31)

The Arabic sentence above includes the (S+V) ***rahat albawabata***, which was introduced to the intended reader as an empathic device in which it states that the Gate itself becomes the accountable body for everything linked to citizens' affairs, including food and health. The pronoun is missing in the ST, but it is implicitly understood in Arabic, therefore, the translator added the pronoun to make it acceptable and natural to the readership. Due to linguistic differences between Arabic and English, the translator found himself obliged to add new segments to the TT for clarity and cohesion reasons.

مر على حجرات الكشف المجاورة له، فوجد عددا من الأطباء الجدد يتناولون اكواب الشاي والقهوة على صوت الراديو، توقف لدقائق مستمعا، كانت مذيعة محطة الشباب تحاور ضيفتها تليفونيا على الهواء (ص.13).

On his way back to his office, he walked past the empty examination rooms and saw several new doctors drinking tea and coffee by the radio. He paused a minute to listen: it was the Youth Station presenter speaking on the air with a call-in guest. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 6)

When TT and ST are compared, it is discovered that the translator frequently makes matricial operational alterations for acceptability reasons, such as adding lexical segments for clarity and consistency. In the TT sentence above, a phrase, ***on his way back to his office,*** is added at the beginning of this sentence for clarity purposes, because the readership shares the same cultural background with the translator, which enhances acceptability norms. Tarek, one of the main characters in *The Queue*, was required to inspect the examination rooms as part of his medical duties. To make the text clearer, the translator included the prepositional phrase at the beginning. The example below also illustrates another occurrence of an addition prepositional phrase at the beginning of the sentence.

D. Lexical Deletion Procedure

After mapping the ST and TT of *The Queue*, various deletion occurrences have been explored in which the translator deletes complete segments of the original text due to reasons such as not understanding the meaning of the CRs or to avoid repletion. The sentence below illustrates the occurrence of deletion.

فسحب نفسا عميقا احس بصداه في جانبه العليل، وتوجه إليها. – مساء الخير. – مساء النور..أفندم؟ - اسمي يحيى جاد الرب، كنت نزيل في المستشفى اللي حضرتك بتشتغلي فيها(ص.144).

he drew a deep breath, let it echo in his injured side, and headed toward her. "Good afternoon." "Hello . . . can I help you?" "My name is Yehya Gad el-Rab Saeed. I was a patient at the hospital you worked at". (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 124)

Due to the absence of these two cultural references in the target culture (TC), the translator left two occurrences of titles or addressee terms untranslated in the TT. The translator is compelled to remove these CRs from the preceding phrase because they are not present in the TL. As a result, the translator made a change in accordance with what Toury refers to as operational matricial norms, which include manipulating lexical segments. The word **أفندم** is adopted from the Turkish language and refers to the polite response to a call or when someone requires assistance. As a result, when someone says *afndem*, the suggested meaning is the English phrase "yeah, sir". Due to cultural differences, this word was removed from the preceding phrase. The second instance is the word **حضرتك**, which the translator eliminated on the grounds that it was sufficient to merely use the pronoun ***you***, which might reflect a part of the meaning intended by the author of *The Queue*. The elimination of CRs from the ST reveals how *The Queue's* translator handled the cultural constraints of the ST.

E. Synonymy Procedure

The resemblance of meaning between two identical or semi-identical words is referred to as synonymy. Various synonym translation procedures were explored in *The Queue*, in which the translator made adjustments related to synonymous words to be closer to the understanding of the target reader and the coherent narration of the story. The following example illustrates:

ملأ رأسها بكلام كثير وفتح أبوابا لم تكن تلتفت إليها في سابق حياتها. عزمت بعد الزيارة التي سالت فيها دموعا ندما وخشوعا، على اداء الفروض والنوافل والالتزام بالمواقيت، وابتاعت طرحة بيضاء احتفظت بها لدى السيدة الكبيرة ام اماني، حتى لا تفوتها الصلاة وهي هناك (ص.29).

Her head filled with so many words, and a way out of this suffering seemed to open up before her. Tears of humble remorse flowed down her cheeks, and she swore she would uphold her religious duties and never miss a prayer. She even bought a white scarf to keep at Amani's mother's house so she would be sure to have one for praying there. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 20)

The sentence above includes two occurrences of synonym procedures in which the translator replaces the first two different words **الفروض والنوافل** *alfurwwD wannawafil* with only ***religious duties.*** This replacement may apply to the first word **الفروض** and obliterate the word **النوافل**, which has another different meaning. This combination of two religious Islamic words refers to obligatory and non-obligatory activities and worship. *Nawafil* is different from *alfurūdh*, in which the latter is a requirement for every Muslim, whereas ***Nawafil*** is performed as an additional activity to please Allah the Almighty. The translator rendered both words as religious duties, thinking that both of them are synonyms for one word. Obligatory duties include praying five times per day, fasting during the Holy Month, pilgrimage, and Zakat, while no obligatory duties include donating money to the poor and offering additional prayers such as the ***Duhaa*** prayer. Therefore, there is an obvious difference between the two words. In such cases of synonyms, translators need to consult the whole context to render the exact meaning. **الفروض والنوافل** pose an obstacle to the translator, since such concepts are missing in the target language and culture due to ideological and religious differences. The second occurrence of synonym shift is obvious in the word **طرحة بيضاء** , which is rendered by the translator of *The Queue* into ***a white scarf***. It seems that the translator does not adhere to a specific type of equivalent through the selection of one type of synonymous word; she sometimes translates the head cover **طرحة** as a veil and other times as a scarf. The translator made adjustments to the synonymous words to be closer to the target reader, in which easy-to-understand replacements function as evidence of the impact of the operational matricial norms suggested by Toury, in which the translator makes modifications to the ST to match the needed norms of the TL.

F. Explicitation Procedure

In The Queue novel, the translator utilizes explicitation, especially within cultural and theological contexts, to offer additional information to the target reader when needed. An exemplar of this practice, illustrating explicitation as an operational metrical norm, is found in the following sentence.

> وقد قام على الفور بالتخلص من الحلوى، وإحراق غلافها مستغفرا ومتعوذا وسط صيحات التكبير، والتهاني، التي تلقاها لتحقيقه اول انتصار على صاحب المصنع (ص.143).
>
> Pleading for God's forgiveness and protection, he immediately destroyed the candy and burned the wrapper, as people around him cried out in praise of God's greatness and commended his victory over the factory owner. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 123)

The aforementioned extracts, which are taken from *The Queue*, refer to the elderly man in Gallabiyah, who stands in for the religious character in the story and appears to be submissive to both the ruler of the nation and the entire political system, both of which are criticized by the populace as being unfair and corrupting the entire nation. The two words **مستغفر ومتعوذا** refer to two religious phrases that most Muslims mention as daily routines, in which the former stands for أستغفر الله whereas the latter stands for أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم . Such religious cultural references constitute a problem for the translator, who is from a different English language and culture. Due to religious differences, the receiving language lacks this cultural reference, and the translator should decide whether to adapt the original phrases to make them more acceptable to the target audience. The literal translation of استغفر الله is ***I ask forgiveness of Allah,*** and the phrase ***اعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم*** can be literally translated as ***I ask Allah to protect me from the accursed Satan.*** The translator rendered the two expressions in one sentence as ***pleading for God's forgiveness and protection***. However, this rendition may provide the receiving audience with a less religious connotation than the original text. These matricial operations offer a tangible example of the translation shifts that a translator may employ to adhere to the norms of English language.

G. Literal Translation Procedure

Literal translation is one of the translation shifts used frequently in *The Queue* to depict non-equivalent concepts in the realms of organization and religious statements. The example below elucidates the matricial operational translation norms governing the process of translating ACRs in The Queue. The translator implemented translation shifts to align with the readership's requirements.

> ألقى عليها السلام كاملا بصوته الرفيع.ثم عاد إلى مكانه بعد ان ألقى نظرة عابرة على يديها الاثنتين، وقد سعد بامتلائهما البض، وبخلو أصابعها من أي مصاغ (ص.62).
>
> He bade her the full, formal religious greeting with a reedy voice that was so incongruous with his sullen visage. He went back to his place in the queue but not before casting a fleeting glance at her hands; he was pleased with her tender skin and the absence of a ring. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 50)

The preceding example, in which the Arabic Islamic formal manner of greeting others is completely rendered in the TT, is used as an example of applying a literal translation shift to translate ACRs. To maintain the cultural distinctiveness of the ST cultural reference, the translator used literal translation to convey the sociocultural meaning of **السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته** *assalamu alaikum warahmatu Allah wa barakatuh*, which derives from Islamic teachings and is the proper way to greet someone in Arabic-speaking communities. This way of greeting is so formal that some translators have used the word "hello" as a formal equivalent in the English language. Due to lexical and cultural differences between Arabic and English, such a type of Islamic greeting is missing in the target language. The alternative translation of the previous example is "hello", since that is the formal way of greeting others in English. However, the translator decided to use a literal translation because he attempted to preserve the originality of the Arabic expressions.

H. Borrowing Procedure

The translator used borrowing as a translation procedure to handle cultural references that are missing in the TL, using it for the available equivalent in every language, which is the doorman. This is also because of cultural differences in which not all families have a doorman.

> كان الرجل ذو الجلباب هو اول من احتفى بفتوى الشيخ الاعلى، احضر مكبرا للصوت، وخرج ليقف بمحاذاة الطابور وبدا في قراءة البيان المطبوع الذي حمله في يده، واغلق تليفونه المحمول ووضعه في جيب الصديرية الداخلي (ص.152).
>
> The man in the galabeya was the first to embrace the High Sheikh's fatwa: he took a microphone, stood alongside the queue, and read the statement aloud from a copy in his hand. He'd turned off his phone and placed it in his inner breast pocket so it wouldn't attract attention. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 132)

The Queue's translator followed matricial operational translation norms to make it easy and natural for the target readers to understand the intended meaning of the ST. Two CRs were borrowed in the TT to appear as the ***galabeya and High Sheikh's fatwa.*** The word ***galabeya*** refers to one type of dressing for men in Arabic countries in general and in Egypt in particular. In other Arabic countries, it is called a ***thoub.*** The translator kept this type of clothing untranslated but transcribed and borrowed it into English without any additional details that define what a ***galabeya*** is; this is left to the intuition and understanding of the reader. The second borrowed CR is the ***High Sheikh's fatwa,*** which includes two religious expressions. The first is sheikh, which in this context refers to a religious figure. The word "sheikh" has multiple meanings in Arabic, which causes confusion for translators. The term can refer to a tribal head, a religious figure, a renowned individual, or even a layperson in comedic settings. Another religiously borrowed word is ***fatwa***, which is a decree or religious law and regulation issued by a group of highly religious individuals. Some sections of the sentence were translated literally for the intended reader, such as the phrase **his inner breast pocket,** which may appear peculiar to the readership since the word ***Sayydaryah*** ("bra" in English) is used only for women. This type of dress refers to a kind of clothing used by old men worn under ***galabyeya,*** or thoub, which has an inner pocket to hold money and personal documents.

I. Modulation Procedure

The Queue translator employs modulation, seen throughout the target text (TT). This technique is apt when idiomatic or colloquial terms in the original lose their intended meaning despite a grammatically accurate translation. Modulation takes two forms: mandatory modulation preserves the ST's original meaning, while free modulation uses TL expressions for stylistic or cultural reasons.

> لم تصدق اماني ما ذكرته ووصفتها بانها <u>حرباء</u>، بينما اصر ناجي على اتهام طارق بالكذب. (ص.148).
>
> Ammani didn't believe the head nurse, and called her a snake, while Nagy accused Tarek of lying. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 127)

In this example, the translator of The Queue novel employs modulation to adapt the Arabic cultural reference "حرباء" (hirbbaa) to the target language and culture. The original term implies cunningness and deceitfulness, akin to a chameleon blending into its surroundings to deceive prey. However, the translator renders it as "snake" (أفعى) in the target text, aligning with the English phrase "a snake in the grass" commonly used to describe deceitful individuals. This modulation prioritizes the acceptability and effectiveness of the translation for the target audience, preserving the original meaning and aligning with Toury's concept of adequacy and acceptability.

J. Adaptation Procedure

In The Queue's source and target texts, the translator used cultural substitutions or domesticated expressions for Arabic cultural references (ACRs). According to Munday (2016, p. 92), this reflects cases where ACRs lack direct TL equivalents. Translators thus adapt by integrating domesticated terms, enhancing the translated text's resonance and accessibility. Translators in these situations are expected to give the cultural differences top importance to avoid being accused of prejudice towards the cultural norms of the receiving language. However, some expressions are not available or have no equivalents in the TL, in which domestication or adaptation is acceptable as long as the original meaning is explained in the footnotes. A translated text that uses adaptation as a translation approach, according to Baker (1998, p. 7), cannot be regarded as a translation result and cannot accurately represent the originality of the ST. In this situation, adaptation is noted as a matter of revising the original content. As a result, the differences between translation and adaptation are clear. The following example illustrates the occurrence of an adaptation shift.

> فتش في جيبه <u>عن شريط المسّكن</u> الذي يحمله دائما فعثر عليه خاويا. تطوع الشاب الوسيم الذي كان يسترق السمع من خلف كتف ناجي <u>بقرصين من دواء ذائع الانتشار</u>(ص.22).
>
> He searched in his pocket for <u>a strip of the painkillers</u> he always carried with him but found just an empty packet. A handsome young man in front of them had been <u>eavesdropping over Nagy's shoulder,</u> and he offered <u>a couple of pills of an over-the-counter medicine, the kind for headaches</u>. (Abdel Aziz, 2016, p. 15)

The ST of the cultural reference stated in the previous example contains a phrase that represents a medication that people in the ST use. It alludes to one of the most popular headache medications. *The Queue's* translator provides an expression in the TT in which the target reader easily understands the cultural connotations of the cultural references. The Arabic expression **ذائع الانتشار** is replaced by the TL expression "pills of an over-the-counter medicine", which is conveyed to the intended reader as if it were spoken in English rather than Arabic. For the TL reader's ease of comprehension, the translator offers modified or localized CRs in English. The phrase "over the counter" refers to the idea of obtaining a medication quickly and at a low cost. According to Newmark (1988), adaptation is a translation approach that is referred to as “naturalization”. The translator adopted this translation shift by adjusting the expression to appear natural to the target readers by respecting the acceptability norms of the translated CRs.

VI. Conclusion

According to the data provided, the translator of *The Queue* encountered a number of difficulties when conveying Arabic cultural references in English, some of which required indirect translation. The textual and cultural norms of the target language and culture appear to have a considerable influence on all sorts of translation procedures explored in this study. In fact, the norms of acceptability played a significant role in determining TT equivalents relating to ST cultural references. Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that both The Queue and its English translation contain cultural references, and the translation seems to align with the cultural expectations of the target audience. The presence of cultural differences requires the translator to employ various translation strategies to meet the readers' expectations. This investigation highlights the influence of norms throughout the translation process, particularly focusing on translation shifts. The study emphasizes the diverse roles of cultural references in The Queue, serving as significant elements that reflect specific Egyptian political, social, and cultural contexts. The translator utilizes a range of techniques, such as modulation, synonymy, literal translation, borrowing, adaptation, and deletion shifts, to convey these cultural references into English. Notably, modulation emerges as the primary strategy employed to translate Arabic cultural elements into English, indicating the translator's thoughtful consideration of the target language and audience. The translator's choice to omit certain Arabic cultural references aids in aligning the source material with the norms of the target language, thereby enhancing acceptability. This analysis underscores the intentional reduction of cultural references in the English translation to meet acceptability criteria, thus facilitating the creation of a target text that respects both cultural and linguistic norms. Such an approach has the potential to improve the quality of literary translation, whether conducted by humans or machines, from Arabic into English. Given the nature of this study as a case study, it is recommended that further research be conducted on other novels to gain a broader understanding of the translatability of cultural elements.

References

[1] Abdel Aziz, B. (2016). The Queue (E. Jaquette, Trans.). London: Melville.
[2] Al-Adwan, A., & Abuorabialedwan, M. (2019). Handling Semantic Repetition when Translating Arabic Short Stories: The Case of Excerpt from the Book of the Dead. *3L, Language, Linguistics, Literature*, *25*(2), 49 – 60.
[3] Aixelá, J. F. (1996). Culture-specific items in translation. *Translation, power, subversion*, *8*, 52-78.
[4] Alharahsheh, A. M. A., Moindjie, M. A., & Lin, D. T. A. (2023). Cultural References Translation Norms in The Queue from Arabic to English. *e-BANGI*, *20*(3), 151-165.
[5] Al-Khafaji, R. (2006). In search of translational norms: The case of shifts in lexical repetition in Arabic? English translations. *Babel*, *52*(1), 39-65.
[6] Alkharashi, N. (2016). Modern Arabic Fiction in English: The Yacoubian Building; a Case in Point. *Arabic Literature in Translation: Politics and Poetics, ed. by Tarek Shamma. Salamanca: CLINA*, 43-59.
[7] Alwazna, R. Y. (2014). The cultural aspect of translation: The workability of cultural translation strategies in translating culture-specific texts. *Life Science Journal*, *11*(11), 182-188.
[8] Asghar, J. (2015). The Power Politics of Translation: A Study of Translation-Ideology Nexus. *NUML Journal of Critical Inquiry*, *13*(2), 32-49.
[9] Bawardi, B. (2016). *The Lebanese-Phoenician nationalist movement: literature, language and identity*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
[10] Catford, J.C. (1965). *A linguistic theory of translation: An essay in Applied Linguistics*. London, England: Oxford University Press.
[11] Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. (3rd Ed.). Sage.
[12] Díaz-Cintas, J., Orero, P., & Remael, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Media for all: subtitling for the deaf, audio description, and sign language* (Vol. 30). Rodopi.
[13] Faiq, S. (2016). 1. Through the Master Discourse of Translation. In *New Insights into Arabic Translation and Interpreting* (pp. 7-21). Multilingual Matters.
[14] Fouad, A., & Sadkhan, R. (2019). *Translation lexical shifts in the swing with reference to culture-specific items.* Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335665784 Translation Lexical Shifts in The Swing with Reference to Culture-Specific Items.
[15] Hanna, S. F. (2014). Remapping habitus: norms, habitus and the theorization of agency in translation practice and translation scholarship. In *Remapping habitus in translation studies* (pp. 57-71). Brill Rodopi.
[16] Hatim, B. A. (2014). *Teaching and researching translation*. Routledge.
[17] Holmes, J. S. (1988). The name and nature of translation studies. Translated. *Papers on literary translation and translation studies*, 2, 67-80.
[18] Leppihalme, R. (2011). Realia. In *Handbook of translation studies* (*Vol. 2*, pp. 126–130). John Benjamins.
[19] Mandal, P. C. (2018). Translation in qualitative studies: Evaluation criteria and equivalence. *The Qualitative Report*, *23*(10), 2529-2537.
[20] Munday, J. (2016). *Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications* Routledge.
[21] Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation* (Vol. 66). Prentice Hall.

[22] Olk, H. M. (2013). Cultural references in translation: a framework for quantitative translation analysis. *Perspectives*, *21*(3), 344-357.
[23] Pedersen, J. (2007). Cultural interchangeability: The effects of substituting cultural references in subtitling. *Perspectives*, *15*(1), 30–48. https://doi.org/10.2167/pst003.0
[24] Qutait, T. (2020). The imaginary futures of Arabic: Egyptian dystopias in translation. *Textual Practice*, *34*(5), 743-759.
[25] Ranzato, I. (2015). *Translating culture specific references on television: The case of dubbing*. Routledge.
[26] Schäffner, C. (2010). Norms of translation. *Handbook of translation studies*, *1*, 235-244.
[27] Snell-Hornby, M. (2007). Theatre and opera translation. In *A Companion to Translation Studies* (pp. 106-119). Multilingual Matters.
[28] Toury, G. (2012). Descriptive translation studies-and beyond. Revised version. *Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company*.
[29] Venuti, L. (2017). *The translator's invisibility: A history of translation.* Routledge.
[30] Vinay, J.P., & Darbelnet, J. (1995). *Comparative stylistics of French and English*. A methodology for translation (J. C. Sager & M. J. Hamel, Trans.). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Abdelrauof Meqbel Alharahsheh specializes in English language and translation. He works as a lecturer in Sattam university in KSA. He is keen on Arabic –English translation research, literary translation, translation norms, and discourse analysis.

Mohamed Abdou Moindjie is a polyglot. He is currently a Senior Lecturer in Translation Studies and English Language at the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, University of Science, Malaysia (USM). He was Senior Lecturer (*Maître de Conferences*) at the Department of Foreign Languages, *Université des Comores*; he was also Chairperson of the Department of Foreign Languages, *Université des Comores* from 2016 to 2018.

Debbita Tan Ai Lin serves as Senior Lecturer at the School of Languages, Literacies and Translation, Universiti Sains Malaysia. She is keen on interdisciplinary research and her current areas of interest include language and media/political studies, translation difficulties, and the relationship between psychology and linguistic nuances. For more information, https://ppblt.usm.my/index.php/lecturer-profile/163-debbita-tan-dr

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 763-771, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.09

Writing Assessment Model: Demands of Indonesian Teachers in the 21st Century

Suhud Aryana
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Ida Zulaeha
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Rahayu Pristiwati
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Haryadi
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

***Abstract*—This research explores Indonesian teachers' perceptions of writing assessment models based on their needs from school. This research also collected input from the teachers regarding important elements in an ideal writing assessment model with 21st century. The development research model used is the Borg and Gall model adapted by Sugiyono, but development research was only at the design planning stage. This research data was collected through surveys and group discussion forums. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model. In short, the results showed the demands of teachers to develop a writing skills assessment model that is oriented towards the 4C and HOTS aspects and that focuses on the characteristics of reliability, sustainability, construct validity, collaboration, assessment criteria, competency standards, question construction, objectivity, and communication. Additionally, the procedural framework for the required writing skills assessment model consists of three parts: 1) identifying assessment standards, 2) writing assignment development, 3) implementation and follow-up. Therefore, this research can make a positive contribution to Indonesian teachers' efforts to measure student achievement in writing skills.**

***Index Terms*—the 21st century, Indonesian teachers, writing assessment model**

I. Introduction

In the context of the technological development era, changes and adjustments to the education system in Indonesia are a necessity that cannot be avoided. 21st century skills, such as Communication, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, and Creativity (4C), as well as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), are increasingly occupying a central position in Indonesian education priorities (Damayanti, 2017).

Teachers as the main educational agents have a very important role in developing and assessing students' writing skills. Teachers also have the responsibility to develop relevant and contextual assessment tools. It is hoped that they can objectively measure student achievement in writing skills using the 4C and HOTS aspects. Besides that, teachers are required to provide constructive feedback to students so that they can continue to improve their students' writing skills. Therefore, there is a need for an assessment model that is able to measure aspects of 21st century competency comprehensively and contextually with a special focus on writing skills. The teacher's role in developing an assessment model is to provide solutions to current problems. They not only transfer knowledge but also measure students' abilities to become superior individuals and ready to encounter the complex challenges of the 21st century (Widihastuti, 2015; Arsanti et al., 2021; Aryana, 2021).

There are now challenges for teachers in Indonesia to be able to integrate 21st century elements in the assessment of writing skills. The assessment is still not effective, and teachers often face difficulties in designing and implementing assessment models that meet these demands. This research aims to develop a writing assessment model based on the demands and needs of Indonesian teachers in the 21st century. Therefore, this research focuses on the writing assessment model as a demand for teachers in the 21st century and on developing a procedural framework for the writing skills assessment model needed by teachers in Indonesia.

II. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the basis for researchers to support a series of definitions and concepts as well as perspectives from research findings. Writing skills in the context of the 21st century have a crucial role; this has been covered in several studies. However, modern education is expected to produce individuals who are able to communicate effectively in various forms, including writing (Wan & Gut, 2011; Claro et al., 2012; Griffin & Care, 2015; Elbow, 2017; Motallebzadeh et al., 2018; Erdoğan, 2019; Fernando, 2020; Yao et al., 2021; Khairallah & Adra, 2022).

Modern education is expected to produce individuals who are able to communicate effectively in various forms, including writing. A writing assessment model is a framework that teachers use to evaluate students' writing skills. It is covered in several researches (Berge et al., 2016; Ghaffar et al., 2020; O'Connell, 2022; Devi et al., 2022; Hawamdeh et al., 2023). Previous research in assessment model development can provide insight into what has been tried and worked in various contexts. Demands and needs of teachers in Indonesia related to writing assessment models. This includes an understanding of the challenges encountered by teachers in assessing students' writing skills, as well as their need for assessment models that are relevant to the curriculum and demands of the 21st century. This has been covered in several studies (Popham, 2017; Quaicoe & Pata, 2020; Aryana, 2021).

The writing assessment model being developed needs to reflect the 4C and HOTS skills expected in 21st century education. A deep understanding of how assessment models can measure and develop aspects such as authenticity, reliability, validity, and fairness in writing assessments is very important; this has been covered by several studies (Griffin & Care, 2015; Winaryati, 2018; Prayogi & Estetika, 2019; Arsanti et al., 2021).

III. Method

This development research used Sugiyono's (2019) model in modifying the Borg and Gall design for development research, consisting of three stages: research (potential and problems, literature study, and information gathering), product design (design and validation of design), and development. However, in this development research, only two of the three stages of the development research model are from Sugiyono's model. The sample and population of this research were senior high school teachers in West Java Province, Indonesia. The total of respondents was 1,700 out of 5,287 people. The data is based on the Central Statistics Agency of West Java Province via https://jabar.bps.go.id/. Data was collected for six consecutive months, starting from the beginning of February to the end of August 2023. Data collection techniques included surveys using questionnaires and forum group discussions (FGD). The survey technique used is a closed questionnaire with alternative questions such as "very needed, enough needed, not needed, really not needed". The questionnaire was first tested for validity and reliability. The validity test results showed that all item validity values are greater than 0.381, which means that each item is declared valid. Meanwhile, for the reliability test results using the Cronbach Alpha method, the value r = 0.885 was obtained, which means it is greater than the reliability coefficient value of 0.89, so the instrument is declared reliable. The data analysis technique refers to the provisions of the likert scale. The data analysis technique also used the Miles and Huberman model for data collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions.

IV. Finding and Discussion

Based on the first stage of development research that needs analysis, the research was conducted using a survey given to 1,700 teachers in the West Java region of Indonesia. Therefore, the results of research on teacher perceptions regarding the need for a writing skills assessment model are presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
TEACHER RESPONSES

No.	Aspect	Very Needed	Enough Needed	Not Needed	Really not needed
1	Question construction	83%	8%	6%	3%
2	Assessment criteria	89%	9%	0%	2%
3	Construct Validity	97%	0%	3%	0%
4	Reliability	92%	8%	0%	0%
5	Objectivity	79%	13%	8%	0%
6	Competency Standards	85%	12%	3%	0%
7	Readability and ease for using	57%	34%	8%	2%
8	Sustainability	87%	10%	3%	0%
9	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	64%	29%	7%	0%
10	Communication	79%	13%	8%	0%
11	Collaboration	92%	8%	0%	0%
12	Creativity	64%	26%	6%	4%
13	Analysis	56%	30%	14%	0%
14	Evaluation	64%	27%	9%	0%
15	Create	49%	35%	17%	0%

The results above show that the need for teachers in the writing assessment model in the question construction aspect is 83%, or 1.411 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer that is really needed. Meanwhile, 8 percent, or 136 out of 1.700 teachers, answered that it was quite necessary. Results (6%) or 102 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer not needed, and (3%) or 51 out of 1.700 answered not really needed. In the assessment criteria aspect, 89%, or 1.513 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as very needed, and the answer (9%), or 153 out of 1.700 teachers, chose it as enough needed. Meanwhile, the answer (2%) or 34 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as not really needed. In the aspect of construct validity (97%), 1.649 out of 1.700 teachers chosen the answer as very necessary; apart from that, the results (3%), or 51 out of 1.700 teachers, answered as not needed. The reliability aspect (92%), or 1.564 out of 1.700 teachers who chose an answer, is very necessary. Apart from that, 9 percent, or 136 out of 1.700 teachers, answered that it was quite necessary. The objectivity aspect (79%), or 1.343 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as very necessary, and the answer (13%), or 221 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the answer (8%) or 136 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as not needed. The competency standards aspect (85%), or 1.445 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as very necessary, and the answer (12%), or 204 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the answer (3%) or 51 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as not requiring. The readability and ease of use aspect (57%), or 969 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as very necessary, and the results (34%), or 578 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the results (8%), or 136 teachers, chose the answer as not needed, and the results (2%), or 34 teachers, chose not really needed. The sustainability aspect (87%) or 1.479 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as very necessary, and the results (10%) or 1.770 out of 1.700 teachers chose it as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the results (3%), or 51 teachers, chose the answer as not needed. The critical thinking and problem-solving aspect (64%) means that 1.088 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as very necessary, and the results (29%) or 493 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, 7 percent of the teachers, or 119 out of 1.700, answered that they did not need it. The communication aspect was 79%, or 1343 out of 1.700 teachers, who chose the answer as very necessary, and the results were 13%, or 221 out of 1.700 teachers, who chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, 8%, or 136 teachers, chose the answer that they did not need it. The collaboration aspect was 92%, or 1.564 out of 1.700 teachers, who chose the answer as very necessary, and the results (8%), or 136 teachers, chose the answer as sufficient. The creativity aspect showed (64%), meaning that 1,088 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer that was really needed. In addition, the results (26%), or 442 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer simply added. Meanwhile, the result (6%) means that 102 teachers out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as not needed, and the result (4%) or 68 teachers chose the answer as not really needed. The analysis aspect was 56 percent, or around 952 out of 1.700 teachers who chose the answer as very necessary. In addition, the result (30%) means that 510 out of 1.700 teachers chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the results (14%), or 238 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as not needed. In the evaluation aspect, the results showed that 64%, or 1,088 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as very necessary, and 27%, or 459 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as quite necessary. Meanwhile, the results (9%), or 153 out of 1.700 teachers, chose the answer as not needed. The create aspect was 49%, or around 833 out of 1.700 teachers, who chose the answer as very needed, and the results (35%), or 595, chose the answer as quite needed. Meanwhile, the results (17%), or 289 teachers, chose the answer as not really needed.

Based on the fifteen aspects, teachers focused more on the nine needs for writing assessment models that need to be developed: reliability, sustainability, construct validity, collaboration, assessment criteria, competency standards, question construction, objectivity, and communication.

Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement results over time. A reliable test or measuring instrument will provide similar results if tested on the same individual under the same conditions (Ginting & Permana, 2018; Zhang, 2022). Sustainability refers to the ability to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of a measurement tool over time (Bond & Dus k, 2020; Nishizuka, 2022; Anggraena et al., 2022; Al-Kuwari et al., 2022). Construct validity is related to the extent to which the measuring instrument actually measures what is intended. This involves proving that the measuring instrument truly reflects the concept or competency construct that is intended to be measured (Rezaei & Lovorn, 2010; Elosua, 2022; Correnti et al., 2022).

Collaboration can mean involving various stakeholders in the development and assessment of competency measurement tools, including experts, teachers, practitioners, and test takers. This collaboration can help ensure that competency measurement tools reflect real-world needs and diverse views (Annetta et al., 2010; Mislikhah, 2020; Li, 2021; Navarro et al., 2022). Assessment criteria are guidelines or guidelines used to evaluate individual performance in competency tests, meaning that these criteria must be clear, relevant, and measurable (Shrestha, 2022; Ramadhanty et al., 2023). Competency-measuring tools must be in accordance with competency standards set for a particular profession or field. This ensures that the measurement tools reflect the skills and knowledge required in the right context (Gallardo, 2020; Syaifuddin, 2020).

Content construction involves creating test items or questions that are relevant, valid, and appropriate to the competency being measured (Asrul et al., 2014; Al-Kuwari et al., 2022). Objectivity in assessment refers to impartiality and consistency in assessment. The appraiser must be objective and not influenced by personal factors (Zheng & Yu, 2019; Ghanizadeh et al., 2020; Ebadi & Bashir, 2021). Communication is important in the process of developing and implementing competency tests. Test results must be communicated clearly to participants, and the results report must provide information that is useful to them (Pearson, 2022; Marjokorpi, 2023).

Meanwhile, creativity, critical thinking and problem solving, evaluation, readability and ease of use, analysis, and creation are aspects that have previously been implemented by teachers in authentic assessment models. According to the results of the Forum Group Discussion (FGD), teachers in Indonesia in the West Java region on average need a procedural framework concept with three stages in the writing skills assessment model, which is presented as follows.

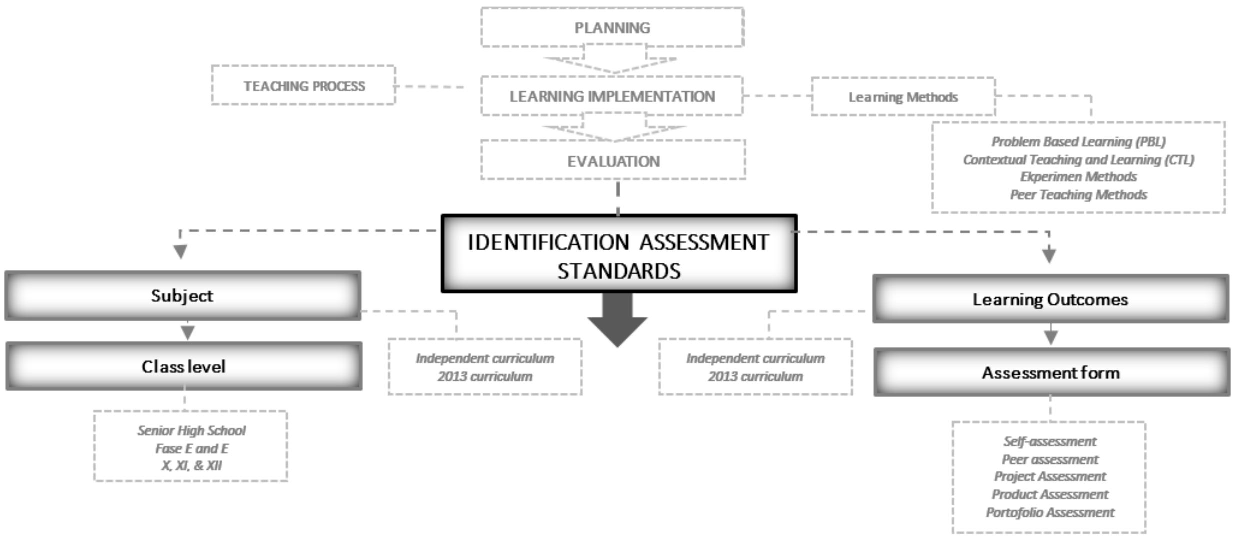


Figure 1. Assessment Standard Identification Stage

The figure above shows the teaching process, starting with the steps of preparing a learning plan, implementing learning using appropriate methods, and ending with an evaluation to measure the extent to which the learning process has been achieved by students and teachers. The assessment standards identification stage involves determining the criteria and guidelines that will be used to assess an individual's performance or competency in a test or evaluation (Carroll, 2020; Abdel Latif, 2021).

In the figure above, the first stage is identification of assessment standards. This is based on researchers' conversations with high school level teachers, they agreed that the first procedure carried out by teachers in measuring writing skills was based on identifying assessment standards. These standards are based on the curriculum that applies to the education unit at the respective high school level. In identifying assessment standards, teachers must look at learning outcomes, material, class level and the form of assessment that will be used (Mendikbudristek, 2021; Gündüzalp, 2021; Ridho et al., 2021).

The second stage in the writing skills assessment model based on the results of the forum group discussion (FGD) of teachers and researchers is presented in the following Figure 2 below.

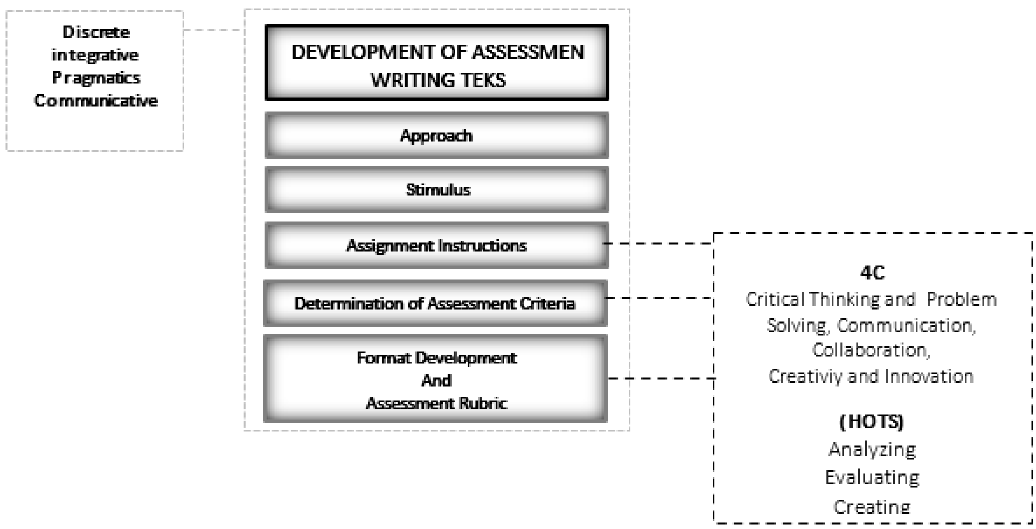


Figure 2. Writing Assignment Development Stage

The picture above shows the development of a writing assignment. In the task development process, there are several stages. This stage is based on the results of discussions between teachers and researchers. The discussion resulted in a framework for assessment procedures starting from a writing approach, including discrete, integrated, pragmatic, and communicative approaches (Nurgianotoro, 2016). After identifying the approach, the next step is stimulus, meaning that in the assessment process the teacher can provide a stimulus first so that students understand the measurement of their writing ability (Rizqoh, A. N. A. & Wagiran, 2020; Ghanizadeh et al., 2020; Li, 2021).

Next there is the assignment instruction stage, this instruction is very important so that students understand the steps in the writing assignment (Seyatiningrum, 2018). After the intrusion stage, the teachers' agreement on the next step is to determine the assessment criteria. Assessment criteria are determined based on the aspects to be measured according to learning objectives and achievements (Asrul et al., 2014). This then ends with steps to develop an assessment format and assessment rubric. At the writing assignment development stage, what teachers must pay attention to is including the concept of 21st century skills, namely 4C and HOTS. Teachers also focus on developing rubrics that are integrated with 21st century competencies, including 4C and HOTS aspects. Assessment rubric that integrates higher order thinking skills (HOTS) and 4C (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking) as part of developing 21st century competencies (Arsanti et al., 2021).

The final stage is implementation and follow-up. At this stage the teacher must pay attention to the assessment steps and procedures based on the assessment plan starting from the first and second stages. The third stage in the assessment process agreed between one teacher and another teacher in a group discussion forum (FGD) is presented in figure 3 below.

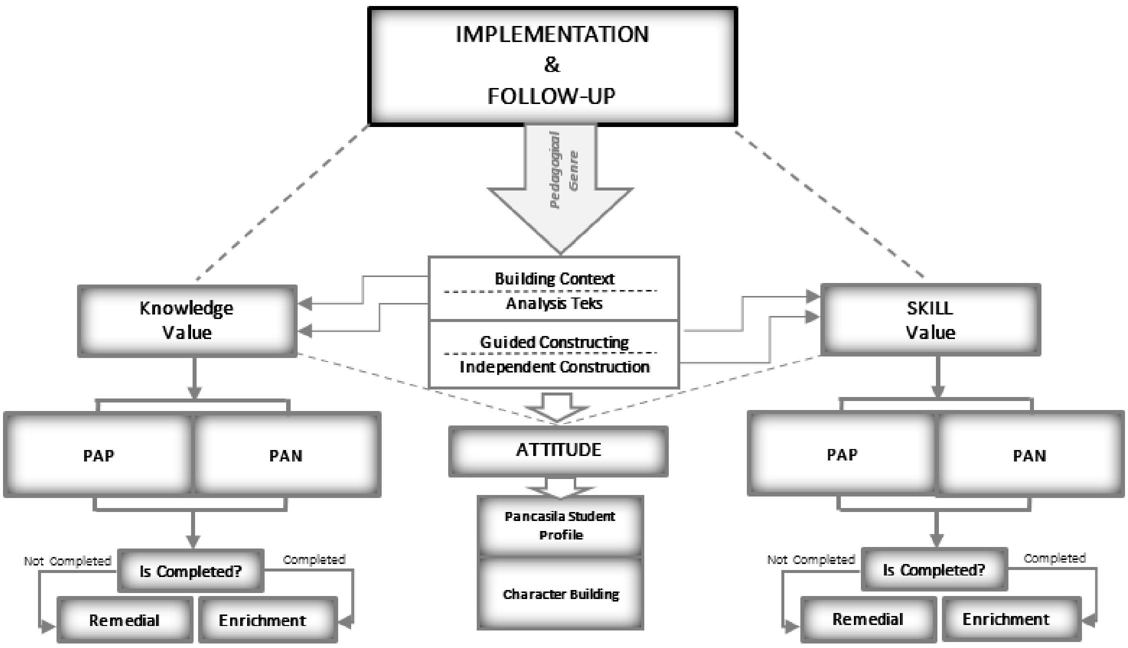


Figure 3. Implementation and Follow Up Stage

The figure above shows the procedural framework, starting with the aspects to be assessed. There are three aspects assessed in writing skills, namely knowledge, skills, and attitudes. These three aspects are measured based on the curriculum implemented in every school in the West Java region of Indonesia.

Based on the agreement of the teachers and researchers in the results of the discussion, when measuring knowledge of writing skills, the first step is application based on pedagogical genre, namely building context and analysing the text. Pedagogical genre involves context building and text analysis as a method for teaching and understanding specific genres in communication or writing (Rosdiana & Mukhtar, 2016). Meanwhile, measuring students' writing skills is the same as using genre pedagogy, namely guided construction and independent construction. This means that during the assessment process, writing assignments can be done with the help of a teacher or by the students themselves (Abdel Latif, 2021). Next, the teacher sets a *Penilaian Acuan Patokan* (PAP) and a *Penilaian Acuan Normatif* (PAN). The application of PAN is for determining individual grades, while PAN is for determining group grades (Asrul et al., 2014; Agus, 2022).

In addition, to measure students' attitude abilities in the learning process, the teachers agreed that they determine aspects of the student profile of Pancasila and building character according to the curriculum used at school. Five Principles of Pancasila: 1) Belief in the one and only God; 2) Just and civilized humanity; 3) The unity of Indonesia; 4) Democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives; and 5) Social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia. The Pancasila student profile and character education include a comprehensive description of the Pancasila values and character that students are expected to have as an important part of their moral and social education. Based on the decision letter of the Indonesian Education Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology number 009/H/KR/2022 regarding the Pancasila student profile is 1) Have faith, be devoted to God Almighty, and have noble character, 2) Global diversity, 3) Work together, 4) Independent, 5) Critical reasoning, 6) creative (Stiawati, 2020; Sufyadi, 2021; Ahmad, 2022).

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results presented, it can be concluded that the demands of teachers in the 21st century are to be able to develop a writing skills assessment model that is oriented towards 21st century competencies with 4C and HOTS aspects. The writing assessment model focuses on the characteristics of reliability, sustainability, construct validity, collaboration, assessment criteria, competency standards, question construction, objectivity, and communication. Apart from that, the need for a conceptual or procedural model for assessing writing skills is very necessary, consisting of three parts: identifying assessment standards, developing writing assignments, implementation, and follow-up.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the teachers of West Java, Indonesia, who have contributed to the research "Writing Assessment Model: Demands of Indonesian Teachers in the 21st Century". The author would like to thank the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology for funding this article through the Indonesian Education Scholarship program to provide a scholarship to complete the author's doctoral study program.

REFERENCES

[1] Abdel Latif, M. M. M. (2021). Remodeling Writers' Composing Processes: Implications for Writing Assessment. *Assessing Writing*, *50*(May), 100547. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2021.100547.

[2] Agus, M. (2022). Penilaian Acuan Norma dengan Penilaian Acuan Patokan pada Cabang Atletik Nomor Lompat Jauh Sebagai Studi Komperatif. *Jurnal Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan*, *3*(1), 6–15. [Normal Reference Assessment with Benchmark Assessment in Long Jump Athletics as a Comparative Study. *Journal of the Faculty of Teacher Training & Education*, *3*(1), 6–15].

[3] Ahmad, A. K. (2022). Pendidikan Life Skill di Madrasah Aliyah: Studi Kasus MA Keterampilan Al Irsyad Gajah, Demak. *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan*, *20*(2), 150-167. [Life Skills Education in Madrasah Aliyah: Case Study of MA Skills Al Irsyad Gajah, Demak. EDUCATION: Journal of Religion and Religious Education Research, 20(2), 150-167].

[4] Al-Kuwari, M. M., Du, X., & Koç, M. (2022). Performance Assessment in Education for Sustainable Development: A Case Study of the Qatar Education System. *Prospects*, *52*(3–4), 513–527. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-021-09570-w.

[5] Anggraena, Y., Ginanto, D., Felicia, N., Andiarti, A., Herutami Indriyanti, H., Alhapip, L., & Setiyowati, D. (2022). *Panduan Pembelajaran dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Menengah*. Jakarta: Badan Standar, Kurikulum, Dan Asesmen Pendidikan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia. [Learning and Assessment Guide for Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Education. Jakarta: Educational Standards, Curriculum and Assessment Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology, Republic of Indonesia].

[6] Annetta, L. A., Cheng, M. T., & Holmes, S. (2010). Assessing Twenty-First Century Skills through a Teacher Created Video Game for High School Biology Students. *Research in Science and Technological Education*, *28*(2), 101–114. https://doi.org/10.1080/02635141003748358.

[7] Arsanti, M., Zulaeha, I., & Subiyantoro, S. (2021, December). Tuntutan Kompetensi 4C Abad 21 dalam Pendidikan di Perguruan Tinggi untuk Menghadapi Era Society 5.0. In *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana (PROSNAMPAS)* (*Vol. 4*, No. 1, pp. 319-324). [21st Century 4C Competency Demands in Higher Education to Face the Era of Society 5.0. In Proceedings of the Postgraduate National Seminar (PROSNAMPAS) (Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 319-324)].

[8] Aryana, S. (2021, December). Studi Literatur: Analisis Penerapan dan Pengembangan Penilaian Autentik Kurikulum 2013 pada Jurnal Nasional dan Internasional. In *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana (PROSNAMPAS)* (*Vol. 4*, No. 1, pp. 368-374). [Literature Study: Analysis of the Implementation and Development of Authentic Assessment of the 2013 Curriculum in National and International Journals. In Proceedings of the Postgraduate National Seminar (PROSNAMPAS) (Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 368-374)].

[9] Asrul, Ananda, R., & Rosinta. (2014). *Evaluasi Pembajalaran*. Bandung: Citapustaka Media. [Learning Evaluation. Bandung: Citapustaka Media].

[10] Berge, K. L., Evensen, L. S., & Thygesen, R. (2016). The Wheel of Writing: a Model of the Writing Domain for The Teaching and Assessing of Writing as a Key Competency. *Curriculum Journal*, *27*(2), 172–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585176.2015.1129980.

[11] Bond, A., & Dusík, J. (2020). Impact Assessment for the Twenty-First Century–Rising to the Challenge. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, *38*(2), 94–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2019.1677083.

[12] Carroll, D. (2020). Observations of Student Accuracy in Criteria-Based Self-Assessment. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, *45*(8), 1088–1105. https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2020.1727411.

[13] Claro, M., Preiss, D. D., San Martín, E., Jara, I., Hinostroza, J. E., Valenzuela, S., Cortes, F., & Nussbaum, M. (2012). Assessment of 21st Century ICT Skills in Chile: Test Design and Results from High School Level Students. *Computers and Education*, *59*(3), 1042–1053. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2012.04.004.

[14] Correnti, R., Matsumura, L. C., Wang, E. L., Litman, D., & Zhang, H. (2022). Building a Validity Argument for an Automated Writing Evaluation System (eRevise) as a Formative Assessment. *Computers and Education Open*, *3*(March), 100084. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeo.2022.100084.

[15] Damayanti, R. S., Suyatna, A., Warsono, W., & Rosidin, U. (2017). Development of Authentic Assessment Instruments for Critical Thinking skills in Global Warming with a Scientific Approach. In *International Journal of Science and Applied Science: Conference Series* (*Vol. 2*, No. 1, pp. 289-299). UNS.

[16] Devi, M. Y., Hidayanthi, R., & Fitria, Y. (2022). Model-Model Evaluasi Pendidikan dan Model Sepuluh Langkah dalam

Penilaian. *Jurnal Basicedu*, *6*(1), 675–683. https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i1.1934. [Educational Evaluation Models and the Ten Step Model in Assessment. *Basicedu Journal*, *6*(1), 675–683. https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i1.1934].

[17] Ebadi, S., & Bashir, S. (2021). An exploration into EFL learners' Writing Skills Via Mobile-Based Dynamic Assessment. *Education and Information Technologies*, *26*(2), 1995–2016. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10348-4.

[18] Elbow, P. (2017). Writing Assessment in the 21st Century: A Utopian View. *Composition in the Twenty-First Century : Crisis and Change, March*, 83–100.

[19] Elosua, P. (2022). Validity Evidences for Scoring Procedures of a Writing Assessment Task. A Case Study on Consistency, Reliability, Unidimensionality and Prediction Accuracy. *Assessing Writing*, *54*(October), 100669. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2022.100669

[20] Erdoğan, V. (2019). Integrating 4C Skills of 21st Century Into 4 Language Skills in EFL Classes. *International Journal of Education and Research* , *7*(11), 113–124.

[21] Fernando, W. (2020). Moodle Quizzes and Their Usability for Formative Assessment of Academic Writing. *Assessing Writing*, *46*(September), 100485. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2020.100485.

[22] Gallardo, K. (2020). Competency-Based Assessment and the use of Performance-Based Evaluation Rubrics in Higher Education: Challenges Towards the Next Decade. *Problems of Education in the 21st Century*, *78*(1), 61–79. https://doi.org/10.33225/pec/20.78.61

[23] Ghaffar, M. A., Khairallah, M., & Salloum, S. (2020). Co-constructed Rubrics and Assessment for Learning: The Impact on Middle School Students' Attitudes and Writing Skills. *Assessing Writing*, *45*(October 2019). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2020.100468.

[24] Ghanizadeh, A., Al-Hoorie, A. H., & Jahedizadeh, S. (2020). Higher Order Thinking Skills. in *Second Language Learning and Teaching*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56711-8_1.

[25] Ginting E. and Permana. Y. (2018). *PEDAGOGI: Penilaian Evaluasi Proses dan Hasil Belajar.* In *Modul* (pp. 1–77). Jakarta:Kemendikbud. [PEDAGOGY: Evaluation Assessment of Learning Processes and Outcomes. In Module (pp. 1–77). Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture].

[26] Griffin, P., & Care, E. (2015). Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills: Method and Approach. In *Educational Assessment in an Information Age*. Dodrecht:Springer Business Media.

[27] Gündüzalp, S. (2021). 21 st Century Skills for Sustainable Education: Prediction Level of Teachers' Information Literacy Skills on Their Digital Literacy Skills. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, *12*(1), 85–101. https://doi.org/10.2478/dcse-2021-0007.

[28] Hawamdeh, A., Testing, L., Okleh, B., Al, S., Hussen, N., Said, N., & Abdelrasheed, G. (2023). Portfolio vs Summative Assessment : Impacts on EFL Learners' Writing Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency (CAF); Self - Efficacy ; Learning Anxiety ; and Autonomy. *Language Testing in Asia, 5*. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40468-023-00225-5.

[29] Khairallah, M., & Adra, O. (2022). The Multifaceted Function of Rubrics as Formative Assessment Tools: A Classroom-Based Action Research in an L2 Writing Context. *Language Teaching Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688221104210.

[30] Li, Z. (2021). Teachers in Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) System-Supported ESL Writing Classes: Perception, Implementation, and Influence. *System*, *99*, 102505. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102505.

[31] Marjokorpi, J. (2023). The Relationship between Grammatical Understanding and Writing Skills in Finnish Secondary L1 Education. *Reading and Writing*, *0123456789*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-022-10405-z.

[32] Mendikbudristek. (2021). No 07 Tahun 2022 ttg Standar Isi PAUD, SD, SMP. *Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi*, 1–10.

[33] Mislikhah, S. (2020). Implementasi Higher Order Thinking Skils dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. *UNEJ e-Proceeding*, 582-593. [Implementation of Higher Order Thinking Skills in Indonesian Language Learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. UNEJ e-Proceedings, 582-593].

[34] Motallebzadeh, K., Ahmadi, F., & Hosseinnia, M. (2018). Relationship between 21st Century Skills, Speaking and Writing Skills: A Structural Equation Modelling Approach. *International Journal of Instruction*, *11*(3), 265–276. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.11319a.

[35] Navarro, F., Orlando, J., Vega-Retter, C., & Roth, A. D. (2022). "Science Writing in Higher Education: Effects of Teaching Self-Assessment of Scientific Poster Construction on Writing Quality and Academic Achievement". *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, *20*(1), 89–110. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10763-020-10137-y.

[36] Nishizuka, K. (2022). Significance and Challenges of Formative Ipsative Assessment in Inquiry Learning: A Case Study of Writing Activities in a "Contemporary Society" Course in a Japanese High School. *SAGE Open*, *12*(2). https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440221094599.

[37] Nurgianotoro, B. (2016). *Penilaian Pembelajaran Bahasa Berbasis Kompetensi*. Yogyakarta: BPFE-Yogyakarta. [Competency-Based Language Learning Assessment. Yogyakarta: BPFE-Yogyakarta].

[38] O'Connell, J. (2022). Using a Logic Model to Evaluate Rater Training for EAP Writing Assessment. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *60*(August), 101160. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2022.101160.

[39] Pearson, W. S. (2022). The Mediating Effects of Student Beliefs on Engagement with Written Feedback in Preparation or High-Stakes English Writing Assessment. *Assessing Writing*, *52*(January), 100611. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2022.100611.

[40] Popham, J. W. (2017). *Classroom Assessment: What Teachers Need to Know* (Eighth edi). Unites States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.

[41] Prayogi, R. D., & Estetika, R. (2019). Kecakapan Abad 21: Kompetensi Digital Pendidik Masa Depan. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, *14*(2), 144–151. www.p21.org. [21st Century Skills: Digital Competencies of Future Educators. Journal of Educational Management, 14(2), 144–151. www.p21.org].

[42] Quaicoe, J. S., & Pata, K. (2020). Teachers' Digital Literacy and Digital Activity as Digital Divide Components Among Basic Schools in Ghana. *Education and Information Technologies*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10158-8.

[43] Ramadhanty, C. P., Hasani, M. F., Prawati, M. T., Horas, R., Alqadry, M. I., & Chandra, W. (2023). Contextualizing Automated Writing Evaluation: A Case of English for Specific Purposes Writings. *Procedia Computer Science*, *216*, 580–586.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2022.12.172.

[44] Rezaei, A. R., & Lovorn, M. (2010). Reliability and Validity of Rubrics for Assessment through Writing. *Assessing Writing*, *15*(1), 18–39. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2010.01.003

[45] Ridho, M. A., Yaqin, M. A., Ibad, M. N., Alqoroni, S., & Fauzan, A. C. (2021). Implementasi Standar Nasional Pendidikan Menggunakan Projects in Controlled Environments (PRINCE2) pada Organisasi Sekolah. *ILKOMNIKA: Journal of Computer Science and Applied Informatics*, *3*(1), 111–127. https://doi.org/10.28926/ilkomnika.v3i1.129. [Implementation of National Education Standards Using Projects in Controlled Environments (PRINCE2) in School Organizations. ILKOMNIKA: Journal of Computer Science and Applied Informatics, *3*(1), 111–127. https://doi.org/10.28926/ilkomnika.v3i1.129].

[46] Rizqoh, A. N. A., & Wagiran, W. (2020). Rekonstruksi Instrumen Penilaian Tengah Semester Kelas VIII Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Bermuatan Hots dan Adiwiyata. *Face Threatening Act of Different Ethnic Speakers in Communicative Events of School Context*, *8*(1), 104–115. https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jpbsi/article/view/24018. [Reconstruction of Class VIII Mid-Semester Assessment Instruments for Indonesian Language Subjects Containing Hots and Adiwiyata. *Face Threatening Acts of Different Ethnic Speakers in Communicative Events of School Context*, *8*(1), 104–115. https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jpbsi/article/view/24018].

[47] Rosdiana, R., & Mukhtar, H. (2016). Penerapan Pedagogi Genre dalam Bahan Ajar Bahasa Indonesia Berbasis Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge. *Konferensi Linguistik Tahunan Atma Jaya*, 334–339. [Application of Genre Pedagogy in Indonesian Language Teaching Materials Based on Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge. Atma Jaya Annual Linguistic Conference, 334–339].

[48] Seyatiningrum et al. (2018). *Muatan HOTS pada Pembelajaran Kurikulum 2013 Pendidikan Dasar*. Jakarta: Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. [HOTS Content in the 2013 Basic Education Curriculum Learning. Jakarta: Education and Culture Policy Research Center, Research and Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Culture].

[49] Shrestha, P. N. (2022). Examining Evaluative Language used in Assessment Feedback on Business Students' Academic Writing. *Assessing Writing*, *54*(August), 100664. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2022.100664.

[50] Stiawati, D. (2020). *Penilaian Berorientasi Higer Order thinking Skills* (Vol. 10, Issue 2). Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan. https://doi.org/10.37411/pedagogika.v10i2.60. [Higher Order Oriented Assessment thinking Skills (Vol. 10, Issue 2). Jakarta: Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, Ministry of Education and Culture. https://doi.org/10.37411/pedagogika.v10i2.60].

[51] Sufyadi, D. (2021). *Panduan Pembelajaran dan Asesmen (Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah)*. Jakarta: Pusat Asesmen dan Pembelajaran Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Perbukuan Kementerian Pendidikan Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknolog. [Learning and Assessment Guide (Primary and Secondary Education Levels). Jakarta: Center for Assessment and Learning, Research and Development and Bookkeeping Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology].

[52] Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitaif, Kualitatif dan R&B*. Bandung: ALFABETA. CV. [Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Research Methods. Bandung: ALFABETA. CV].

[53] Syaifuddin, M. (2020). Implementation of Authentic Assessment on Mathematics Teaching: Study on Junior High School Teachers. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *9*(4), 1491–1502. https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.9.4.149.

[54] Wan, G., & Gut, D. M. (2011). Twenty-First Century Students Need 21st Century Skills. In *Bringing schools into the 21st century* (Vol. 13). http://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=en&btnG=Search&q=intitle:No+Title#0%5Cnhttp://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-007-0268-4_3.

[55] Widihastuti. (2015). Model Penilaian untuk Pembelajaran Abd 21 (Sebuah Kajian untuk Mempersiapkan SDM Kritis dan Kreatif). *" Prosiding Pendidikan Teknik Boga Busana.*, *10*(1), https://news.ge/anakliis-porti-aris-qveynis-momava. [Assessment Model for Abd 21 Learning (A Study for Preparing Critical and Creative Human Resources). " Proceedings of Fashion Engineering Education., 10(1), https://news.ge/anakliis-porti-aris-qveynis-momava].

[56] Winaryati, E. (2018). Penilaian Kompetensi Siswa Abad 21. *Seminar Nasional Edusainstek FMIPA UNISMUS 2018*, *6*(1), 6–19. https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/psn12012010/article/viewFile/4070/3782. [21st Century Student Competency Assessment. National Seminar on Edusainstek FMIPA UNISMUS 2018, 6(1), 6–19. https://jurnal.unimus.ac.id/index.php/psn12012010/article/viewFile/4070/3782].

[57] Yao, Y., Wang, W., & Yang, X. (2021). Perceptions of the Inclusion of Automatic Writing Evaluation in Peer Assessment on EFL Writers' Language Mindsets and Motivation: A Short-Term Longitudinal Study. *Assessing Writing*, *50*(April), 100568. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2021.100568.

[58] Zhang, Y. (2022). Assessing Literacy in a Digital World. *Assessing Literacy in a Digital World*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5715-4.

[59] Zheng, Y., & Yu, S. (2019). What Has Been Assessed in Writing and How? Empirical Evidence from Assessing Writing (2000–2018). *Assessing Writing*, *42*(January), 100421. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2019.100421.

Suhud Aryana was born in 1992 in the Karawang region of West Java, Indonesia. He finished his bachelor's degree in English education from STKIP Siliwangi Bandung, West Java, Indonesia, in 2016. In 2019, his Master's degree in Indonesian language education at IKIP Siliwangi, Cimahi, West Java, Indonesia. Currently, he is one of the language education lecturers and serves as secretary of the language education faculty at IKIP Siliwangi. Currently, he is also a student in the Language Education Doctoral Programme at Universitas Negeri Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. His scientific interests include Indonesian language teaching, evaluation of language education and learning, and language literacy entrepreneurship.

Ida Zulaeha was born in 1970 in the Kudus region of Central Java, Indonesia. She finished her bachelor's degree from IKIP Malang State in 1992. A master's degree was obtained from Gajah Mada State University in 2000, and a doctoral programme was obtained from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia in 2008. She obtained his title (Prof.) in 2018. Currently, she is one of the senior postgraduate lecturers at Universitas Negeri Semarang. She is a professor in the field of dialectology at the Department of Indonesian Language and Literature, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, Universitas Negeri Semarang. She teaches the Indonesian Language Education Research Methodology, Writing Learning, Indonesian Language Learning, and Sociolinguistics.

Rahayu Pristiwati was born in 1969 in the Tegal region of Central Java. She completed her Sarjana degree in language and arts education at the University of Mataram in 1992. She finished his master's degree in 2004 at Universitas Negeri Semarang, and she finished her doctoral degree in 2017 at the same institution. She is currently the head of the Language and Arts Education study programme at Semarang State University. Her scientific interests include citizenship and learning to speak Indonesian.

Haryadi was born in Kudus, October 5 1967. He finished his bachelor's degree in Indonesian Language and Literature Education at IKIP Semarang in 1992. He finished his master's degree in Indonesian Language Education at Universitas Negeri Semarang in 2003 and he finished his Doctoral degree at the same university, that is, Universitas Negeri Semarang in 2014. Currently, he is one of the lecturers in the Language and Arts Education Study Program at Universitas Negeri Semarang. He is an expert in the field of Studying Indonesian Language and Literature Learning Models and Media, and Receptive Language Skills Learning.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 772-786, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.10

A Corpus-Based Study on Cohesion Development in Writing by EFL Novices

Weilu Wang
Foreign Languages College, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

Wei Chen
Foreign Languages College, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

Shuangshuang Shi
Foreign Languages College, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

Lin Tong
Foreign Languages College, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

Manfu Duan*
Division of International Cooperation and Exchange, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China

***Abstract*—This corpus-based study explored the development of cohesive devices in the writing of Chinese beginner learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) over a three-year span. Quantitative analysis utilizing the Tool for Automatic Analysis of Cohesion (TAACO) was conducted on a longitudinal learner corpus comprising over 500 exam essays. Lexical, syntactic, semantic, and discourse features were examined to identify reliable indices for tracking learners' progressive mastery of cohesion. Results revealed that pronoun-related features, including pronoun density and repetition, significantly differed across year pairs and robustly predicted writing development. However, most lexical and connective indices showed ambiguous trajectories over time. The findings highlight the vital role of pronouns in building coherence for novice writers and underscore persistent difficulties in acquiring sophisticated content words and their collocations. This study contributes data-driven insights into the nonlinear processes and enduring challenges shaping EFL beginners' cohesive competence. It demonstrates the value of computational tools and learner corpora in exploring discourse acquisition.**

***Index Terms*—learner corpus, cohesion development, English writing, EFL novice**

I. Introduction

In Second Language Acquisition (SLA), cohesion has long been recognized as a crucial element in constructing meaning and conveying ideas effectively. Cohesion refers to the links that hold a text together and allow it to be interpreted as a meaningful whole by signaling the relationship between sentences and paragraphs (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). In recent years, the significance of cohesion in the writing of EFL learners has been widely emphasized. For second language learners, using appropriate and effective cohesive devices poses a significant challenge and is an essential indicator of their writing ability and language development. Mastering cohesion is closely related to learners' proficiency and discourse competence (Wray & Perkins, 2000). Studies have shown that lack of cohesion is a distinguishing feature of learner writing, and cohesion use differentiates high-proficiency learners from low-proficiency ones (Connor, 1984; Zhang, 2000).

In a broader sense, cohesion is a central component of discourse competence and is closely linked to an individual's language proficiency and cognitive development (Wray & Perkins, 2000). Analyzing cohesive patterns in learner language allows researchers to better understand learners' abilities in connecting ideas and navigating discourse (Granger & Tyson, 1996), as well as to trace their language learning progress over time. Previous studies have shown the significant role of cohesive devices in predicting writing quality and differentiating developmental stages (Witte & Faigley, 1981; Crossley & McNamara, 2011).

On the frontier, learner corpus research has become increasingly prevalent in second language acquisition in recent decades, including the study of cohesion in writing. By amassing and analyzing learners' authentic language data, learner corpus studies have provided valuable insights into learner language that complement traditional qualitative studies (Granger, 2002). Compared with natural language corpora, the "ecological validity" of learner corpora allows researchers to observe genuine learning processes and outcomes (Meunier, 2002, p. 138). The use of computational

* Corresponding Author. E-mail: duanmanfu@imu.edu.cn

techniques also enables large-scale analyses of linguistic features in learner language. These advantages have led to a growing interest in building learner corpora and a surge in studies examining various aspects of learner language. In recent years, NLP techniques have been used to investigate cohesion in learner language. For example, automated cohesion analyses can identify and quantify cohesive devices in learners' writing, such as lexical repetition (Crossley & McNamara, 2011), grammatical cohesion, and conjunctions (Kong & Pearson, 2003). By comparing such cohesive profiles of learners at different proficiency levels, NLP tools provide a means to explore developmental patterns in acquiring cohesive competence. For example, Crossley and McNamara (2011) found significant differences in lexical bundle and grammatical cohesion between high- and low-rated TOEFL essays. Such large-scale analyses enabled by NLP would be impossible through manual annotation.

This study investigates cohesion in English writing texts by EFL beginners using a learner corpus approach. By analyzing the frequency and use of a set of cohesive devices with the help of an NLP tool named TAACO. This study aims to explore the predictability of a set of statistical indices to determine the ones that count in marking the development of cohesion in beginner writing. The findings provide valuable insights into the cohesion learning process of EFL beginners and their potential difficulties. They can also inform EFL writing instruction by helping instructors identify key areas to focus on in guiding students toward producing more cohesive writing over time. In summary, this study seeks to contribute to the growing field of learner corpus research by exploring cohesion use in EFL beginners' writing and providing implications for writing instruction and automated writing evaluation. The findings will also enrich our understanding of the language learning process from a discourse perspective. This study aims to yield more comprehensive and ecologically valid insights into EFL beginners' cohesion learning and inform pedagogical implications for their writing development.

II. Literature Review

A. *Cohesion of Learner English*

Previous research has established that cohesion is one of the critical features of effective second-language writing (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Hyland, 2004). Cohesion refers to the explicit and implicit connections among words, phrases, and sentences in texts, which are crucial for conveying meaning and coherence. Many studies have investigated the use of cohesive devices by EFL learners to identify areas of difficulty. Some specific challenges that EFL learners face in using cohesive devices include the correct use of pronouns, conjunctions, tense and aspect markings, prepositions, and articles (Tsou, 2005; Hyland, 2004). Few studies have specifically used corpus-based approaches to examine cohesion in beginner-level EFL writing. Moreover, large-scale investigations of global cohesion in beginner writing are still scarce.

B. *NLP for Cohesion*

Recent research has also used various NLP techniques and statistical measures to assess beginner writing quality based on cohesion. For example, McNamara et al. (2013) identified lexical bundles, grammatical cohesion, and word frequency indices that can distinguish high- and low-rated beginner essays. Crossley et al. (2016) developed automated indices of lexical sophistication, syntactic complexity, and cohesion (e.g., lexical repetition) to predict essay scores. Shin and Kim (2017) proposed coherence indices based on entity grid, centering, and lexical chain to measure coherence in L2 writing. Their studies prove the feasibility of assessing beginner writing through computational methods. These innovative studies have demonstrated the significant potential of using NLP and statistical techniques to gain a deeper understanding of challenges faced by beginner EFL writers, especially in constructing coherent discourse. NLP and statistical techniques have assessed beginner writing quality based on coherence and cohesion. Studies have identified various linguistic indices, developed predictive models, and designed automated evaluators using these techniques. The computational methods complement traditional qualitative evaluations by enabling large-scale analyses and pinpointing areas of difficulty for beginners. They provide promising means for tracing learners' progress over time and supporting their writing development through data-driven insights and feedback.

However, fewer studies were conducted specifically on beginners from a longitudinal perspective. To address this gap, the current study aims to conduct a comprehensive analysis of cohesive features used by beginner-level EFL writers via corpus-based methods and NLP indices. By exploring the development of cohesion in learner writing corpus, this research aims to provide insights into the challenges faced by beginner-level EFL writers in constructing coherent texts. The findings may have significant implications for language teaching and learning, as they can inform instructional strategies that target the identified areas of difficulty for learners at this proficiency level. To serve the purpose, the following research questions are addressed:

1. How does cohesion in EFL beginners' writing develop over the years?
2. What cohesion indices are most useful in determining beginner writing development?
3. What difficulties beginners may face in achieving cohesion in their writing?

III. Method

A. Corpus Compilation

The learner corpus utilized in this study comprises English essays compiled from an intensive English program at a Chinese university over a 3-year span (2017-2020). The essays were collected from approximately 170 freshman students enrolled in the program who represent beginner-level EFL writers. The students attend four hours of weekly English classes focusing on core language skills including basic writing. The essays were drawn from timed in-class exams administered at the conclusion of each academic term, ensuring the texts exemplify students' authentic writing abilities. The essay prompts spanned a range of topics such as technology, education, environment, and lifestyle.

To construct the electronic corpus, the handwritten essays were digitized via Optical Character Recognition (OCR) techniques and manually checked for accuracy against the original texts. Any errors in conversion were manually corrected. The final corpus contains over 500 essays (70,000 tokens). For analysis, the corpus was divided into three sub- corpora based on students' year of study - first, second, and third year. This enables comparisons of developmental trajectories over the years.

B. Cohesion Analysis

To conduct automated cohesion analysis, this study utilized the Tool for the Automatic Analysis of Cohesion (TAACO) version 2.0.4. TAACO calculates 150 validated indices of local, global, and overall textual cohesion encompassing diverse dimensions including lexical diversity, semantic overlap, connectives, givenness, and lexical repetition across sentences and paragraphs (Crossley et al., 2016). The comprehensive indices allow the examination of multiple facets of cohesive device usage in learner writing.

Specifically, the TAACO indices were applied to each essay in the corpus, and computed scores were compared statistically across sub-corpora grouped by year of study. Due to non-normal distribution, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was utilized to determine significant differences among year groups for each index. Indices demonstrating statistically significant differences for multiple comparisons were interpreted as potentially reliable markers of developmental progression in novices' cohesive competence. Through this quantitative analysis of patterns in TAACO index scores over time, this study aimed to pinpoint specific dimensions of cohesion that pose persistent challenges for beginner writers versus areas of growth.

The automated TAACO measures complement traditional qualitative methods by enabling robust large-scale analysis of cohesive features and precise quantification of linguistic phenomena. The findings provide data-driven insights into developmental shifts in beginners' ability to construct coherent discourse and achieve textual unity. Moreover, the results inform future instructional interventions targeting particular facets of cohesion that students struggle to master. In summary, this study harnesses learner corpus techniques and computational tools to elucidate empirical patterns in the emergence of cohesive competence in novice writing.

IV. Results and Discussion

According to Crossley et el. (2016), TAACO calculates a variety of local, global, and overall text cohesion markers classified into five categories, namely type–token ratio (TTR), lexical overlap, semantic overlap, connectives and Givenness which have been proved to demonstrate positive relations with measures of cohesion in previous research (McNamara et al., 2010; Crossley & McNamara, 2011). The program has been validated on a corpus of writing by L2 college students. In this study, we are trying to calculate the values for the five groups of indices for EFL beginner writing to determine the effective indices for significant relations that mark progress and development.

A. Type–Token Ratio (TTR)

The type-token ratio (TTR) is a measure that quantifies the repetition of words in a text, which is calculated by dividing the number of unique words (types) by the total number of words (tokens). The TAACO program calculates several TTR indices, including simple TTR (the ratio of types to tokens for all words) and content word TTR (the ratio using only nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). In addition, TAACO computes lemma TTR, which uses lemmas instead of word forms, and content lemma TTR. Beyond traditional word-based TTR, TAACO also determines TTR for bigrams (two-word strings) and trigrams (three-word strings). These lexical diversity metrics capture repetition at the word and phrase level.

TAACO calculates altogether 15 indices for TTR. Lemma TTR (lemma-ttr) is measured by the number of unique lemmas (types) divided by the number of total running lemmas (tokens). Lemma MATTR (lemma-mattr) is the moving average TTR with 50-word window. Lexical density of tokens (lexical-density-tokens) is the percentage of text tokens that are content words. Lexical density of types (lexical-density-types) is the percentage of text types that are content words. Content lemma TTR (content-ttr) is the number of unique content word lemmas (types) divided by the number of total content word lemmas (tokens). Function lemma TTR (function-ttr) is measured by the number of unique function word lemmas (types) divided by the number of total function word lemmas (tokens). Function word MATTR (function-mattr) is the moving average function word TTR with 50-word window. Noun lemma TTR (noun-ttr) is measured by the number of unique noun lemmas (types) divided by the number of total noun lemmas (tokens). Verb lemma TTR (verb-ttr) is measured by the number of unique verb lemmas (types) divided by the number of total verb lemmas (tokens). Adjective lemma TTR (adj-ttr) is measured by the number of unique adjective lemmas (types) divided by the number of total adjective lemmas (tokens). Adverb lemma TTR (adv-ttr) is measured by the number of unique adverb lemmas (types) divided by the number of total adverb lemmas (tokens). Pronoun lemma TTR (prp-ttr) is measured by the number of unique pronoun lemmas (types) divided by the number of total pronoun lemmas (tokens). Argument lemma TTR (argument-ttr) is measured by the number of unique noun and pronoun lemmas (types) divided by the number of total noun and pronoun lemmas (tokens). Bigram lemma TTR (bigram-lemma-ttr) is measured by the number of unique bigram lemmas (types) divided by the number of total bigram lemmas (tokens). Trigram lemma TTR (trigram-lemma-ttr) is measured by the number of unique trigram lemmas (types) divided by the number of total trigram lemmas (tokens).

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for TTR over the years. For indices like lexical density of tokens and pronoun lemma TTR, there are significant differences existing among the three year-group pairs, which demonstrates their apparent effectiveness in marking the development of beginner English. For another eight indices: lemma TTR, function lemma TTR, lexical density of types, noun lemma TTR, lemma MATTR, function word MATTR, argument lemma TTR and bigram lemma TTR, there are significant differences among some of the year groups, but not all, which indicates their partial effectiveness in predicting development of beginner English writing. For the remaining five indices: content lemma TTR, verb lemma TTR, adjective lemma TTR, adverb lemma TTR and trigram lemma TTR, there is no significant difference among the year groups, which means they are really ineffective for describing the development of beginner English writing.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR TTR (BY YEAR)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
lemma-ttr	1st Year	124	.6042056	.06154838	.007*	.220*	0.180*	1.000
	2nd Year	165	.5809601	.06316105				
	3rd Year	199	.6058319	.09135382				
	Total	488	.5970091	.07632501				
lemma-mattr	1st Year	124	.7330383	.05151894	.000*	1.000	.000*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.7387137	.04365904				
	3rd Year	199	.7724083	.05883193				
	Total	488	.7510118	.05513662				
lexical-density-tokens	1st Year	124	.5352502	.04606519	.000*	.400*	.000*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.5487304	.04813057				
	3rd Year	199	.5780773	.06033019				
	Total	488	.5572724	.05586542				
lexical-density-types	1st Year	124	.6890586	.04532788	.000*	.000*	1.00	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.7191128	.04311203				
	3rd Year	199	.7211756	.05527885				
	Total	488	.7123172	.05072148				
content-ttr	1st Year	124	.7796973	.08488925	.072	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.7630607	.08333150				
	3rd Year	199	.7567638	.10737782				
	Total	488	.7647203	.09449971				
function-ttr	1st Year	124	.4312852	.06487324	.000*	.000*	.000*	. 560
	2nd Year	165	.3897842	.07198707				
	3rd Year	199	.4308936	.09949560				
	Total	488	.4170934	.08493900				
function-mattr	1st Year	124	.4596455	.06219964	.000*	.056	.000*	.003*
	2nd Year	165	.4442500	.05251929				
	3rd Year	199	.4932052	.07839894				
	Total	488	.4681252	.06980977				
noun-ttr	1st Year	124	.8101165	.11615705	.000*	.030*	.131	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.7809462	.09964661				
	3rd Year	199	.7574599	.12028006				
	Total	488	.7787809	.11432796				
verb-ttr	1st Year	124	.7813169	.10521046	.135	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.7547443	.11438665				
	3rd Year	199	.7512365	.14670986				
	Total	488	.7600659	.12692249				
adj-ttr	1st Year	124	.8581928	.11626879	.423	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.8737070	.12184008				
	3rd Year	199	.8582106	.14901874				
	Total	488	.8634456	.13227205				
adv-ttr	1st Year	124	.7251454	.19014802	.247	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.7512745	.18258782				
	3rd Year	199	.7540799	.20661678				
	Total	488	.7457792	.19458221				
prp-ttr	1st Year	124	.2938143	.07626773	.000*	.000*	.000*	.002*
	2nd Year	165	.2367947	.09867630				
	3rd Year	199	.3966275	.20452447				
	Total	488	.3164610	.16328528				
argument-ttr	1st Year	124	.5969056	.09103748	.000*	1.000	.000*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.5991390	.08992661				
	3rd Year	199	.6706779	.12953046				
	Total	488	.6277441	.11362483				
bigram-lemma-ttr	1st Year	124	.9266178	.04087659	.000*	.088	.000*	.393
	2nd Year	165	.9186062	.03589195				
	3rd Year	199	.9319951	.04642455				
	Total	488	.9261018	.04201648				
trigram-lemma-ttr	1st Year	124	.9856652	.01585286	.345	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.9839646	.01628005				
	3rd Year	199	.9847113	.02002056				
	Total	488	.9847012	.01777949				

The statistical significance detected among the ten lexical indices furnishes quantitative evidence that novice learners actively absorb new linguistic symbols and expand their vocabulary over time. This underscores the critical priority for beginners to devote focused study to continuously enlarging their vocabulary, particularly regarding function words and collocations, as this represents a foundational task undergirding communicative ability. For any language learner, the preliminary and most essential step is comprehending and utilizing the words that denote surrounding people, objects and ideas, since this lexical knowledge delineates the scope and sophistication of verbal and written expression. Hence, pedagogical materials and activities for novice English learners should be purposefully designed to target this core need for vocabulary enrichment. Simply put, constructing a basic vocabulary foundation should be considered the cornerstone in introductory courses for beginners across linguistic and situational contexts.

The statistically significant differences observed in pronoun-related indices, such as pronoun lemma type-token ratio, offer compelling quantitative evidence for the developmental trajectory of cohesive devices in novice English learners' writing. As demonstrated extensively in prior discourse analytic research, pronouns serve a vital cohesive role by establishing logical connections across sentences and paragraphs and avoiding repetitive use of proper nouns (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Biber et al., 1999; Flowerdew, 2000). The skilled use of pronouns to maintain coherence is gradually and dynamically developed over time as learners gain proficiency. Similar to the acquisition process of other linguistic features, learners' mastery of pronominal cohesion is shaped by multiple factors, most saliently the semantic transparency and perceptual salience of specific pronoun forms and functions (Ellis & Simpson-Vlach, 2009; Goldberg, 2019).

Concordance analysis of the present learner corpus reveals a possible learning sequence progressing from personal and demonstrative pronouns toward increased use of possessive and reflexive pronouns. As personal and demonstrative pronouns tend to be more semantically and structurally transparent, as well as more grammatically salient, this aligns with usage-based theories which posit that transparency and salience facilitate acquisition (Tomasello, 2005; Ellis, 2002). The later emergence of reflexives and possessives accords with research showing that linguistically opaque features require more holistic processing and take longer to acquire (Glucksberg, 2001; Wray, 2000). Overall, the data-driven findings presented here support the conclusion that mastery of pronoun usage, and function words more broadly, serves as a critical step toward enhanced textual cohesion and readability in student writing. Moving forward, explicit instruction and targeted practice with opaque pronoun forms could speed the development of native-like cohesive device usage.

In contrast to the pronoun-related indices, the statistical insignificance of the lemma type-token ratios for content words, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and trigrams provides insight into the persisting difficulties novice writers face. As demonstrated in prior discourse studies, content words like nouns, verbs, and adjectives constitute the primary means of expressing ideas, concepts, and emotions in a text (Biber & Conrad, 2019). The lack of sophisticated content word knowledge evidenced in learner writing may stem from underdeveloped vocabulary failing to provide the precise, expressive words required for descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative purposes (Nation, 2013). This deficiency is compounded by insufficient mastery of simple modifying structures, including adjectives and adverbs, which expand and refine lexical meanings (Schmid, 2012). Additionally, limited use of longer collocational bundles like trigrams may undermine the logical flow and connectivity of more complex ideas (Durrant & Schmitt, 2010).

The statistically flat growth trajectories for multiple type-token ratios illuminate ongoing content-word, modifier, and collocation usage gaps hindering learners' lexico-grammatical smoothness in writing. As evinced by the present corpus analysis, achieving native-like lexical richness, specificity, and collocational fluency remains an elusive benchmark for novice academic writers. Explicit vocabulary expansion interventions may help expedite mastery of the sophisticated content words and collocations essential to precise expression in writing (Crossley & Salsbury, 2010). Additionally, awareness-raising around modifier usage could sharpen learners' ability to write expressively and vividly.

B. Lexical Overlap (Sentence)

Lexical overlap, the repetition of words or phrases across different text parts, establishes cohesion and unity within writing. When specific terminology or expressions are echoed throughout a work, this signals to readers that these concepts are fundamentally connected and vital to the central theme. The strategic repetition of critical terms facilitates comprehension by reinforcing principal ideas, emphasizing salient points, and delineating a logical progression of thoughts. Moreover, lexical overlap aids in smoothly transitioning between sections or paragraphs, promoting fluidity by linking related concepts using repetitious language. Consequently, this technique enhances readability and strengthens the writer's material handling.

While lexical repetition may manifest within sentences, between sentences, or across paragraphs, novice writers often compose texts with minimal overlap due to their reliance on short or single paragraphs. Therefore, calculating lexical overlap indices across paragraphs proves insignificant mainly. This research consequently focuses exclusively on lexical overlap across sentences, which serves as a more meaningful measure of cohesion for fledgling beginner writing. This research utilizes TAACO to calculate six lexical overlap indices across sentences systematically: 1) adjacent sentence overlap - the average number of repeated words between consecutive sentences; 2) binary adjacent sentence overlap - the proportion of adjacent sentences containing any overlapping words; 3) adjacent two-sentence overlap - the average repeated words between a sentence and the sentence two units later; 4) adjacent sentence overlap (sentence normed) - the average repeated words between sentences divided by the number of sentences; 5) adjacent two-sentence overlap (sentence normed) - the average repeated words between a sentence divided by the number of sentences two units later; and 6) binary two-sentence overlap - the proportion of sentences containing overlapping words with the sentences two units later. These precise, automated measurements provide granular insights into patterns of lexical repetition between sentences in novice writing samples. The indices enable us to pinpoint strengths and deficiencies in students' utilization of lexical overlap to promote cohesion.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for the first part of the exact indices considered: adjacent sentence overlap all lemmas (adjacent overlap all sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap all lemmas (adjacent overlap 2 all sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap all lemmas (sentence normed) (adjacent overlap 2 all sent div seg) and binary adjacent two-sentence overlap all lemmas (adjacent overlap binary 2 all sent). The results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicate significant differences among the three year pairs for all six lexical overlap indices. This suggests that these measures can potentially track progression in students' utilization of repetition for cohesion in early writing. However, subsequent pairwise comparisons reveal that no indices differ significantly across all year pairs, implying these metrics alone may not fully capture developmental trajectories in novices' grasp of cohesion.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR LEXICAL OVERLAP (SENTENCE, BY YEAR, PART 1)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
adjacent overlap all sent	1st Year	124	.1578766	.05075178	.003*	1.000	.003*	.081
	2nd Year	165	.1592696	.04736822				
	3rd Year	199	.1425744	.05764924				
	Total	488	.1521075	.05310691				
adjacent overlap all sent div seg	1st Year	124	1.4707991	.68918098	.006*	.043*	1.000	.005*
	2nd Year	165	1.7282382	.89807024				
	3rd Year	199	1.8897127	1.16017040				
	Total	488	1.7286705	.98302441				
adjacent overlap binary all sent	1st Year	124	.6742909	.16993930	.004*	.003*	.156	.302
	2nd Year	165	.7414923	.16452732				
	3rd Year	199	.6993865	.21838704				
	Total	488	.7072463	.19104805				
adjacent overlap 2 all sent	1st Year	124	.2454301	.06253737	.020*	1.000	.072	.046*
	2nd Year	165	.2406589	.05670242				
	3rd Year	199	.2268673	.07620190				
	Total	488	.2362472	.06704743				
adjacent overlap 2 all sent div seg	1st Year	124	2.3033885	1.09968501	.000*	.167	.104	.000*
	2nd Year	165	2.5690405	1.19281005				
	3rd Year	199	2.9563375	1.64827036				
	Total	488	2.6594734	1.40007217				
adjacent overlap binary 2 all sent	1st Year	124	.8135530	.13537375	.000*	.000*	1.000	.004*
	2nd Year	165	.8737486	.12998383				
	3rd Year	199	.8462186	.17929961				
	Total	488	.8472266	.15464910				

Several factors may explain the dynamic patterns in lexical repetition revealed by the indices. First, fledgling writers often rely on simple syntactic structures and short sentences, which intrinsically limits their capability to repeat words across sentences. Second, the indices quantify overlap across adjacent sentences, whereas students may begin repeating words in a more long-range, sophisticated manner before mastering repetition across consecutive sentences. Finally, the skill development in using lexical repetition for cohesion probably progresses non-linearly, with regressions as students experiment with repetition.

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for the second set of the exact indices considered: adjacent sentence overlap content lemmas (adjacent overlap cw sent), adjacent sentence overlap content lemmas (sentence normed) (adjacent overlap cw sent div seg), binary adjacent sentence overlap content lemmas (adjacent overlap binary cw sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap content lemmas (adjacent overlap 2 cw sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap content lemmas (sentence normed) (adjacent overlap 2 cw sent div seg), binary adjacent two-sentence overlap content lemmas (adjacent overlap binary 2 cw sent), adjacent sentence overlap function lemmas (adjacent overlap fw sent), adjacent sentence overlap function lemmas (sentence normed) (adjacent overlap fw sent div seg), binary adjacent sentence overlap function lemmas (adjacent overlap binary fw sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap function lemmas (adjacent overlap 2 fw sent), adjacent two-sentence overlap function lemmas (sentence normed) (adjacent overlap 2 fw sent div seg), binary adjacent two-sentence overlap function lemmas (adjacent overlap binary 2 fw sent). Analysis of the lexical overlap indices for content and function words reveals nuanced insights into novice writers' evolving utilization of repetition for cohesive purposes. Regarding content word repetition, the indices show ambiguous developmental patterns, with only two of the six metrics indicating significant differences between one or two year pairs, but no indices differing significantly for all group pairs. This suggests fledgling writers' repetition of content words progresses irregularly rather than linearly. For function words, all six indices significantly differ between pairs, yet post hoc tests reveal significance for just one or two year pairs per index, not across all year pairs.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR LEXICAL OVERLAP (SENTENCE, BY YEAR, PART 2)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons: 1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
adjacent overlap cw sent	1st Year	124	.0780125	.05507522	.743	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0716493	.04742333				
	3rd Year	199	.0770217	.05802963				
	Total	488	.0754570	.05385292				
adjacent overlap cw sent div seg	1st Year	124	.4059277	.32269355	.002*	.683	.070	.003*
	2nd Year	165	.4743773	.39554561				
	3rd Year	199	.6278599	.58403441				
	Total	488	.5195725	.47585657				
adjacent overlap binary cw sent	1st Year	124	.3020822	.20292772	.013*	.898	.169	.014*
	2nd Year	165	.3270068	.20142620				
	3rd Year	199	.3825004	.25101926				
	Total	488	.3433031	.22546036				
adjacent overlap 2 cw sent	1st Year	124	.1242944	.07056928	.285	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.1163540	.06667118				
	3rd Year	199	.1275195	.07909610				
	Total	488	.1229248	.07295205				
adjacent overlap 2 cw sent div seg	1st Year	124	.6551183	.52264172	.000*	.424	.002*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.7558467	.56955860				
	3rd Year	199	1.0204739	.81959010				
	Total	488	.8381633	.68974319				
adjacent overlap binary 2 cw sent	1st Year	124	.4274535	.21460352	.000*	.877	.003*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.4656173	.25434359				
	3rd Year	199	.5438433	.27090414				
	Total	488	.4878195	.25618756				
adjacent overlap fw sent	1st Year	124	.2352727	.07576343	.000*	.006*	.000*	.882
	2nd Year	165	.2634762	.07884356				
	3rd Year	199	.2241963	.08710433				
	Total	488	.2402919	.08320001				
adjacent overlap fw sent div seg	1st Year	124	.9951241	.48049352	.016*	.013*	.803	.156
	2nd Year	165	1.2025078	.64480530				
	3rd Year	199	1.1923788	.77568986				
	Total	488	1.1456815	.67135207				
adjacent overlap binary fw sent	1st Year	124	.5881450	.17951129	.000*	.000*	.000*	1.000
	2nd Year	165	.6753525	.18334110				
	3rd Year	199	.5952122	.23114444				
	Total	488	.6205131	.20670729				
adjacent overlap 2 fw sent	1st Year	124	.3596506	.08641044	.000*	.008*	.000*	1.000
	2nd Year	165	.3911772	.08740202				
	3rd Year	199	.3524277	.11276817				
	Total	488	.3673648	.09963449				
adjacent overlap 2 fw sent div seg	1st Year	124	1.5369767	.69985564	.029*	.084	1.000	.037*
	2nd Year	165	1.7418699	.80131814				
	3rd Year	199	1.8426520	1.06607109				
	Total	488	1.7309045	.90373177				
adjacent overlap binary 2 fw sent	1st Year	124	.7478181	.15854199	.001*	.001*	.045	.451
	2nd Year	165	.8146724	.14788899				
	3rd Year	199	.7547786	.21638209				
	Total	488	.7732609	.18339906				

The same factors may explain these complex, nonlinear patterns. On the one hand, novice writers may rely heavily on short sentences and simple structures, distorting index scores. The descriptive statistics for novice writing indicate scores of 3.8 for the number of letters per word and 14.0 for the number of words per sentence, while that for the writing of native speakers (LOCNESS) goes up to 4.7 for the number of letters per word and 20.2 for the number of words per sentence. On the other, contextual factors like assignment type likely influence repetitive patterns. College beginners in their freshman year are mainly required to complete writing assignments of letters, notes or emails; while in the sophomore year, expositive or narrative essays are required; and in the third argumentations form the major tasks.

C. Semantic Overlap

TAACO 2.0 calculates the average similarity between progressive adjacent segments (sentences or paragraphs) in a text. But because novice writers may usually tend to have only one paragraph for a piece of writing, semantic similarity is calculated at the sentence level in this study. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for semantic overlap among sentences, and the exact indices considered include: average sentence-to-sentence overlap of noun synonyms (syn overlap sent noun), average sentence-to-sentence overlap of verb synonyms (syn overlap sent verb), average latent semantic analysis cosine similarity between all adjacent sentences (lsa 1 all sent), average latent semantic analysis cosine similarity between all adjacent sentences (with a two-sentence span) (lsa 2 all sent), average latent dirichlet allocation divergence score between all adjacent sentences (lda 1 all sent), average latent dirichlet allocation divergence score between all adjacent sentences (with a two-sentence span) (lda 2 all sent), average word2vec similarity score between all adjacent sentences (word2vec 1 all sent) and average word2vec similarity score between all adjacent sentences (with a two-sentence span) (word2vec 2 all sent).

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR SEMANTIC OVERLAP (BY YEAR)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
syn overlap sent noun	1st Year	124	.2348546	.27146316	.000*	.320	.000*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.2923775	.30947867				
	3rd Year	199	.5030662	.56995730				
	Total	488	.3636771	.44365290				
syn overlap sent verb	1st Year	124	.1905886	.19879583	.047*	.854	.454	.045*
	2nd Year	165	.2460485	.28728015				
	3rd Year	199	.2904373	.31939810				
	Total	488	.2500574	.28429275				
lsa 1 all sent	1st Year	124	.2641947	.11975273	.186	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.2440322	.09666080				
	3rd Year	199	.2434589	.12981950				
	Total	488	.2489217	.11704729				
lsa 2 all sent	1st Year	124	.6180059	.08201105	.842	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.6164877	.09359811				
	3rd Year	199	.5968245	.12774386				
	Total	488	.6088550	.10669454				
lda 1 all sent	1st Year	124	.9336287	.04852075	.001*	.183	.148	.001*
	2nd Year	165	.9454044	.04305631				
	3rd Year	199	.9493092	.05285490				
	Total	488	.9440046	.04893147				
lda 2 all sent	1st Year	124	.9626876	.03757985	.064	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.9633775	.08165994				
	3rd Year	199	.9635150	.10243107				
	Total	488	.9632583	.08287458				
word2vec 1 all sent	1st Year	124	.7651502	.04536008	.000*	.000*	.326	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.7892150	.04556824				
	3rd Year	199	.7876728	.09221712				
	Total	488	.7824713	.06913218				
word2vec 2 all sent	1st Year	124	.8213032	.03238955	.000*	.001*	1.000	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.8329795	.05591308				
	3rd Year	199	.8181638	.11719341				
	Total	488	.8239709	.08333550				

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicate that for some of the indices for semantic overlap there are significant differences (five out of eight). Post hoc pairwise comparisons revealed that statistically significant differences exist for one or two of the year pairs but none for all three pairs. This denotes that indices for semantic overlap help predict cohesion development of novice writers, but they are not the most reliable. The results also confirm the dynamism of cohesion development of novice writing. It may be explained by the fact that novice writers struggle with the right words to express themselves. At the beginning of their English learning journey, they are trying to pick the everyday linguistic forms for things around them, while complex semantic relations like synonymy, polysemy, antonymy and hyponymy may only develop later with their improvement in vocabulary richness. Further concordance analysis of high-frequency simple verbs like “think” and their synonyms like “state”, “claim”, “argue”, “hold”, “believe”, "announce" and structures with a similar sense of expressing opinions like "in … opinion", "form … perspective", "take…for granted" and "point out", the search finds that the most frequently used is "think" (Fre. = 103), followed by believe (20) and argue (2). Most strikingly, other expressions and structures on the above list find no occurrence in the corpus.

D. Connectives

Connectives are the standard means for a writer to ensure cohesion and coherence in writing. TAACO 2.0.4 calculates 25 connectives indices, for each of which the occurrence of each item is counted and the sum is divided by the total number of words in the text. The indices for this study are mainly considered on the sentence level. Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for the first half of indices, including basic connectives, conjunctions, disjunctions, lexical subordinators, coordinating conjuncts, addition, sentence linking, order, reason and purpose, all causal connectives, positive causal connectives and opposition. For basic connectives, it calculates the frequency of words like "for", "and", "nor"; for conjunctions, words like "and", "but"; for disjunctions, words like "or"; for lexical subordinators, words like "after", "although", "as"; for coordinating conjuncts, words like "yet", "so", "nor"; for addition, words like "and", "also", "besides"; for sentence linking, words like "nonetheless", "therefore", "although"; for order, words like "to begin with", "next", "first"; for reason and purpose, words like "therefore", "that is why", "for this reason"; for all causal connectives, words like "although", "arise", "arises". From Table 5, the results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicate that for some of the indices for the first set of connectives there are significant differences (nine out of twelve), and post hoc pairwise comparisons reveal that the statistically significant differences exist for one or two of the year pairs, but none for all three pairs, which denotes that indices for connectives help to predict cohesion development of novice writes, but they are not the most reliable. The results also confirm the dynamism of cohesion development of novice writing. It may be explained by the fact that connectives are the standard practice for cohesion despite languages. It's mainly a positive transfer for novice writers to transfer the connections from their mother tongue to a second language they are using.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR CONNECTIVES (BY YEAR, PART 1)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year –3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
basic connectives	1st Year	124	.0387581	.01814382	.471	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0410173	.01786714				
	3rd Year	199	.0411798	.02088882				
	Total	488	.0405095	.01921210				
conjunctions	1st Year	124	.0266556	.01407599	.037*	.121	1.000	.042*
	2nd Year	165	.0303149	.01481850				
	3rd Year	199	.0313912	.01818129				
	Total	488	.0298240	.01618723				
disjunctions	1st Year	124	.0022405	.00452989	.001*	1.000	.008*	.005*
	2nd Year	165	.0023572	.00469849				
	3rd Year	199	.0039463	.00566858				
	Total	488	.0029755	.00513160				
lexical subordinators	1st Year	124	.0123730	.01141277	.780	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0119932	.01028290				
	3rd Year	199	.0110394	.00874205				
	Total	488	.0117007	.00999497				
coordinating conjuncts	1st Year	124	.0100875	.01053715	.013*	1.000	.109	.018*
	2nd Year	165	.0087769	.00877796				
	3rd Year	199	.0068392	.00762666				
	Total	488	.0083197	.00891075				
addition	1st Year	124	.0266154	.01505393	.046*	.056	.708	.040*
	2nd Year	165	.0292851	.01513882				
	3rd Year	199	.0316869	.01918912				
	Total	488	.0295861	.01697662				
sentence linking	1st Year	124	.0172107	.01383554	.010*	.033*	1.000	.014*
	2nd Year	165	.0203959	.01115989				
	3rd Year	199	.0210441	.01275674				
	Total	488	.0198509	.01260586				
order	1st Year	124	.0049391	.00701321	.076	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0031417	.00515463				
	3rd Year	199	.0037354	.00558599				
	Total	488	.0038405	.00587655				
reason and purpose	1st Year	124	.0067048	.00914589	.001*	.001*	.664	.027*
	2nd Year	165	.0101053	.00964415				
	3rd Year	199	.0086312	.00821996				
	Total	488	.0086401	.00903328				
all causal	1st Year	124	.0138304	.01277783	.009*	.038*	.016*	1.000
	2nd Year	165	.0170166	.01232715				
	3rd Year	199	.0133305	.01059667				
	Total	488	.0147038	.01186765				
positive causal	1st Year	124	.0136920	.01190992	.000*	.000*	.013*	.021*
	2nd Year	165	.0212769	.01321436				
	3rd Year	199	.0172298	.01191549				
	Total	488	.0176993	.01268343				
opposition	1st Year	124	.0045854	.00686894	.002*	.161	.277	.001*
	2nd Year	165	.0056429	.00609159				
	3rd Year	199	.0069109	.00648411				
	Total	488	.0058913	.00651050				

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for the second half of indices for connectives, including determiners (a, an, the), demonstratives (this, that, these), attended demonstratives (this + noun), unattended demonstratives (this as the subject), all additive connectives (after all, again, all in all), all logical connectives (actually, admittedly, after all), positive logical connectives (actually, after all, all in all), negative logical connectives (admittedly, alternatively, although), temporal connectives (a consequence of, after, again), positive intentional connectives (by, desire, desired), all positive connectives (actually, after, again), all negative connectives (admittedly, alternatively, although), all connectives (actually, admittedly, after). The results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicate that for some of the indices for the second set of connectives there are significant differences (nine out of thirteen), and post-hoc pairwise comparisons reveal that the statistically significant differences exist for one or two of the three year pairs, but none for all three pairs, which denotes that indices for connectives help to predict cohesion development of novice writing but not the most reliable, which also confirms the dynamism of cohesion development of novice writing.

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR CONNECTIVES (BY YEAR, PART 2)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year –3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
determiners	1st Year	124	.0561664	.02296447	.000*	.019*	.004*	.000
	2nd Year	165	.0647777	.02538318				
	3rd Year	199	.0732913	.02862552				
	Total	488	.0660613	.02702165				
all demonstratives	1st Year	124	.0143748	.00994088	.079	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0130695	.01093394				
	3rd Year	199	.0123391	.01221077				
	Total	488	.0131033	.01124678				
attended demonstratives	1st Year	124	.0061021	.00746829	.050	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0070970	.00935783				
	3rd Year	199	.0044009	.00583952				
	Total	488	.0057447	.00767010				
unattended demonstratives	1st Year	124	.0082726	.00719268	.015*	.011*	.513	.236
	2nd Year	165	.0059725	.00680695				
	3rd Year	199	.0084828	.01532693				
	Total	488	.0075806	.01120313				
all additive	1st Year	124	.0357418	.01847137	.000*	.283	.065	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.0394300	.01850796				
	3rd Year	199	.0443954	.02098351				
	Total	488	.0405176	.01982162				
all logical	1st Year	124	.0249926	.01625636	.001*	.029*	.808	.001*
	2nd Year	165	.0296871	.01373013				
	3rd Year	199	.0318111	.01702551				
	Total	488	.0293604	.01598216				
positive logical	1st Year	124	.0127967	.01220073	.415	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0132311	.01032768				
	3rd Year	199	.0133554	.00932802				
	Total	488	.0131714	.01043755				
negative logical	1st Year	124	.0042929	.00610710	.002*	.071	.571	.001*
	2nd Year	165	.0056675	.00593446				
	3rd Year	199	.0066910	.00627052				
	Total	488	.0057356	.00617821				
all temporal	1st Year	124	.0106434	.01067377	.001*	.001*	.713	.015*
	2nd Year	165	.0059803	.00635626				
	3rd Year	199	.0072160	.00763829				
	Total	488	.0076691	.00833090				
positive intentional	1st Year	124	.0061354	.00779197	.001*	.009*	.003*	1.000
	2nd Year	165	.0093846	.00977897				
	3rd Year	199	.0060902	.00714807				
	Total	488	.0072156	.00840953				
all positive	1st Year	124	.0567093	.02402958	.304	-	-	-
	2nd Year	165	.0610915	.02334297				
	3rd Year	199	.0592777	.02386800				
	Total	488	.0592383	.02374325				
all negative	1st Year	124	.0066466	.00767763	.000*	.367	.016*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.0080626	.00777032				
	3rd Year	199	.0106373	.00848917				
	Total	488	.0087527	.00820137				
all connective	1st Year	124	.0477623	.02099567	.000*	.016*	.214	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.0557663	.02290641				
	3rd Year	199	.0603775	.02406454				
	Total	488	.0556129	.02341914				

E. Givenness

Givenness indices approximate the proportion of given information to new information by examining pronoun density, pronoun-to-noun ratios, and repeated content lemmas and pronouns. TAACO 2.0.4 calculates four indices related to givenness: pronoun density, pronoun-to-noun ratio, repeated content lemmas, repeated content lemmas and pronouns. Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics, results of Kruskal-Wallis tests, and pairwise comparisons for the indices for givenness.

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, RESULTS OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS TESTS, AND PAIRWISE COMPARISONS FOR GIVENNESS (BY YEAR)

Variables	Year	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Kruskal-Wallis test (Sig.)	Pairwise Comparisons		
						1st Year –2nd Year (Sig.)	2nd Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)	1st Year – 3rd Year (Sig.)
pronoun density	1st Year	124	.0245356	.01648155	.000*	.343	.000*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.0214381	.01753344				
	3rd Year	199	.0343214	.02258267				
	Total	488	.0274788	.02032674				
pronoun noun ratio	1st Year	124	.1026146	.07459447	.000*	.015*	.000*	.390
	2nd Year	165	.0803862	.07104280				
	3rd Year	199	.1192520	.09917957				
	Total	488	.1018834	.08593164				
repeated content lemmas	1st Year	124	.1930637	.06792846	.026*	.417	.623	.021*
	2nd Year	165	.2063716	.06946115				
	3rd Year	199	.2151526	.08818968				
	Total	488	.2065709	.07764562				
repeated content and pronoun lemmas	1st Year	124	.2075686	.06647654	.000*	.345	.027*	.000*
	2nd Year	165	.2215994	.07464513				
	3rd Year	199	.2413953	.08882318				
	Total	488	.2261067	.07993782				

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis tests indicate that for all the indices, there are significant differences, and post hoc pairwise comparisons reveal that the statistically significant differences exist for one or two of the year pairs, but none for all three pairs, which denotes that indices for givenness help to predict cohesion development of novice writing, but they are not the most reliable. The results also confirm the dynamism of cohesion development of beginners. The explanation could be the repetition of pronouns in beginners' writing is commonly and frequently utilized. Therefore, the high repetition and frequency of pronouns contribute to the high score of pronoun-related indices.

V. CONCLUSION

This corpus-based study explored the development of cohesive device usage in beginner EFL writing over time through quantitative analysis of a longitudinal learner corpus. The results reveal noteworthy insights into novice writers' evolving mastery of cohesion and discourse competence. Most strikingly, the statistical analyses demonstrate that indices related to pronouns, including pronoun density, pronoun-noun ratios, and pronoun repetition, differ significantly across year groups and reliably track progression in cohesive proficiency. This aligns with previous research emphasizing pronouns' vital cohesive role in establishing logical connections and maintaining coherence (Flowerdew, 2000). It also provides quantitative confirmation of the critical importance of function words in developing native-like written discourse (Biber et al., 1999; Goldberg, 2019). Based on the corpus data, learners appear to acquire personal and demonstrative pronouns earlier, followed by possessive and reflexive forms, consistent with usage-based acquisition patterns where transparent features emerge first (Goldberg, 2019; Ellis, 2002).

However, the study findings indicate that most lexical, syntactic and connective indices, though demonstrating some pairwise differences, do not reliably distinguish or predict writing development for beginners. The indices for content word diversity and overlap, conjunctions, and modifiers reveal ambiguous developmental trajectories over time. This contrasts prior research using similar NLP tools which found lexical bundles, cohesive markers and sophistication indices effectively predict essay scores, even for novice writers (Crossley et al., 2016; McNamara et al., 2010).

The divergence suggests persistent difficulties in mastering sophisticated content words, precise nuances, and appropriate collocations, which undermine beginners' lexical repetition and cohesive patterning (Nation, 2013; Durrant & Schmitt, 2010). Concordance analysis verifies learners' predominant reliance on high-frequency pronouns like “he” and “it”, while more varied opinion-stating expressions remain scarce. The indices' instability over time indicates a complex, nonlinear acquisition process as novices experiment with forms.

In conclusion, this study's unique longitudinal perspective provides empirical insights into beginners' cohesion development, highlighting persistent hurdles like content-word gaps while tracking statistical shifts in pronoun usage. The findings reveal both universal sequencing principles and persistent challenges shaping the discourse competence of novice writers. They underscore the vital need for vocabulary expansion and explicit cohesion instruction targeting opaque features like possessive pronouns and precise lexico-grammatical expressions. The techniques used also demonstrate the value of learner corpora and computational tools in generating data-driven insights to inform instruction and assessment. Exploring lexical patterning development at the multi-word level could further enrich understanding of this critical dimension of EFL writing proficiency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present research is funded by the Innovative Practice Base for Developmental Integration of Information Technology with Foreign Languages Teaching and Research, Inner Mongolia University.

REFERENCES

[1] Biber, D., & Conrad, S. (2019). *Register, genre, and style* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[2] Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999). *Longman grammar of spoken and written English*. Pearson Education Limited.
[3] Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H. (2006). Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *5*(1), 4-18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2005.10.002
[4] Connor, U. (1984). A study of cohesion and coherence in English as a second language students' writing. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *18*(3), 301-316. https://doi.org/10.1080/08351818409389208
[5] Crossley, S.A. (2020). Linguistic features in writing quality and development: An overview. *Journal of Writing Research*, *11*(3), 415-443. https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2020.11.03.01
[6] Crossley, S.A., Kyle, K., & McNamara, D.S. (2016). The development and use of cohesive devices in L2 writing and their relations to judgments of essay quality. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *32*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.01.003
[7] Crossley, S.A., & McNamara, D.S. (2011). Text coherence and judgments of essay quality: Models of quality and coherence. In L. Carlson, C. Hoelscher, & T. F. Shipley (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 29th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society* (pp. 1236-1241).
[8] Crossley, S.A., & McNamara, D.S. (2014). Does writing development equal writing quality? A computational investigation of syntactic complexity in L2 learners. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *26*, 66-79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2014.09.006
[9] Crossley, S.A., & Salsbury, T. (2010). The development of lexical bundle accuracy and production in English second language speakers. *IRAL - International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *48*(1), 1-26. https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.2011.001
[10] Crossley, S.A., Kyle, K., & Dascalu, M. (2019). The tool for the automatic analysis of lexical sophistication (TAALES): Version 2.0. *Behavior Research Methods*, *51*, 1030-1046. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-017-0924-4
[11] Crossley, S.A., Roscoe, R., & McNamara, D.S. (2014). What is successful writing? An analysis of linguistic features of independent and integrated essay prompts. *Written Communication*, *31*(2), 202-221. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088314526354
[12] Durrant, P., & Schmitt, N. (2010). Adult learners' retention of collocations from exposure. *Second Language Research*, *26*(2), 163-188. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658309349431
[13] Ellis, N. C. (2002). Frequency effects in language processing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *24*(2), 143-188. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263102002024
[14] Ellis, R., & Simpson-Vlach, R. (2009). Formulaic language in native speakers: Triangulating psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics, and education. *Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory*, *5*(1), 61-78. https://doi.org/10.1515/CLLT.2009.003
[15] Flowerdew, J. (2000). Signalling nouns in discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, *22*(4), 329-346. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0889-4906(02)00017-0
[16] Glucksberg, S. (2001). *Understanding figurative language: From metaphors to idioms*. Oxford University Press.
[17] Goldberg, A. E. (2019). *Explain me this: Creativity, competition, and the partial productivity of constructions.* Princeton University Press.
[18] Granger, S. (2002). A bird's eye view of learner corpus research. In S. Granger, J. Hung, & S. Petch-Tyson (Eds.), *Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching* (pp. 3-33). John Benjamins.
[19] Granger, S., & Tyson, S. (1996). Connector usage in the English essay writing of native and non-native EFL speakers of English. *World Englishes*, *15*(1), 17-27. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.1996.tb00089.x
[20] Halliday, M. A. K., & Hasan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. Longman.
[21] Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and second language writing*. University of Michigan Press.
[22] Kong, K., & Pearson, P.D. (2003). The road to participation: The construction of a literacy practice in a learning community of linguistically diverse learners. *Research in the Teaching of English*, *38*(1), 85-124.
[23] McNamara, D.S., Crossley, S.A., & McCarthy, P.M. (2010). Linguistic features of writing quality. *Written Communication*, *27*, 57-86. https://doi.org/10.1177/0741088309351547
[24] McNamara, D.S., Crossley, S.A., & Roscoe, R. (2013). Natural language processing in an intelligent writing strategy tutoring system. Behavior Research Methods, *45*(2), 499-515. https://doi.org/10.3758/s13428-012-0258-1
[25] Meunier, F. (2002). The pedagogical value of native and learner corpora in EFL grammar teaching. In S. Granger, J. Hung & S. Petch-Tyson (Eds.), *Computer learner corpora, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching* (pp. 119-141). John Benjamins.
[26] Nation, P. (2013). *Learning vocabulary in another languag*e (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[27] Schmid, H. (2012). *English abstract nouns as conceptual shells: From corpus to cognition.* De Gruyter Mouton.
[28] Shin, Y. K., & Kim, Y. (2017). Using lexical bundles to teach articles to L2 English learners of different proficiencies. *System*, *69*, 79-91. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.08.002
[29] Tomasello, M. (2005). *Constructing a language: A usage-based theory of language acquisition*. Harvard University Press.
[30] Tsou, W. (2005). Improving speaking skills through instruction in oral classroom participation. *Foreign Language Annals*, *38*(1), 46-55. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2005.tb02452.x
[31] Witte, S. P., & Faigley, L. (1981). Coherence, Cohesion, and Writing Quality. *College Composition and Communication*, *32*(2), 189–204. https://doi.org/10.2307/356693

[32] Wray, A. (2000). Formulaic sequences in second language teaching: Principle and practice. *Applied Linguistics*, *21*(4), 463-489. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/21.4.463
[33] Wray, A., & Perkins, M. R. (2000). The functions of formulaic language: An integrated model. *Language and Communication*, *20*(1), 1-28. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0271-5309(99)00015-4
[34] Zhang, M. (2000). Cohesive features in the expository writing of undergraduates in two Chinese universities. *RELC Journal*, *31*(1), 61-95. https://doi.org/10.1177/003368820003100104

Weilu Wang, born in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, PRC. He is an associate professor in Foreign Languages College of Inner Mongolia University. His research interest includes corpus linguistic, applied linguistics and translation technology.

Wei Chen is working as a college lecturer at Inner Mongolia University. Born in April 1981, she was raised in a Daur family. Her research interests include applied linguistics and American literature.

Shuangshuang Shi was born in Ordos, China in 1980. She received her Master degree in English language and literature from Inner Mongolian University, China in 2010. She is currently a lecturer in the College of Foreign Languages, Inner Mongolian University. Her research interests include British literature and English teaching.

Lin Tong was born in Inner Mongolia, China in 1983. She received her Master's degree in English language and literature from Inner Mongolia University, China in 2010. She is currently a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, Inner Mongolia University, Hohhot, China. Her research interests include translation and American literature.

Manfu Duan, born in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, PRC. He is a professor in Foreign Languages College of Inner Mongolia University and Chief of Division of International Cooperation and Exchange, Inner Mongolia University. His research interest includes translation study and applied linguistics.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 787-797, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.11

The Textual vs the Contextual: A Heideggerian Reading of Walid Saif's Poem 'Love Again'

Hanan M. Ibrahim
Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan

Linda Alkhawaja
Department of English Language, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan

Maha S. Yaseen
Department of English and Literature, Al-Ahliyya Amman University, Amman, Jordan

***Abstract*—This article reads *Love Again* (1992), the last poem written by contemporary Palestinian poet Walid Saif based on Heidegger's concept of the *Dasein* as detailed in *Being and Time* and his concept of art as detailed in "The Origin of the Work of Art" as well as in other of his works. In *Love Again* "togetherness," which is the essence of the *Dasein,* dissolves completely into the kind of being of "the Others". Heidegger's definition of "the truth of being" has the tendency of combining two contesting groups of theories: the first is a modernist group that advocates an intrinsic/textual approach to read literary texts in light of new criticism and other formalist schools. The second is a group that advocates a contextual/extrinsic/political approach to read literary texts like new historicism, postcolonialism and others. A Heideggerian reading of Saif's poem debunks the modernist claim that a detachable aesthetic experience can safeguard the poem's "historical permanence" and transcend its political context. Unlike formalists of his time, Heidegger was not concerned with the tension that emerged between the above two groups since he took both the extrinsic and intrinsic elements of a literary work as indispensable elements towards exploring the literary work. Furthermore, the above tension does not seem to be part of Heidegger's consciousness.**

***Index Terms*—Heidegger, Saif, *Dasein*, intrinsic, extrinsic**

I. Introduction

Walid Saif (1948-), a prominent Palestinian poet, writer of TV drama and novelist, is well known in Palestine and the Arab region for his poetic oeuvre whose chief focus is Palestine, Palestinian resistance, the diasporic identity and others. Saif began his writing career as a poet and then he proceeded to write many successful historical series for different Arabic TV channels, the most important of which is *The Palestinian Odyssey* (*Al-Taghriba Al-Falastiniyah*), written in 2002 (Mahmoud, 2022). He wrote novels, the majority of which were based on many series that he wrote for the TV. Saif was born in Palestine, obtained his PhD degree in linguistics from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, London University). He taught in the Department of Arabic at the University of Jordan for more than fifteen years, and later he decided to quit the academic life and get devoted to writing.

In 2022, he received many awards for his literary achievements, including the Order of Al Istiqlal (Independence Day) of the First Degree by King Abdullah the Second[1], a medal by the Association of the Jordanian Writers[2], and State of Palestine Prize in Literature, Arts and Humanities[3]. In the same year, he was announced the man of the year for the Regional Book Day[4]. In 2005, he was given the Appreciation Award from the Arab Broadcasting Union, League of Arab States, for the TV series *The Palestinian Odyssey*[5]. For four consecutive years (2001-2004), he received the annual award of the Best Drama Writer at the Cairo Radio and Television Festival for four of his TV drama series: *Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi*, *Saqr Quraish*, *Rabi' Cordoba*, and *The Palestinian Odyssey*[6].

In Saif's last poem, 'Love Again' (1992), the 'I am' of the poem invites the woman he is in love with to join him in an ethereal journey through time and space where they come across people who are memorable for their intellectual

[1] watananews.com/192338/
[2] ammonnews.net/article/691668
[3] https://www.wafa.ps/Pages/Details/61584
[4] alrai.com/article/10743159/%D8%AB%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%A9-%D9%88%D9%81%D9%86%D9%88%D9%86/%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%B6-%D8%B9%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%86-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%83%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%83%D8%A7%D8%AA%D8%A8-%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%81https://www.katebmaktub.org/%D9%85%D8%A4%D9%84%D9%81/%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%81
[5] ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%BA%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A8%D8%A9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9(%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%84)
[6] katebmaktub.org/%D9%85%D8%A4%D9%84%D9%81/%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%81

achievements and entrancing fantasies. Saif uses the refrain technique whereby he repeats the following sentence at the end of many of the stanzas of the poem: ‘Be, so I am’ (كوني أكن). In the poem, both love and the existence of the other render ‘being’ possible. Two conditions that are essential in Heidegger’s account of the *Dasein*. Denker states that according to Heidegger, ‘human existence shows itself most clearly in the extremes of the limit situations (death, love, faith, sickness)’ (2013, p. 61). For Heidegger (2002a, 2002b, 1971), being is not a metaphysical concept that can be defined in transcendental terms. He does not raise typical ontological questions impinging on God’s existence, humans’ free will and others (see Carman, 2013; Philips, 2005; Wrathall, 2013).

The narrator in ‘Love Again’ is a first person singular who is invented by the poet (see Khalaf, 2007; Salameh, 2019). By virtue of the aesthetics the poet utilizes and the authenticity of the human emotions he projects, each I is relevant as a ‘being’, using Heidegger’s word, now and then. The narrative of the ‘I’ unconceals both the poet’s consciousness, through self-revelation, and the reader’s consciousness, through active responses, and renders them part of the world’s being. Heidegger (2002a, 2002b) sees that works of art, specifically poems, are possible happening via bonding with the other(s).

In ‘Love Again’, both the textual experiences of the ‘I’ and the ‘I’ of the poet bring forth the long-held controversy between two opponent sets of theories. The first stresses the self-sufficiency of the literary work based on a close-reading approach stressing the intrinsic elements that inhere in the work. Other extrinsic elements that surround the text, including autobiographical elements and the context, need not be considered. Such views are promoted in new criticism, structuralism, formalist theories, the intentional fallacy, the affective fallacy and others (see Wimsatt & Beardsley, 1946; Barry, 2017; Dobie, 2012; Farrell, 2017). The other set of theories asserts that an insightful reading of the work is one that is necessarily informed by both extrinsic elements pertaining to the author and various socio-cultural elements as well as by a close-reading approach of the work. The reader-response theory, cultural studies, new historicism, psychoanalytic theories, phenomenology and postcolonial theory and others are seriously concerned with how extrinsic elements are operational in any work and how the ‘I’ of the author is inherently imbedded in the literary work (see Parker, 2020; Ahern, 2019; Felski, 2015; Castle, 2007).

Drawing upon Heidegger’s concept of art, the happening of the truth, and time and being, along with other author-related theories, I argue that in ‘Love Again’ the poet’s self-revelation does not forsake the poem’s aesthetics nor does it limit its humanist scope. The recognition that the persona in the poem is also representative of the ‘I’ of the poet can positively affect readers’ response to the poem and the way they bond with it. Heidegger’s views of the author and his/her work of art mediate between the above two theoretical positions.

Saif’s commitment to the cause of Palestine is reflected in all of his works, whether literary or non-literary, directly or indirectly. Resistance to the occupation of Palestine led him to be an activist in the Students’ Union at the University of Jordan and he took a leading part in many demonstrations organized against the Israeli occupation of Palestine in the sixties and seventies of the twentieth-century. He wrote many articles condemning the peace treaty between many Arab countries and the state of Israel. His attitude towards the treaty was similar to that of Edward Said in that both exposed the unethicality of the treaty and how the Zionist propaganda has for long been working to justify the uprooting of Palestinians from their lands. Saif expressed his resentment to how the previously oppressed becomes an oppressor and the victimized becomes a victimizer, stressing that neither the Palestinians nor the Arabs had anything to do with the Holocaust and yet they were the ones to be punished for it. In *The Witness, the Witnessed*, Saif opposes Mahmoud Darwish's stand regarding the Zionist entity when Darwish considered the Israeli existence a *fait accompli* that has to be recognized by all the Arabs even though he never denied that the land of Palestine belongs to the Palestinians. Darwish (1993) argued that the historical solution for the Palestinian conflict lies in the transformation of the Middle East to the socialist system and with the victory of global socialism over capitalism. This ensures the historical progress of the region and its evolution into one big socialist nation (Saif, 2016). Saif continues to be preoccupied with the Palestinian cause through the creation of an imaginative world that fulfils his desire for freedom, justice and love. Saif believes that dictatorship and authoritarian regimes are responsible for the deterioration of the region and for the continued Israeli occupation of Palestine.

II. Literature Review

Walid Saif started his poetic career by accentuating the dilemma of the Palestinian cause, resistance as an ontological necessity and the importance of redeeming the land. In the poems he wrote in the 1960s, Saif made specific reference to the Palestinian city he was born in, Tulkarm. In this phase, Saif was hopeful of freeing the Palestinian land from occupation. Like Darwish, he was named as a poet of resistance (Salameh, 2019), and was classified, along with Fadwa Toukan, Nizar Qabani, Bader Shaker Al-Sayyab and others, as one of the most important Arab poets in composing free verse (Salameh, 2019). Odeh (2020)[7], Abu-Nidal (2000), Al-Mashayikh (2005), Ibrahim (2019), Fakhri (1990), Khalil (2021)[8], Saleh (2022)[9] and others acknowledge the impact that Saif has on the development of modern poetry and free

[7] balkinews.com/?p=29438
[8] sahafi.jo/files/art.php?id=285661dbd89e6d3fa15f1b2ff7a4c2622989586e
[9] diffah.alaraby.co.uk/diffah/opinions/2022/9/7/%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B9%D8%B1-%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%88%D8%B2%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%83%D9%87%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-

verse in Jordan and Palestine and on the protection of the historical memory of Palestine through his poetry and the TV series he authors. Saddouk, in *The Palestinian Poets in the Twentieth Century: An Anthology* (2000) includes Saif as one of the most important poets who influenced the style and topics of other Arab poets despite the fact that he turned from writing poetry into writing drama and novels. About his abandonment of poetry, Saif states in his biography *The Witness, The Witnessed* that ‘I took poetry with me in my dramatic writing ... The concept of poetics is broader than the limits of the poem, and it can really be manifested in other literary forms’ (2016, p. 465). Saif finds that ‘poetry hates division, partnership, and constraints; poetry demands to remain in the center of the "I", and poets do not reach their full potential unless they take poetry as a craft and devote their mental and emotional abilities completely to it’ (2016, p. 466).

Nevertheless, Saif’s above shift did not prevent some Arab critics from pursuing serious scholarly work on his poems. In *The Manifestations of Artistic Creativity in the Poetry of Walid Saif* (2007), Khlaf draws attention to the artistic creativity in Saif’s poetry as manifest in the remarkable stylistic elements, lexicon, imagery, and dramatic structure enriched by intense utilization of paradox, intertextuality, ancient myths from different locations and allusion. In addition, she shows how Saif is influenced by writers from the West like Federico García Lorca and other non-Arab poets.

Another study entitled *Myth and Folklore in Walid Saif’s Poetry* (Nada, 2013) draws attention to Saif’s utilization of mythic figures like the phoenix, mermaid, Osiris, Ishtar, folklore like folk proverbs, songs, tales, and costumes. Nada analyses the function of those mythic and folklore elements as they occur both in Saif’s poetry and in the original myth and folklore tales. She elaborates on how this utilization affects the structure of Saif’s poem as well as its meaning, emphasizing that Saif does not use myth and folklore as mere decorative tools; rather they are intended to be a chronicle guarding the Palestinian memoir and an implicit critique of corrupt and complicit political authorities. The mythic elements in two poems by Saif also constitute the subject of the article ‘Depicting Reality in Walid Saif’s Poem ‘Ghadra and Zaid Al-Yasin Tal’ as a Model’ (Al-Deek, 2008). Al-Deek explicates how myth has always been indispensable to the poetry genre and how Saif makes use of mythology to endow his poems with dramatic energy and dream-like visions so as to reveal the different layers of the identities projected in both poems.

While Saif’s literary work is the focus of many Arab scholars, Heidegger’s work is the focus of scholars from all over the world. Many western scholars read poetry through Heideggerian lenses. For example, Backman (2011) argues how being in Stefan George’s poetry is influenced by Heidegger’s concept of unconcealment through linguistic articulation - releasement of words from metaphysics to being. The being of the word, its meaning, is historically and contextually determined and not a purely subjective process. Rogers (2006) finds that Heidegger’s view of poetry does not differ much from his view of philosophy despite the fact that Heidegger later defends poets against philosophers; ‘the words in a poem may be less formal, but truth never depended on an academic degree’ (p. 6).

In the process of reading Wallace Stevens’ poetry from a phenomenological perspective, Tan (2022) points out that Heidegger and Stevens stress the importance of poetic language as an opening that surpasses transcendental ego and a strict dualistic view of the world. Both see the truth in poetry as openings and happenings that figure out methods for potential transformation of reality rather than a mere representation of it. Appropriation is for both a major function of the poetic language. Similarly, ‘Love Again’ is all about the poet’s endeavour to appropriate images that defy the existing status quo and express a desire for things to be. Gordon (1998) emphasizes Heidegger's interest in proving that language as a way of thinking is what makes human existence meaningful. Apart from being a communicative means, language, unconceals human truth. Poetry is not merely a source of pleasure or a site for the aesthetic; poetry is an educational tool that has the potential of awakening people to deeper perception of ontological issues.

Heidegger’s philosophy is also drawn upon to read novels. For Heidegger, Kim shows, uncovering a phenomenon is a sort of epiphany that belongs to the truth; art is a ‘manifold revealing’ (2012, p. 41). Art is all poetic and allows for an opening through which the luminosity can be possible. Epiphany is the mysterious opening itself. ‘The opening is neither the light nor the darkness but the space that allows both to play’ (2012, p. 44). Heidegger’s description of epiphany is used in the twentieth century in place of the word vision. Both Heidegger and Joyce use the term to denote resistance to order in disciplines and institutions. Scholar (2018) analyzes Leopold Bloom, the main character in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, through Heidegger’s concept of the *Dasein*, where via his phenomenological approach, affirms how human beings cannot be dissociated from their environment. Bloom is as much in Ithaca as much as Ithaca is in Bloom. The transformation that Bloom undergoes is also the transformation in the place.

Babich (2006) points out the convergences and divergences between Nietzsche, Heidegger and Hölderlin in philosophical thought, music and love. She draws attention to the deterioration that is befalling the real world in term of politics, science, ecology and economy. She holds that philosophy can nourish an ethical attitude to deter this deterioration. Also, Grosser and Sahouri (2021) show how Heidegger turned from philosophical thinking into poetic thinking after his engagement with the Nazi movement to name phenomena anew. Their book underscores some critics’ reading of individual poetic and literary works drawn on Heideggerian themes, specifically those concerned with immanence and transcendence in modern times. They show affinities as well as divergences in world literature to unfold the complex relation between literature and philosophy rather than rendering one a mirror of the other.

%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9

Allen (2007) argues that it is important to account for the specificity and excessiveness of literary language within the ontological terms laid out by Heidegger. This is so since literature is grounded in the human nature, human relations and human history. This approach entails that critics consider Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin from an aesthetic perspective and not in terms of its convergence with Heidegger's philosophy. Allen maintains that a combined approach of the two can enable a discovery of the truth which is, in Deriddean term, can be found in ellipses (see Pelmas, 1993; Bové, 1980). Griffiths (2014) explains how sensitive and personal moments that T. S. Eliot experienced in his life and expressed best in his poetry are reminiscent of those moments of unconsealment that Heidegger refers to in *Ereignis*. Heidegger's reading of Hölderlin invokes the same situation as that of T. S. Eliot. It is poetic language that transforms this subjective experience into a generic human condition.

In the Arab region, scholars refer to Heidegger a lot; many of his works are translated into Arabic. However, we could not come across a study that undertakes the analysis of any Arabic literary work from a Heideggerian perspective. For example, Moser (2014) argues that there are many Arab thinkers who are interested in Heidegger's philosophy; those include Meskini, Miftah and al-Shaykar who read Heidegger as a critic of metaphysics. They also apply Heidegger's critique of metaphysics to their own philosophical projects, but not to any literary work.

Mohammad (2012) draws attention to Heidegger's interest in poetry not merely as an aesthetic object but as a primordial mode of thinking. Poetic language is imbued with potentials that account for both transcendental, historical and ontological issues. He established a dialogue with Hölderlin to free language from its rigid reference to one phenomenon or another in the modern age. Mahmmud shows that poetry derives its value from the philosophy that poetry inheres. For example, Al-Dihaji (2022) mentions in his study that the Modern Egyptian poet Mohammad Amin raises ontological questions influenced by Heidegger's philosophy; but he does not talk in detail about those questions. His study is concerned with Amin's interest in modernist ideas.

This study differs from previous studies on Saif's poems in that it is the first to read 'Love Again' or actually any of Saif's poetry from a Heideggarian perspective and, drawing specifically upon Heidegger's view of art, it is the first to make use of many aspects of the poem to probe whether any separation between contextual readings and textual readings is possible or constructive. None of the foregoing studies and other studies on Heidegger provides analysis of any poem or work of art to demonstrate how Heidegger's views of art can reconcile between two different theoretical positions that still occupy the thought of many scholars. This study shows that Heidegger attributes importance to both extrinsic and intrinsic elements of art, to the value of the writing 'Self', and to the permanence of the historical functionality of the literary text.

III. Theory in the Research

Being for Heidegger is a *Dasein* which denotes the entity's relation to the other, and more specifically the interaction with that other without whom the world is plunged into nothingness. The earth and the world are two different but inseparable entities. The world manifests its being through the different aspects of humans' actions, interactions, production, struggle, etc. Earth is the site which shelters the world – this dynamic presence. Everyday *Dasein* thus exists as being-with in any mode of involvement, be it harmonious or cacophonic (Heidegger, 2002a, 1971). In 'Love Again', the 'Other' is depicted as constitutive of the 'Self', through love and empathy at times and through struggle, disturbance and uprooting at others – an instance stressed by Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* (2002a). The persona in 'Love Again' is a highly dynamic entity whose presence is not confined by temporality or locality.

The dynamic re-emergence of the speaker and the spoken in Saif's poem is reminiscent of what Heidegger terms in his article 'The Origin of the Work of Art' 'permanence,' 'a continued existence' (2002a, p. 268). In fact, Saif wrote various poems about the Palestinian tragedy and resistance to the Israeli occupation. Those include 'Poems in the Time of Fath' (1968), 'The Odyssey of the People of Palestine' (1979), 'Tattoo on the Arm of Khadra' (1971), and others. However, 'Love Again' was more attuned with Heidegger's definition of a literary work of art as not simply a 'thing' or a 'vocal in the linguistic work,' a feature that is characteristic of all literary works, but one that 'makes publicly known something other than itself, it manifests something other: it is an allegory … the work is a symbol' (2002, p. 3). Yet, unlike the outward being of things, a work has a core that is naturally derived from its 'thingliness'; it is that 'which always appears and comes forth along with the core' (2002a, p. 6). The sentence, he argues, does not provide the structure of the work, for the structure of the thing (the being of the poem) and the sentence are derived 'from a common and more primordial source,' whose 'familiarity' as 'a long-established habit' has led to overlooking 'the unfamiliarity from which it arose.' A mere interpretation of the work as a thing, as it stands, is 'inadequate to its thingliness, its self-sustaining and self-containing nature' (2002a, p. 7).

Obviously, by emphasizing 'primordial source,' Heidegger gives weight to human sentiments, values and inclinations. Proust, Deleuze and Barthes hold a similar point of view in focusing on the sublimity and eternality of the work of art due to the spiritual power it has. This power is derived from the relation that exists between the work and people's various experiences. In 'Love Again', the speaker/the poet is aware of his value as an originator of unique linguistic words that invoke timelessness and spacelessness. Thus, he invites his woman to

Come nigh and enter the heart of my realm,
To a timeless time, a spaceless space. (1992, p. 9)

The reference to a human core whether through allegory or symbol, according to Heidegger, is a crucial element of his definition of the aesthetics of works of art. This human core is a vital presence and a central theme in Saif's poem. Palestinian resistance to occupation in Saif's other poems can be underscored reference to Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* where Being is meaningful in terms of one's engagement with a cause. In 'Love Again', 'historical permanence' and 'primordial source' are more clearly projected than in his previous poems. Despite the fact that Heidegger applies his views to what he labels as 'great works of art,' what counts as a great work of art or a canon has become a highly debated issue now. For Langfeld (2018), canonisation is a dynamic process that cannot be reduced to the aesthetic elements of an artistic work. It can be a site of power struggle (see Dobie, 2012; Eagleton, 2013; Parker, 2020).

Heidegger in 'The Origin of the Work of art' shows how the poem or any work of art allows 'the artist to emerge as the master of art. The artist is the origin of the work. The work is the origin of the artist. Neither is without the other' (2002a, p. 1). The reciprocal relation between the two is where the happening of the truth can be found. The artist or the orator is presented through the language which enables meanings and speaks historically the artist's name and identity. Poetic language unconceals the poet's inner world and brings it partly into being. This reminds of the Freudian perspective of dreams, for like dreams, language and literary texts can be symptomatic of the unconscious, the latent. Unlike dreams, a poetic text is a form of being, a *Dasein*. Heidegger, influenced by Husserl's phenomenology, stresses the impact of subjective consciousness on the formation and perception of art and actually any worldly phenomenon. Unlike Descartes who maintained that disinterestedness is conditional for an 'objective' account of any phenomenon, including art, Heidegger admits that great works of art are a site of openness and a source of light through which the artist's subjective self is disclosed. Heidegger's viewpoint on 'great' works of art offers a situation where the personal and the impersonal coexist.

Heidegger calls revelation through language of poetry a 'projective' statement in a historical sense. Through art, the poet's subjective experience enables readers to understand permanence and images in temporal time. Poetry is a process of preservation of the truth, 'the setting-into-work of truth' (2002, p. 33). Through it 'history either begins or starts over again' (2002, p. 74). Given the historical function and nature of art, a poem is always in a position of a genuine beginning. Whenever art happens, through reading and rereading, it discloses new dimensions of people's being in the world. Heideggerian above perspectives prove useful in understanding how the subjective dimension – the 'I am' of the poet – in 'Love Again' does not prevent the poem from permanently becoming a genuine beginning and an infinite reservoir of human 'truth'(s). 'Love Again', as the study aims to show, is both a subjective narrative and a poetic happening; the 'I am' in the poem is both intentional/biographical and impersonal/infinite in its permanent historical functionality.

Moments of self-representation for an inclusive interpretation of 'Love Again' as a literary text in its own right and as a disclosure of Saif's own psychological status call for reference to authorial theories of Roland Barthes, Freud, Lacan as well as to autobiographical theories. This study will explore anxieties and ontological concerns that are manifest in 'Love Again' in relation to the Palestinian traumatic political and cultural context. The issue of the author's being in the text and the historical being of the text *per se* will be discussed in reference to Heidegger's perception of the *Dasein* – being as an act of involvement with the other (Heidegger, 2002).

In 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Heidegger argues that 'art is historical and, as historical, is the creative preservation of truth in the work. Art happens as poetry' (2002, p. 49). In any work of art, there is 'a disclosure of the being as that and how it is, there is a happening of truth at work' (2002, p. 16), and this being is none other than the producer of the artistic work. What Heidegger seems to be implying here is that the artist does not only speak the momentary truth through his art, but s/he also preserves it, for every time the work is visited, a new opening is revealed, which is reminiscent of defamiliarization, a term first coined by Russian formalist Victor Shklovsky, to signify art's power to transform the ordinary and release it from the monotony of typical perception (Eagleton, 1996).

In 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Heidegger affirms that 'Art is the origin of both the artwork and the artist. An origin is the source of the essence in which the being of a being presences' (2002a, p. 33). He presents us with a pattern of thought that supports both a linguistic/intrinsic reading of the text as well as an extrinsic/contextual reading – both approaches help to illuminate the truth in this work. The historical survival of the work is as important as the creator of the work since 'it is the work which makes the creators possible in their essence and which, in virtue of its essence, needs the preservers' (2002a, p. 44). The reader, the preserver, of the work is not a contingency; s/he is 'unavoidable' and naturally comes to the essay from without, at first and for a long time thereafter, represents and interprets the facts of the case from out of the silent domain that is the source of what has been thought. But for the author there remains the necessity to speak each time in the language that is, in each case, appropriate to the various stations on his/her way (2002a, p. 56).

Heidegger describes the language of poetry, which has a privileged place in his thinking, as the truth of all the truths since it speaks the orator's name and unconceals her/his identity (see Magrini & Schwieler, 2018). The potential of great art is 'to attune, transform, and displace *Dasein,* representing its ecstatic entry into the unconcealment of Being' (Heidegger, 2002, p. 54). Collins and Selina maintain that art for Heidegger 'opens space the space for disclosure (lighted clearing or *Lichtung sens Sein*)' (2012, p. 251). 'It is more like a field of flickering illumination and darkening. Beings appear in the light, but in that same light beings also retreat, slide into shadow, become absent … every presence arrives with Absences' (Ibid, p. 259). Heidegger points out that 'the clearing is pervaded by a constant concealment in the twofold form of refusal and obstructing' (2002, p. 31). This invokes Virginia Woolf's famous statement in her article 'Modern Fiction' where she asserts that life is 'not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end' (1984, p. 160). The essence of truth in art is that which stands between obstruction/concealment and clearing/unconcealment; 'the essence of truth is in itself the ur-strife [*Urstreit*] in which is won that open center within which beings stand, and from out of which they withdraw into themselves' (2002, p. 31). The oscillation between disclosure and closure sustains art and creates a continuous strife/struggle.

Heidegger (2002) maintains that, for art to be accessible, it has 'to stand on its own' and this is 'the innermost intention of the artist' who is 'like a passageway which, in the creative process, destroys itself for the sake of the coming forth of the work' (p. 19). Yet, he wonders if it is possible for the work of art to stand outside all relations; he answers that it is not possible, since 'a mere reversal, made for its own sake, reveals nothing' (2002, p. 21). Both the creator and the preserver are the thrust behind the survival of a 'good' work of art. The artist seeks an expression of a sense of 'historical humanity' that is based on 'the foundational experience of the thinking,' reflecting an ability to unconceal beings (2002, pp. 38, 40). The creator of the work of art sets forth the work, allows beings to assume appearance and uses his/her handicraft to capture the truth of the human existence. Heidegger's assertion that the artist aims to capture what is true about the human existence attributes importance to the artist's intention. Heidegger in the process does not overlook the importance of how the artist's handicraft determines the kind of effect the work of art has on readers or audience. The above views of Heidegger will be made use of while analysing 'Love Again' to explore how authorial impulses and other contextual elements help to elucidate works of art and understand their permanent ontological significance.

IV. Note on Methodology

This study is based on a reading of Walid Saif's poem 'Love Again' through a Heideggerian perspective. In 'Love Again', Saif raises lots of ontological questions and concerns, some of which are specific to the Palestinian question, the history of the Arab world and others relate to humanity in general. Through Heidegger's views of *Dasein* and works of art, the study shows how the poem combines the specific concerns of the poet with timeless issues and how the specific itself can be transcended to become timeless and borderless.

The article first introduces the speaker in the poem (the persona) and shows how he can be identified with the poet himself and influenced by the context in which the poem is produced. In 'Love Again', there is repetition of sentences like 'Be, so I am' and 'love's not but for me to be and for you to be'. This conditional mode of existence is how Heidegger sees *Dasein* (being in action), which manifests itself in the extreme through love. The poem is imbued with instances and themes that evoke many of the thoughts that Heidegger confers. This correlation was encouraging to undertake this study.

Heidegger's attentiveness to the concept of the originator of the work of art and of the revelation of the work through a linguistic activity brings forth the argument that his views assume a position that mediates between contextual and non-contextual theories. Accordingly, the study will underscore how the aesthetic of the work is inherently linked with the author's performance (handicraft) and influenced by the author's own context. It is on this performance that readers can make ethical, political and aesthetic judgement. A reference to any of the contextual and non-contextual theories will be made as relevant to the discussion of 'Love Again' and to Heidegger's perception of the work of art.

The analysis of 'Love Again' will be qualitative – emphasizing thematic, aesthetic, contextual and authorial issues. The poem, as such, is intended as an example to show that Heidegger's perception of the work of art proves that the contest between textual theories and contextual theories proves unnecessary or even chimerical.

V. Appropriation and Reversal

In 'The Origin of the Work of Art', Heidegger assigns great significance to poetry to save humanity from being enslaved by accelerating progress in the world of technology. He believes that poetry expresses the authentic truth of the human being (2002a, 2002b). In the following lines from 'Love Again', the speaker allows his imagination to travel back in time only to recreate history

> Love Again
> ….
> Here Al-Ma'arri peruses life and seeks explications in explications,
> And here Al-Ma'arri devours history and epochs in seconds of speculation,
> And observes the epics, the battles, the ladders and the paths in the trunks of oaks;
> And here Al-Ma'arri observes the odds in their odds.
> As the wheel of fortune rotates unchecked against the odds.
> And here Al-Ma'arri, reclining, unravels in the body tempests and subordinate morasses,
> And here Al-Ma'arri's eyes opened to the expanses. (1992, p. 9)

Al-Ma'arri (937-1057) is considered one of the greatest classical Arab poets and philosophers. He became blind at a young age and was known for his pessimism and hereditary views. Saif reinvents Al-Ma'arri and bestows upon him what he did not have, sight, and glorifies through fantasia what he already had, insight. Al-Ma'arri is an allusion that expresses the poet's desire for reversing historical facts and producing an effect of estrangement. Al-Ma'arri in the above lines can observe and 'open his eyes to the expanses,' and 'unravels in the body tempests and subordinate morasses.' He is depicted as indulged in a world of desires and sensuality, a world to which he was an alien. But such is the shock that Saif induces in the reader. Heidegger (2022) asserts that aesthetics is located in the disturbance of the familiar and traditional (see Grosser & Sahouri, 2021). Al-Ma'arri who lived in the Abbasid era is recreated through the poet's imagination and so he becomes the truth of being at the moments of reading; 'the undisclosed abundance of the unfamiliar and the extraordinary, which means that it also contains strife with the familiar and ordinary' (Heidegger, 2002a, p. 74).

Al-Ma'arri is shown as a free man who is not hindered by blindness. Heidegger attributes to poetry a special status because it is that special nature of the language of poetry that brings the original core of humans into the open, which in the case of Al-Ma'arri is the desire to be released from the imprisonment of blindness. The projection of this desire is bringing the human core into being by disclosing it; Heidegger describes poetry as a 'projective saying' (2002, p. 46). The truth, however, 'is intended to denote that opposition which exists within the essence of truth between clearing and concealment. It is the conflict of the primal strife. The essence of truth is in itself the *ur-strife*' (2002, p. 31). Al-Ma'arri's presence in the poem entreats a situation where the power of the image is based on the creation of oppositions between what is real and what is illusionary.

A similar opposition between reality and illusion is found in another stanza that describes Hassan Al-Nawasi, a Muslim Persian (650-814) who pioneered the genres of wine poetry and erotic poetry addressed to both men and women. In 'Love Again', Al-Nawasi is cooped up in this world, creating his world in a glass of wine.

He Beholds on the martyr's head a dove perching, and headless tyrants walking,
He beholds countries recovering their firmaments and their birds. (1992, p. 9)

Saif creates images inspired not much by the reality of Al-Nawasi as officially chronicled, but rather by Saif's own desire to render him an agency for the transformation of an oppressive condition. This recalls Heidegger's description of art as capable of 'exposing the unreality of the arrangements of our ordinary life, releasing us from the closure and rigidity of conventional perception.' So even if poetic elements are based on *being* at a specific moment in time, Heidegger argues that 'what truth the work of art reveals can never be identical to what went before' (2002, p. 75).

VI. Saif's and Heidegger's Phenomenology

Heidegger was influenced by Husserl, a founder of modern phenomenology, who thought of the human consciousness not in Freudian terms but in terms of what might be true of the universal structure of the human mind/consciousness. Heidegger did not settle for a transcendental human consciousness. In *Time and Being*, he argues how the human consciousness is not an abstract entity. Rather, it is *being* in the world, it is *being* in time and place. Being turns into *Dasein* through an active engagement with others. More recent studies show that the phenomenology of many human experiences prove that the affect and consciousness cannot be separated (Miller, 2017; Wehrs, 2017). This implies that our interpretation of a literary text is a sort of affect that is inseparable from how we respond to this text.

The truth is perceived differently by people based on their different experiences and the truth represents itself to the reader through a sublime linguistic activity. The reader's perception of the truth is a subjective process informed by her/his own mental activities. Perception is what turns up in one's consciousness and does not have to correspond with what exists in the real world. '*Dasein* is not primarily a detached observer of 'objects', but a 'concerned' user of practical entities…So the world is not something 'out there', external – but part of *Dasein*'s being, as being-in' (Collins & Selina, 2012, p. 128; see Andrew, 2018). Saif in *The Witness, the Witnessed* maintains a similar position: "The eye of the beholder changes, so the image of the visible person changes. The self-identity that connects me to the distant past gives me the feeling that the stages of my life represent a process of one self. And to the extent that the past contributes to the production of the present, the present contributes to the reproduction of the past insofar as it is a narrative constructed by the present consciousness" (2016, p. 5).

In 'Love Again', there are many places and names that are inspired by the poet's cultural and historical location but are transcended to address what Heidegger calls the human core which he defines as the struggle between what is hidden and what is revealed. Saif appropriates historical figures to induce the idea of resistance as conducive to freedom.

Saif repeats the expression 'it is love again' and 'be, so I am' eight times in the poem. Love is ever-regenerated and the I's being is conditioned by the other's being whose togetherness makes *Dasein* possible. The speaker in the poem addresses his beloved by saying 'Start your trip to a metaphysical time beyond the scope of time.' Love, *Dasein* and timelessness are three main terms that Heidegger finds necessary for sublime works of art: "The time is desolate because it lacks the unhiddenness of the essence of pain, death, and love. This desolation is itself desolate because the essential realm in which pain and death and love belong together is withdrawn. Hiddenness exists so long as the realm where they belong together is the abyss of being" (Heidegger, 2002a, p. 205).

Love, according to Heidegger, is the 'invisible innermost,' which is true in terms of its presence 'like that of the customary consciousness of calculating production, is a presence of immanence' (2002, p. 125; see Marshall). Saif's reference to metaphysical time and immanence in 'Love Again' does not mitigate the intensity of the Palestinian crisis as an issue in the poem. Saif witnessed the 1967 war between the Israelis and some Arab countries, which ended in the Israeli's occupation of Tulkarm, the poet's own town, and the rest of the Palestinian land that remained after the 1948 war. The poetic is not carried out at the expense of the political in the poem. Saif depicts vivid images of the battlefield, martyrs and barricades. He compares those images with his own poetic rhyme:

> I'm the lounge where jaded warriors recline
> I'm the conglomeration of oxymora where east and west entwine.
> …
> My rhyme is the burning of the bosom in the way of lassies.
> My rhyme is a walking martyr
> Squelching in his blood, stalked by fires and ashes. (1992, p. 9)

The horror of the war is rendered less strenuous through a human/humanist encounter between the speaker, who now assumes the role of a soldier, and the enemy soldier. In a beautiful stanza, the speaker expresses fear of surrendering to the other soldier out of empathy which, however, does not last for long since he knows that the being of the other is the annihilation of the self.

> Let's part now then, before our acquaintance is complete,
> For we're two warriors – let's not with sophisms compete.
> …
> We may meet at the dart shooting spree,
> After which you will be but I won't be,
> Or I will be but you won't be. (1992, p. 9)

This crisis is both personal and collective; it is expressed through visual and perceptual senses:

> I am still searching in my spirit's space for an orb that guides me to my motherland.
> I want to extol my motherland,
> It's a land where bards and lovers command,
> Reigned not by Kafur, nor does a policeman in ink-colour uniform has the upper hand. (1992, p. 9)

The speaker expresses not what is but what he desires things to be; a free land that is not governed by Kafur[10] and policemen. It is in that gift of the sublime poetic that the desired becomes unconcealed. It is *being* that renders poetry a source of pleasure and a call for renewal. For Heidegger, beauty lies in the truth[11] and the poet is the primal source of art who has the talent to appropriate humans to the sublime in many ways, and appropriate being to places and earth to sky through "an upward glance that spans the between of earth and sky…The poet it is who, looking to the sky, sees in its manifestness the self-concealment of the unknown god … At the basis of man's ability to build in the sense of cultivating and constructing there must be, as primal source, his poetic ability, the ability to take the measure of the world." (1971, p. xiv). The lines below from 'Love Again' articulate a situation – images – similar to Heidegger's above comment on the poet and poetry, especially in relation to the ascendance of lands for heavens:

> And seagulls wailing, and powerful poetry flowing!
> How could a shepherd's pipe take me back to myself?
> Wherefrom does this nightfall purloin its tint, for aught I know?
> Love Again then.
> Wonderous is the place whence comes this ocean, these embers,
> The land ascends for the heavens to give her a kiss so aglow! (1992, p. 9)

Saif in 'Love Again' uses poetry to disturb reality and to make the unconscious patent through an activity. This reminds of Freudian interpretation of dreams, where one's dream can illuminate the gist of the concealed dream. But unlike dreams, poetic articulation is a presence fashioned through the poet's premeditated artistic skills. There is a resemblance between what Saif does in his poem and what Heidegger says about poetry:

> Projective saying is poetry: the saying of world and earth, the saying of the arena of their conflict and thus of the place of all nearness and remoteness of the gods. Poetry is the saying of the unconcealedness of what is. Actual language at any given moment is the happening of this saying, in which *a people's world historically arises for it and the earth is preserved as that which remains closed* [Italics mine]. Projective saying is saying which, in preparing the sayable, simultaneously brings the unsayable as such into a world. In such saying, the concepts of an historical people's nature, i.e., of its belonging to world history, are formed for that folk, before it. (1971, p. 71)

Disruption and linguistic deviation in poetry are for Freud a sign of the artist's neuroses that nevertheless can be therapeutic for both the poet and the reader. Like Heidegger, Saif and many others, Freud linked aspects of the work of art with the life of its originator, a genre which was later called psychobiography (Dobie, 2012). Freud shows how the unconscious can emerge through art 'to give a neurosis socially acceptable expression' (Dobie, 2012, p. 61). This view has led to emphasize the author's life and her/his intentions. Lacan later focused on how the unconscious constitutes the core of one's being. While the 'I' self for Lacan is always fragmented and often absent, the healthy 'I' self for Freud is

---

[10] A ruler of Egypt whom Al-Muttanbi, a well-known poet who lived in the Abbasid period, described as tyrant and dictator
[11] It echoes Blake's poem "Ode on a Grecian Urn" where Blake situates beauty and truth in a similar philosophical tone: 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.' It is worth referring to this interesting intertextuality briefly.

characterized by unity. Freud was interested in art as symptomatic of the author's unconscious. For Lacan, the text does not have an outside reference in the physical reality. The only reference is the words that make up the text. This indifference to the author and to the world outside the text is a condition that is rejected by Heidegger and subscribers to contextual theories (Dobie, 2012).

Despite the fact that the link between the author's intention and the text is not perfectly reciprocal or simplistic, Heidegger does not undermine the role of the author in originating the text, nor does he undermine history and its ever-emerging effect on the text and the reader. It is true that knowing about the author's intention might illuminate many aspects of the text, but equally true is that the text might illuminate many aspects about the author and his/her context. Formalists are usually more rigid about their theoretical standings than contextualists who make use of many of the components that formalists develop in their work, including the close-reading approach and the infinite/deferred meanings (*Différance*) of the text by deconstructionist theorists and others. Contextualist readings of the text acknowledge that fissures, contradictions, absences, gaps and inconsistencies in the text itself can tell more about the author's unconscious or his/her inhibitions.

VII. Conclusion

The literary text can say about the author what the author does not say about his/her own text or about him/herself. Literary language, on the other hand, especially poetry, has a wide range of connotations and implications that can be revealed through interpretive activities and analytical approaches. Literary language can expose the unconscious of the author and tell a great deal of her/his inner complex world. This dilutes the far-stretched contest between those who invoke the context in the process of reading/interpreting the text and those who advocate the autonomy of the text and focus exclusively on its intrinsic aspects. The text could illuminate the status of the author and her/his world and the context in which the work is produced much more than the author's own account of his/her own text. This recognition neither subdues the text to the context nor the reverse.

Heidegger's approach to the work of art is attentive to the text in terms of its unique linguistic articulation, origin, originator, permanent historicity, aesthetics and humanist function, and inherent relation to the world. Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* is crucial to understanding how the work of art relates to the world not merely as a being but also as an operative dynamic tool that links humans with the world. The poem, or the work of art, continues to re-emerge and reveal what Heidegger calls the human core. The continuous happening of the truth (the core/the unconscious and the conscious) necessarily involves different agencies including the reader and the world.

In 'Love Again', Saif presents us with many concepts that Heidegger develops in many of his works as pertaining to love and being and art and being. Otherness and love as components of the Self's being are emphasized by both Heidegger and Saif. A significant convergence exists between many elements in Saif's poem and Heidegger's views of art at the conceptual level. This study has also shown how 'Love Again' does not extol the aesthetic at the expense of the personal, nor does it sacrifice the personal at the expense of aesthetics. In different positions in the poem, the poet elevates his own linguistic abilities and his rhymes. Nevertheless, the poem continues to reflect Saif's commitment to, and nostalgia for, Palestine and his resentment to tyranny. His belief in the power of poetry leads him to a reversal of miserable realistic conditions and as such he depicts impressive images reference to his own subjective desire and patriotic wishes. A Heideggerian reading of 'Love Again' has shown how Heidegger himself does not see that a conflict actually exists between textual and contextual approaches to works of art (probably he took those two positions for granted). A separation is neither feasible nor even possible.

References

[1] Abu-Nidal, N. (2000). 'Walid Saif's Tattoo on the Arm of Khadra': A voice with Rhythm'. Afkar, Retrieved March 20, 2023, from http://www.afkar.jo/View_Articlear.aspx?ID=0&Type=11&Keyword=%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AF%20%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%81

[2] Ahern, S. (2019). 'Introduction'. *Affect Theory and Literary Critical Practice: A Feel for the Text.* Edited by Stephen Ahern. Palgrave Macmillan.

[3] Allen S. W. (2007). *Ellipsis of Poetry and the Experience of Language after Heidegger, Hölderlin, and Blanchot*. State University of New York.

[4] Al-Deek, I. (2008). Depicting Reality in Walid Saif's Poem - Ghadra and Zaid Al-Yasin Tale as a Model. *Al-Najah University Journal for Research in Humanities*, *22*(5), 11-25.

[5] Al-Dihaji, M. (2022). 'Mohamad Adam's Modern Writing in poetry and verse'. *Afkar*. Retrieved April, 15, 2023, from afkar.jo/View_ArticleAr.aspx?type=2&ID=3057

[6] Al-Mashayikh, M. (2005). 'From the Memoir of the Secretary of the Writers' Union'. *Al-Ra'i* (Jordan). 29/6/2005

[7] Alshaer, A. (2011). 'Identity in Mahmoud Darwish's Poem 'The dice player.' *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, *4*(2). 90–110.

[8] Babich, B. E. (2006). *Words in Blood, Like Flowers Philosophy and Poetry, Music and Eros in Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Heidegger*. State University of New York Press.

[9] Backman, J. (2011). 'The Transitional Breakdown of the Word: Heidegger and Stefan George's Encounter with Language'. *Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual*, 54-73.

[10] Barry, P. (2017). *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (4th ed). Manchester University Press.

[11] Carman, T. (2013). 'The Question of Being'. Edited by Mark A. Wrathall. *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*. Cambridge University Press. 84-99.
[12] Collins, G. and Howard, S. (2012). *Introducing Heidegger: A Graphic Design*. Icon Books Ltd.
[13] Denker, A. (2013). 'Martin Heidegger's Being and Time: A Carefully Planned Accident?' *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*. Edited by Mark A. Wrathall. Cambridge University Press. 54-83.
[14] Dobie, A. B. (2012). *Theory Into Practice: An Introduction to Literary Criticism. 3rd ed.* Wadsworth.
[15] Eagleton, T. (1996). *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. (2nd ed). Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
[16] Eagleton, T. (2013). *How to Read Literature*. Yale University Press.
[17] Fakhri, S. (1990). 'Walid Saif: Nature and Plants Celebrating the Body of the Martyr'. *Ad-Dustour*, 12/1/1990.
[18] Farrell, J. (2017). *The Varieties of Authorial Intention Literary Theory beyond the Intentional Fallacy*. Palgrave Macmillan.
[19] Felski, R. (2015). *The Limits of Critique*. The University of Chicago Press.
[20] Gordon, H. (1998). *Educational Implications*. August 10-15, 1998. Retrieved May, 14, 2023, from bu.edu/wcp/Papers/Cont/ContGord.htm
[21] Grosser, F. and Nassima S. (2021). 'Variations on a Theme of 'Poetic Thinking' An Introduction'. *Heidegger in the Literary World: Variations on Poetic Thinking*. Edited by Florin Grosser and Nassima Sahroui. Rowman and Littlefield. ix-xxi.
[22] Griffiths, D. (2014). 'Looking into the Heart of Light: Considering the Poetic Event in the Work of T. S. Eliot and Martin Heidegger'. *Philosophy and Literature*, *38*(2), 350-367. DOI: 10.1353/phl.2014.0053
[23] Heidegger, M. (1940). *Existence and Being*. Introduction by Phil Henry Wernerbrock. Henry Regenery Company.
[24] Heidegger, M. (1971). *Poetry, Language, Thought*. Translated and introduced by Albert Hofstadter. Harperperennial Modern classics.
[25] Heidegger, M. (2002a). *From the Earliest Essays to Being and Time and Beyond*. Edited by John Van Buren. State University of New York Press.
[26] Heidegger, M. (2002b). *Off the Beaten Track* Edited and translated by Julia Young and Kenneth Haynes. Cambridge University Press.
[27] Ibrahim, R. (2019). 'Introduction'. Salameh, Ziyad. *Walid Saif: A Writer and a Thinker*. Al-Maktaba Alwataniyya.
[28] Khlaf, M. (2007). *Aspects of Creativity in Walid Saif's Poetry*. Al-Khalil University.
[29] Langfeld, G. (2018). *'The canon in art history: concepts and approaches'.* Retrieved February, 2nd, 2023, from https://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/langfeld.pdf
[30] Magrini, J. M. and Elias S. (2018). *Heidegger on Literature, Poetry, and Education after the 'Turn' at the Limits of Metaphysics.* Routledge.
[31] Mahmoud, M. (2022). *The Palestinian Issue in Arab T.V Dramas: Al-Taghreeba Al- Felastineyah as an Example*. Amman: Middle East University.
[32] Marshall, D. (2002). G. *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature*. Retrieved March, 19, 2023, from publish.iupress.indiana.edu/read/martin-heidegger-and-the-question-of-literature/section/71dc94a4-53e7-4eb4-90f1-073221bbf1f0
[33] Miller, B. (2017). 'Affect Studies and Cognitive Approaches to Literature.' *The Palgrave Handbook of Affect Studies and Textual Criticism.* Edited by Ronald R Wehrs and Thomas Blake. Palgrave Macmillan. 113-134.
[34] Mohammad, K. (2012). *Poetry and Existence in Heidegger's Thought*. Wahran: University of Wahran.
[35] Moser, K. (2014). *Metaphysics and beyond – Heidegger in contemporary Arabic philosophy.* Paper presented at the World congress of Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES) in Ankara. Retrieved April, 13, 2023, from www.academia.edu/8891980/Metaphysics_and_beyond_Heidegger_in_contemporary_Arabic_philosophy
[36] Nada, D. (2013). *Myth and Popular Heritage in Walid Saif's Poetry*. Al-Najah University.
[37] Parker, R. (2020). *How to Interpret Literature: Critical Theory for Literary and Cultural Studies*. 4th ed. Oxford University Press.
[38] Pelmas, S. (1993). *Literary Reading: Hölderlin Through Heidegger Through De Man.* Retrieved May, 17, 2023, from https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1065098ar
[39] Philips, J. (2005). *Heidegger's Volk between National Socialism and Poetry.* Stanford University Press.
[40] Rogers, B. (2006). *Poetic Uncovering in Heidegger*. Retrieved February, 15, 2023, from file://P:\00OLD\old_aporia_site\volumes\vol122\BenRogers.html 8/25/2006
[41] Saddouk, R. (2000). *Palestinian Poets in the Twentieth Century: An Anthology*. Al-Arabiyya for Publication.
[42] Saif, W. (1990). 'In Search of Abdullah' Al-Barry. *Bayader, 2*, 74-86.
[43] Saif, W. (1992). 'Love Again'. *Ad-Dustour (Jordan).* 23 December, 9.
[44] Saif, W. (2016). *The Witness, the Witnessed: A Biography and Intellectual Revisions*. Al-Ahliyya.
[45] Saif, W. (2022). *Al-Taghriba Alfalastineiyah*. Al-Ahliyya.
[46] Salameh, Z. (2019). *Walid Saif: A Writer and a Thinker*. Al-Maktaba Alwataniyya.
[47] Scholar, J. (2018). Joyce, Heidegger & the Material World of *Ulysses:* 'Ithaca' as Inventory. Retrieved April, 12, 2023, from https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:f94d2fe1-2c0a-4e56-9a0c-bee6dc256e98/download_file?file_format=application%2Fpdf& safe_filename=Scholar-2018-Joyce-Heidegger-and-the-material-world--.pdf&type_of_work=Journal+article
[48] Tan, I. (2022). *Wallace Stevens and Martin Heidegger: Poetry as Appropriative Proximity*. Palgrave McMillan.
[49] Wimsatt, W. and Beardsely, M. (1946). 'The Intentional Fallacy.' *The Sewanee Review, 54*(3), 468-488.
[50] Wehrs, D. (2017). 'Affect and Texts: Contemporary Inquiry in Historical Context'. *The Palgrave Handbook of Affect Studies and Textual Criticism*. Edited by Ronald R Wehrs and Thomas Blake. Palgrave Macmillan. 1-96.
[51] Woolf, V. (1984). 'Cordial'. Edited by Andrew McNeille. *The Essays of Virginia Woolf.* Volume 4: 1925 to 1928. The Hogarth Press.
[52] Wrathall, Mark A. and Max Murphey. (2013). 'An Overview of Being and Time'. *The Cambridge Companion to Heidegger's Being and Time*. Edited by Mark A. Wrathall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-53.

Hanan Ibrahim is an associate professor who is currently teaching in the Department of English Language and Literature at Al-Ahliyya Amman University in Jordan. She was also head of the Department of English Literature and head of the Department of Translation. She obtained her PhD degree in Comparative Literary Studies in postcolonial feminist novels from the School of European Culture and Languages at University of Kent at Canterbury in the United Kingdom. She taught English literature at Jordan University, was head of Women's Studies Programme at the same university, and director of two Jordanian NGOs. She also worked for the UNDP as head of the regional office for the Enhancement of Quality Assurance in Arab Universities. She is published in national, regional and international journals. Her research interests are diverse and cover the areas of feminism, interculturalism, interfaith relations, translation and the "postcolonial" narrative. She is a founding member of both the Muslim-Christian Arab group based in Beirut-Lebanon and of Women on Boards in Jordan. She is also a member of the Higher Council of Jordanian National Forum for Women. For more than eight years, she was a consistent participant in the interfaith dialogues organized by the World Council of Churches in Genève.

Linda Alkhawaja is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Translation Studies at Al-Ahliyya Amman University in Jordan. She holds an MA in Translation and Interpreting Studies from Salford University/Manchester and PhD in Sociology in Translation Studies from Aston University/Birmingham. She is actively engaged in various projects exploring the sociology of translation, cultural studies, and Machine Translation. Her work delves into the complex relationship between language, culture, and society, unraveling the transformative power of translation in different contexts. She took on, for two years, the role of the Director of the Language Centre and the Head of the English Language and Literature and English Language and Translation Departments.

Maha Yaseen is currently an associate professor of linguistics in the Department of English Language and Literature at Al-Ahliyya Amman University in Jordan. She obtained her PhD degree in Linguistics from the University of Jordan. She is actively engaged in various projects exploring the phonological aspects of human language, cultural studies, and sociolinguistics. She was also the Head of the English language and Literature and English Language and Translation Department.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 798-806, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.12

War and the Question of Identity: A Study of the Novel *Half of a Yellow Sun* and the Movie *The Wall*

Dheyaa Khaleel Nayel
Department of English, University of Karbala, Karbala, Iraq

***Abstract*—This study examines the complex correlation between warfare and individual identity as depicted in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's literary work, "Half of a Yellow Sun." and a movie entitled “the wall”. The novel explores the effects of the Nigerian-Biafran War on personal and group identities, providing a captivating narrative within this historical context. The movie also tackles the issue of identity by providing viewers with situations pertaining to the issue of identity formation. This research aims to explore the impact of war on the transformation and reinterpretation of identity, encompassing ethnic, national, and personal ties. It achieves this by closely analyzing the experiences of the individuals involved. This paper explores the characters' reactions to the societal disruption resulting from the war, scrutinizing their efforts to navigate their sense of self amidst the presence of aggression and forced relocation. Furthermore, this study critically examines the influence of memory, trauma, and storytelling on the development of the characters' changing perception of their own identity. Through an exploration of these thematic elements, a more profound comprehension of the ways in which war may both shatter and form identities is attained, thereby illuminating the intricate nature of human experiences within periods of conflict.**

***Index Terms*—identity, war, Nigeria, Iraq**

I. INTRODUCTION

The term "war" often refers to a condition of armed confrontation that arises between distinct nations or factions within a nation. The endeavor commonly encompasses the utilization of coercion, encompassing armed endeavors, with the aim of attaining certain political, territorial, or ideological objectives. Additionally, war has a range of manifestations, encompassing traditional combat characterized by organized armies and weaponry, guerrilla warfare tactics, and the contemporary emergence of cyber warfare. The occurrence of armed conflict frequently leads to the unfortunate consequence of human casualties, hence inflicting profound sorrow and psychological distress on families and communities.

The outcomes of war can be seen in different aspects; for instance, the displacement of individuals from their residences may result in a significant influx of refugees, giving rise to a crisis of forced migration. Moreover, the flood of migrants may place significant pressure on the available resources and infrastructure in the nations hosting them. More importantly, the occurrence of armed conflict can result in extensive psychological distress. The two works chosen for this study depict characters who suffer from such psychological consequences. Violence and instability, which are the outcomes of war, often result in the erosion of social links and trust, resulting in the fragmentation of communities. Such an idea is vividly manifested in *Half of the Yellow Sun*, but not in the movie due to the fact that the story has a variety of relationships quite different from the movie, in which the action is confined to one single event and the sub-events associated with it.

According to Dogan (2021), the combat in Nigeria resulted from intense conflicts between Nigeria's various ethnic groups over issues of religion, economics, and ethnicity, which have an impact on how identities are formed. The rivalries between various ethnic groupings, the respect certain people have for the West, and identity difficulties are a result of the black people's loyalty to white people and, ironically, the white people's loyalty to black people in *Half of a Yellow Sun* are all available in the novel. In this connection, identity crisis that might be linked to several parts of the war is significantly influenced by the violent side of the conflict. Afzal (1996) argued that Nigeria, being a nation comprised of numerous clans, witnessed the emergence of ethnic tensions between the Muslim Hausa and Christian Igbo clans. These tensions eventually escalated, leading to the occurrence of ethnic cleansing targeting the Igbo population residing in the northern regions of the country.

Rönnhede (2019) reasoned that governments frequently amass significant levels of debt in order to support military endeavors, a practice that can impose a financial burden on subsequent generations. Economic inequality can be exacerbated by the economic consequences of warfare, leading to a disproportionate impact on marginalized communities and further extending the gap in income distribution. Economy and the marginalized people, and how the war often impacts the lives of those people, as the government will spend a lot of money on the war without paying attention to the living conditions of those people; therefore, the war usually imposes certain rules and conditions on people, encouraging or forcing them to be part of some social relations.

During a formal gathering in a Nigerian household, Olanna's parents, who belong to an affluent social class, extend their hospitality to a government minister in order to engage in a conversation on a contractual agreement. The servant, Maxwell, is responsible for the delivery of food, nevertheless, it is only Olanna who demonstrates appreciation. The individual has the belief that this particular action is degrading and has the ability to compromise the hierarchical dynamic between the superior and subordinate. The dynamic between a servant and master is predicated upon the fulfillment of their respective jobs without the imposition of further obligations. The representation of armed conflict in literary works such as 'Half of a Yellow Sun' and 'The Wall' underscores the significant human ramifications of combat and the enduring psychological scars it imposes on individuals.

II. Post Colonialism

Following the conclusion of World War II, intellectuals and academics observed the rise of postcolonial theory. Postcolonial literature in Africa, namely in Nigeria, encompasses literary works that explore themes related to colonialism as well as the period after the country's attainment of freedom (Muhammad, 2018). In his seminal work, Orientalism, Edward Said endeavored to provide a comprehensive elucidation of the concept of colonialism. Said's term underscored the Western perception of the East. The construction of the notion of a primitive and uncivilized East, as well as the perception of its inhabitants as illiterate, may be attributed mostly to Western philosophers. This instance is an opportunity to examine the concept of colonialism and its implications for understanding the disparities between Europeans and non-European populations (Muhammad, 2018).

According to the theoretical framework of Edward Said's concept of orientalism, the protagonists in the novel engage in a quest to reclaim their identity, which had been undermined by the actions of the Hausa tribe with the backing of European powers. In this context, the concept of identity is characterized by its inherent instability, necessitating a perpetual process of rebuilding. This suggests that an individual's identity is shaped by the dynamic interplay between their personal characteristics and the external environment in which they exist. Furthermore, an individual's decisions and personal experiences significantly contribute to the formation of their identity (Karambiri, 2002, p. 23).

Nevertheless, what is intriguing is that the readers are not deprived of their ability to understand the Igbo terms. Frequently, there is a lack of translation observed, which arises from the contextual significance that the speaker imparts to the statements. There are arguments suggesting that the author's frequent use of Igbo phrases in her works is closely aligned with her intention to preserve the authenticity of her characters and her works as a whole. Furthermore, it is believed that this choice may reflect a conscious or subconscious desire to reduce the prevalence of English and Western influences (Aboh & Uduk, 2016, pp. 7-8). In this regard, the significance of the local tongue becomes apparent to the reader.

The identities of those residing in war-torn regions can undergo substantial transformations as such individuals have the potential to be transformed from their status as regular citizens to assuming roles as refugees, activists, or relief workers. Residing in a place afflicted by armed conflict can significantly impact an individual's sense of self. Afzal Thahiya argued that the novel can be seen as “a graceful evocation of a forgotten time and place during the Biafran war” (1996, p. 1). In that depiction of the past, the reader is invited to notice that ethnic and religious identity frequently play a significant role in conflicts, as individuals tend to exhibit heightened affiliation with their own ethnic or religious communities in times of war. This phenomenon has the potential to give rise to both cohesion and discord inside and among societal groups. Additionally, the phenomenon of identity crisis can be observed in people who experience displacement or the loss of loved ones as a result of war. When their accustomed environments and interpersonal connections undergo disruption, people often face identity crises.

After the conclusion of armed conflicts, individuals and communities frequently encounter difficulties in the endeavor of reconstructing their sense of self and societal structures. The long-lasting impacts of war, trauma, and grief can have a profound influence on individuals' self-concept and their sense of inclusion within the international community. This indicates the possible transformation experienced by the people. Lauren Rackley quoted by Issack Ruth (2015) states that Adichie’s focus on the lives of Kainene and Olanna result in the positional that becomes specific to middle class Igbo women. However, Adichie includes other female working- class characters that undergo exceptional trauma because of war.

The impact of war on gender identity can be significant, as it has the capacity to both disrupt and reinforce established gender norms within combat environments. In periods of conflict, women have the potential to experience significant shifts in both their societal roles and personal identities. In this context, the war frequently influences the assignment of specific duties to women that are not inherently appropriate for them. The exploration of gender identity holds significant position within the work, as it encompasses the portrayal of roles that were historically inaccessible to women. M. H. Abrams’ quotation about the relation between the writer and the historical event posited that the novelist “not only takes its setting and some characters and events from history, but makes the historical events and issues crucial for the central characters and the course of the narrative” (quoted by Afzal, 1996, p. 3).

Half of a Yellow Sun portrays the societal landscape following the withdrawal of British colonial control, therefore rendering the application of postcolonial theory highly pertinent to this analysis. Within this particular framework, the novel explores the subject matter pertaining to legal regulations and the subsequent execution of such rules. It is noteworthy that the rules in question were not established by the indigenous African population but rather imposed by the colonizers. This imposition undoubtedly exacerbates the suffering endured by the original inhabitants. Another matter, as shown in the story, pertains to the routine existence in the rural areas and the endeavors undertaken by the political figures and other governmental personnel inside the nation.

The story explores the concept of emotional turmoil and the challenges that may arise as a result of the misuse of authority, which is a consequence of interactions with the British (Mullaney, 2010). Within the novel, it becomes evident to the reader that the roles of the colonizer and the colonized are assumed by two distinct tribes. Specifically, the Hausa tribe assumes the role of the colonizer, while the Igbo tribe takes on the role of the colonized. The novel explores notions of the colonized, uncivilized, and uneducated, not in the context of European colonizers and native inhabitants but rather between two tribes belonging to the same country (O'Reilly, 2001); hence, the novel signifies the author's endeavor to relocate the concept of the colonizer-colonized relationship from its familiar domain to an entirely novel one.

III. War and Identity

The issue of identity may be regarded as the primary catalyst for the conflict, which was exacerbated by the political instability within several nations and the deep-seated animosity among tribal groups. In this context, the civil war might be attributed to the legacy of colonialism, as it is widely acknowledged that the primary aim of colonial powers was to fragment nations into smaller entities in order to undermine their strength and facilitate conquest. The primary approach employed was the establishment of nations of diverse ethnic groups, resulting in intergroup conflicts driven by a desire for material gain and political success (Roshan, 2014).

The protagonists in the narrative are pointedly influenced by the war, compelling them to confront challenging decisions that frequently contradict their ethical principles, resulting in psychological turmoil. This phenomenon has the potential to fundamentally alter the characters' perception of themselves. Additionally, the conflict is driven by contrasting political ideologies and the desire for self-governance. The individuals within the tale have a proclivity for aligning themselves with certain political factions, and their respective ideas play a vital role in shaping their self-perception and driving their pursuit of goals.

The novel "Half of a Yellow Sun" explores the Nigerian-Biafran War as a transformative experience that challenges the protagonists' fortitude, convictions, and sense of self. This experience compels individuals to reach their utmost capabilities and compels them to confront the terrible truths associated with combat, loss, and the act of preserving one's existence. The many characters in the story exhibit varying responses to the challenges presented by the war, and their personal changes serve as symbolic representations of the wider influence of conflict on society, culture, and human experiences. The novel adeptly examines the impact of war on the human psyche and sheds light on the intricate dynamics between individual and societal upheaval. Chibundu Onuzo (2014) tackled the issue of the past by affirming that “in looking over Nigeria's past, difficult concepts such as tribalism and genocide begin to appear: and how does a nation that hasn't coped with providing electricity for its citizens, that is still racked by ethnic divisions and political instability” (p. 4).

From a political standpoint, the British administration made the decision to grant authority to a select number of Nigerian elites. It is widely acknowledged that the British exhibited a predilection for the Hausa people, who are commonly associated with the northern region of Nigeria. This preference ultimately led to division within the community. Within the context of the narrative, Ugwu articulates the notion that the British had a preference for the northern region. The climate in that region was characterized by a delightfully arid heat. The Hausa-Fulani people, with their narrow facial features, were considered by some to be superior to the Southerners of negroid descent, as well as being followers of the Islamic faith (Adichie, 2006, p. 115).

In this particular setting, the Hausa tribe perceives itself as possessing a higher social status in comparison to other tribes, particularly the Igbo people who exhibited relative vulnerability during the war due to their limited population size. The individuals in question possessed a high level of education and were renowned for their affluence, which was mostly attributed to the presence of oil resources in their property (Strehle, 2011). In this respect, the role of the colonizer in supporting one group to be superior and elite in the community is quite evident. The occurrence of armed conflict frequently results in an intensified manifestation of national identity as individuals have the potential to develop a heightened sense of patriotism and a deep affiliation with their nation, including its principles and objectives.

The struggle between national identification and ethnic identity emerges as a prominent problem within the thematic exploration of identity in the novel. Given that the conflict at hand involves a central governing body and a separatist faction, it presents an opportunity for the protagonists to explore the significance of their own identities. This situation affords them the possibility of discerning between their national identity and their ethnic identity. In this connection, Lindecrantz (2023, p. 6) argued that “identities constructed around the concepts of postcolonial society in Nigeria have a contradictory character and tend to neglect the complex foundation that defines postcolonial Nigeria and its inhabitants and that character’s rally around simple concepts such as ethnicity in their search for identity”. Although it is quite clear that Lindecrantz attempts to belittle the importance of the ethnic identity, the importance of that identity is rather noticeable.

In the late 1960s, the Biafran region was deteriorating due to widespread famine and violence. As for the Europeans, Richard works on humanitarian assistance papers, while Kainene manages a refugee camp. In this sense, human relations also fall under the impact of war as people are forced to construct or reconstruct their relations which are often deemed to be the essential part of their identities. As an example for the influence of the conflict is that Ugwu develops a romantic attachment to Eberechi but is involuntarily enlisted in the military. He suffered severe injuries and is believed to be dead. Moreover, the city of Umuahia is captured, and Olanna's family is relocated to live with Kainene whose disappearance leads to the capitulation of Biafra and the subsequent reunification of Nigeria. Ugwu discovers his sister has been murdered and begins documenting their personal encounters. Ojinmah (2012, p. 3) argued that "Ugwu, in particular, develops from the clumsy little village boy, unsure of himself and who sleeps with pieces of chicken in his pocket, to a resourceful "teacher" and "child soldier" able to distinguish himself in battle situation".

IV. The Igbo Identity

In any societal context, individuals may be classified based on their identity, which is typically characterized as fluid and subject to continual reconfiguration. Hence, several aspects, such as an individual's geographical location, level of experience, and personal decision-making processes, all contribute to the formation of one's identity (Lecznar, 2017). In the novel *Half of a Yellow Sun*, one notable aspect of significance is the Igbo people's inability to recognize their Igbo heritage, leading to the emergence of an identity problem. Shortly after the onset of the conflict, often referred to as the Biafran War, the reestablishment of identity becomes evident.

The individuals belonging to the Igbo tribe had a notable lack of complacency; moreover, they were not motivated by external stimuli. Hence, the proximity to Europeans facilitated the indigenous population's recognition of the challenges posed by their interaction with European settlers. In the literary work, the concept of the challenge was introduced through a dialogue among the faculty members of the institution. During the course of the dialogue, it became evident that the tribe plays a significant role in shaping one's identity, as exemplified by the statement, "It is my contention that the sole genuine form of identity for individuals of African descent lies within their tribal affiliations" (Beyers, 2019, p. 4). The teacher underscored the significance of my proximity to Europeans by asserting that the establishment of Nigeria and the attribution of my identity were facilitated by individuals of European descent (the African tribe and identity). The concept of blackness has been developed by the white population in order to emphasize its stark contrast with whiteness.

The prevalence of white dominance contributed to the emergence and conceptualization of the Igbo ethnic identity. According to Adichie (2006, p. 20), the concept of identity in this context emerges as a result of colonial control. The concept of dominance lacks clarity within the film, as the narrative mostly focuses on the interactions between Isaac and the sniper's voice. Furthermore, the same concept encompasses, in one of its dimensions, the notion of American supremacy. However, this superiority has diminished due to its association with the sniper, who demonstrates exceptional precision in executing his duties.

Adichie explores the concept of identity in the context of war as well as through the dynamics between the three characters and their interactions within Igbo society. For instance, Olanna, resides in England and receives her education there; consequently, this experience engenders two outcomes: grappling with conventional ideologies and conforming to them. The second character is Richard who gained insight into the structure of Nigerian culture through his involvement in the conflict. Even inside his country of origin, he had the challenge of wrestling with identity crisis, rendering it difficult for him to comprehend his own sense of self. In this regard, the issue of identification is evident for both Europeans and indigenous individuals.

V. Characters' Identity

A. *Olanna's Identity*

Initially, Olanna harbored doubts regarding the Igbo tradition to such a degree that she felt unable to identify herself as Igbo. The characters endeavored to engage with the Igbo tradition in varying ways, influenced by their own experiences and traits. Olanna's identity is subject to modification based on her circumstances. Gustav (2019) argued that in one particular scenario, she was compelled to assume an Igbo identity with her cousin Arize in Lagos. Similarly, in a separate circumstance, she was expected to assume a Muslim persona as a means of evading a Hausa assault. The motivation for Olanna's inclination to alter her identity may be attributed to her African heritage and the period of time she spent residing in Western societies. She was expected to assimilate into various social groups; however, she harbored apprehension over the potential stigma of being perceived as an outsider.

Due to her residence and educational pursuits in England, Olanna's persona embodies a synthesis of Nigerian cultural heritage and British influences. Regarding her personal circumstances, it can be inferred that this individual exhibits certain elements of variability. This is evident in her decision to terminate her relationship with her Muslim boyfriend, who belonged to the Hausa ethnic group, and subsequently engage in a romantic partnership with a university professor from her own Igbo tribe. The rationale behind her choice of Odenigbo appears to be rooted in the emotional proximity he was capable of offering. According to Strehle (2011, p. 662), it may be inferred that the tribe had an influence on the formation of her identity. Olanna's sense of self is intricately intertwined with her tribal characteristics. In this regard, her personal identity serves as a mirror reflecting the distinctive attributes prevalent within her indigenous community.

Upon further examination, it becomes evident that Olanna's personality serves as a commendable embodiment of British heritage as her character diverges significantly from that of Odenigbo, who serves as a representative incarnation of the Igbo ethnic group's identity. In support of this assertion, the author cites the mother's statement, "Excessive education has a detrimental effect on women" (Adichie, 2006, p. 98). The character development of Olanna is significantly influenced by the multifaceted role played by Odenigbo's mother. Olanna's self-awareness was cultivated by her intimate relationship with her mother. However, this very closeness also compelled her to acknowledge the distinction between herself and the Igbo tribe, as her mother consistently emphasized her dissimilarity from the Igbo community.

In her endeavor to escape from the city of Kano, which had been subjected to an assault by Hausa Muslims, she received assistance from Mohammed, a former romantic partner. He advised her to exercise caution and avoid drawing attention to herself since there was a risk of being identified as Igbo. In this context, the protagonist adorned a scarf in a manner reminiscent of Muslim ladies. In this respect, she drew upon elements of Muslim culture as a means of averting the potential jeopardy associated with revealing her true self. Consequently, she fashioned a composite of multiple identities that collectively contributed to the intricate construction of her sense of self (Adichie, 2006, p. 147). Thahiya Afzal in his appreciation of the character of Olanna, described her as “the professor’s beautiful young mistress who has abandoned her life in Lagos for a dusty town and her lover’s charm”.

Strehle (2011) claimed that the concept of diaspora encompasses both challenges and advantages. Individuals who endure exile have undergone the profound deprivation of their own territory, forcibly uprooted from residences that they are unlikely to regain. Consequently, they may forever be deprived of a feeling of attachment to a place they may call home. This phenomenon is commonly observed in narratives where individuals are compelled to go from their native land and establish residence in a foreign country. The protagonists in *Half of a Yellow Sun* undergo a psychological load, which is prominently demonstrated via their journeying experiences throughout the narrative.

The novel prominently uses the context of civil war and political turmoil as the backdrop for the narrative events. Nigeria saw a civil conflict commonly referred to as the Biafran War in the early aftermath of its independence. The commencement of the war may be attributed to a military coup that occurred in 1966, resulting in the termination of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa's leadership. The advent of General Yakubu Gowon's administration ensued significant hardships for the Igbo community, characterized by a substantial loss of life within the tribe. This dire situation compelled a considerable portion of the Igbo population to seek refuge beyond the borders of the country (Lecznar, 2017). This signifies the moment of dislocation and its influence on the concept of self-actualization, as the act of relinquishing one's native land and settling in a different location undoubtedly plays a significant role in the formation of one's identity.

Olanna expresses a sense of disconnect from the celebration, as she finds it inadequate for capturing her own identity due to the profound impact of her prior encounters during the civil war. In this particular instance, it can be observed that the weight of her tumultuous history surpasses the significance of her present circumstances. The dichotomy between Olanna's personal and societal spheres is evident, as they engage in a constant struggle for dominance within her character. In contrast to participating in Odenigbo's hymn of triumph for Biafra, Olanna directs her focus primarily towards a pronounced discomfort in her knee (Adichie, 2006, p. 275). This implies that she does not endorse the concept of the establishment of Biafra, and her lack of awareness of the progress of the Igbo community rendered her an outsider.

Over the course of time, Olanna gradually came to embrace the notion of war as an inexorable reality, recognizing that neither her own demise nor the demise of others would alter this truth. According to Adichie (2006), the conflict would persist in the absence of their involvement (p. 280). A transition may be observed in her emotional state when she moves from perceiving herself as a victim to embracing a heightened consciousness of the significance of personal freedom. The expression of her fascination with the pursuit of liberty signifies a notable shift in her personal development. Olanna's active engagement in social and political endeavors is evident as she articulates her perspectives on specific matters, such as the flag and its chromatic composition.

B. Richard's Identity

Richard, a British expatriate and writer, arrives in Nigeria with idealized perceptions of the African continent. He is compelled to confront the stark truths of colonialism and racism as a result of the conflict. As the author chronicles the atrocities of the war, his status as an individual detached from the conflict becomes increasingly evident, leading him to confront emotions of powerlessness and culpability. He made the decision to end his marriage in order to pursue a romantic involvement with Kainene, the sister of Olanna. The occurrence of emotional transference between the British wife and the African girlfriend in this context serves as a significant indicator of the profound psychological implications and emotional void experienced by the character, who self-identifies as a solitary individual. Consequently, his engagement with the African female signifies his aspiration for acceptance within the Igbo community. In this sense, the character experiences a state of swinging between British and African.

In this connection, Major Madu cynically criticized Richard's endeavor to integrate into the Igbo community, highlighting the British policy's hypocrisy of granting unrestricted travel privileges to British citizens while placing limitations on non-European individuals attempting to visit England (Adichie, 2006, p. 79). Prior to observing the secession of Biafra from Nigeria, Richard harbored a sense of detachment from the Igbo community. In an effort to establish a connection with the Igbo community, he undertook significant measures, such as employing the Igbo language during his encounter with Major Madu, who responded in English. The use of the English language by Madu functions as a significant indication of the role language plays in the construction of one's identity. Additionally, Vuletic (2018) highlights that Madu's actions posed challenges for Richard's integration into Igbo society. Regarding Richard, he finds himself torn between his country of origin and the African nation in which he currently resides. Consequently, his inability to completely assimilate into African society and his lack of ownership over the conflict and its associated tensions became apparent.

Richard's unwavering resolve to utilize the Igbo language yielded a certain degree of advancement in his effort to integrate into the Igbo community. As an illustration, inside the region of Kano; he extended a salutation to an officer using the Igbo language. To show Richard’s integration into the Igbo community and during the meeting with the officer, it became apparent that there was a close relationship between the officer and Richard. This signals the great affinity between the two. Due to this rationale, language now serves as a gauge for the advancement in the creation of Richard's personal identity (Adichie, 2006).

VI. War's Ordeal: Modelling and Fluctuating Identities

The impact of the war on the matter of identity is significant, serving as a central theme throughout the work, as seen by the author's deliberate focus on characters’ development and their subsequent progression. The exploration of the subject of identity in this work may be examined by shedding light on the fact that the conflict exerts influence on the construction of identity since it compels individuals to flee from their homes and families, provoking a sense of loss and fragmentation. The condition of lacking affiliation with a particular state will undoubtedly have an influence on the development of their identity.

Ugwu starts his tenure as a youthful and malleable domestic servant to Odenigbo, an esteemed academician inside the university setting. The exigencies of the battle oblige him to mature rapidly and acclimate himself to the severe truths of the struggle. The individual's encounters throughout the conflict, encompassing instances of aggression and bereavement, radically alter his outlook on existence and his personal identity. Through a series of formative events, Ugwu undergoes a transformative process wherein he transitions from a state of naivety to that of a more multifaceted and resilient individual. In his appreciation of this character, Afzal (1996) described him as “a thirteen-year-old houseboy who works for Odenigbo, a university professor full of revolutionary zeal”.

The character of Olanna undergoes a significant transformation as a result of the war, which has a tremendous impact on her privileged and idealistic disposition. The individual in question relinquishes a life characterized by comfort and chooses to reside in the conflict-ridden region of Biafra, where she actively aligns herself with the separatist cause. The protagonist's affection for Odenigbo undergoes scrutiny, and she confronts significant individual bereavement amid the conflict, prompting a reassessment of her principles and convictions. The conflict engenders a profound metamorphosis inside her, shifting her identity from that of a protected scholar to that of a resolute and tenacious individual.

Odenigbo, an intellectually inclined individual, believes in societal transformation, but his intellectualism is challenged by conflict, leading to emotional distress and a shift towards self-examination and deep reflection. Kainene, a multifaceted character, undergoes significant transformation during the battle, transitioning from a profit-driven mindset to a humanitarian focus, revealing her vulnerability and the war's ability to dismantle superficial appearances.

VII. War and Identity in “The Wall”

Before delving into the movie, it is imperative to acknowledge that the cultural framework of Iraq is characterized by a rich diversity and constant evolution, encompassing regional nuances and the impact of surrounding nations and historical epochs. Furthermore, the cultural topography of Iraq has undergone changes during the course of its existence, and the nation's cultural identity remains subject to influence from its historical background and present-day obstacles. This frame work is responsible for the making of the sniper’s identity.

According to Philips, the film "The Wall," directed by Doug Liman, endeavors to establish a connection between the Iraqi sniper and the American soldiers. The distinct identities of these two are primarily shaped by their inherent dissimilarities while simultaneously sharing a common location, namely the Iraqi desert. The shared sense of belonging to the same location engenders the perception that they are in a comparable situation, as exemplified by one individual's statement, "We share more similarities than differences." The identities of the two protagonists are influenced by the prevailing circumstances, particularly the immediate context of war and their confinement to a lone site throughout the narrative.

In his analysis of the film "The Wall," Tobias posited that the aforementioned movie lacks the diverse range of places and people that are present in the literary work "Half of a Yellow Sun." Throughout the narrative, the primary focus of the action is confined to a single area. The presence of a singular place significantly enhances the level of intensity experienced by the audience. In the film, the frenetic scenario is indelibly etched in the viewer's memory. Tobias also claimed that the film effectively portrays the concept of warfare in a realistic manner. The statement provides a transparent indication that the conflict persists and underscores the numerous tasks that must be accomplished prior to its resolution. The film perhaps symbolizes the internal struggle experienced by American soldiers, who find themselves torn between complete engagement in the war and the prospect of complete detachment from their surroundings. The internal struggle experienced by the soldier may be indicative of the uncertain strategies formulated by higher-ranking authorities stationed in the central command. The soldier's confinement to a single location signifies a state of stagnation, which may also be figuratively applied to the political realm. The condition of sluggishness significantly contributes to the process of identifying formation among soldiers.

The inquiry at a pipeline construction site in Iraq has been assigned to U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Shane Matthews and Sergeant Allen Isaac. Following a period of 22 hours of sustained alertness, Matthews experiences a gunshot wound, resulting in significant injuries. Isaac, a designated observer, finds shelter behind an unsteady barricade. The sharpshooter employs a wireless communication device to establish contact with Isaac, assuming the identity of a high-ranking member of the allied forces. The sniper employs deceptive tactics in order to get important intelligence from Isaac, therefore exposing the fact that the assailant is not Juba, a moniker commonly associated with Al Qaeda snipers.

Isaac endeavors to establish communication with the central command, encountering hindrances as a result of the lack of his radio antennas. Matthews regains consciousness and attempts to divert the sniper's attention; nevertheless, the sniper proceeds to shoot his firearm, resulting in an injury sustained by Matthews. Isaac employs physical force against the wall in an attempt to counteract Juba's presence and incite his manifestation, although this endeavor proves unsuccessful. Upon the arrival of the helicopters, the assailant proceeds to fatally harm Isaac and eliminate all American rescue troops. The sharpshooter requests the implementation of an extra rescue operation in order to build a new ambush.

Liman's latest artwork, titled "The Wall," appears to present a formal challenge that aligns well with his innovative inclinations. This narrative consists of three characters and takes place in 2007, coinciding with the official declaration of the conclusion of the Iraq war. Two military personnel from the United States, one armed individual and his companion responsible for surveillance, are observing the aftermath of a violent incident. In close proximity to the location of a pipeline now under construction, around ten Western contractors have tragically lost their lives. Upon observing the surroundings, the individual responsible for monitoring the area observes that each individual present exhibits injuries to the head region. According to his assessment, their demise was caused by an individual with professional expertise. The individual carrying the firearm exhibits uncertainty. The individual proceeds to remove their camouflage attire, as they have been engaged in this particular assignment for about twenty consecutive hours without encountering any significant events. Subsequently, they descend from their elevated position in order to closely observe the aftermath of the destructive scene. Subsequently, he experiences an impact. Despite facing challenges, the situation is not completely hopeless. The observer descends from his elevated position since the two individuals share a significant past, which involves a connection formed via a fallen comrade from a previous encounter. The observer endeavors to offer assistance in this situation. The exchange of gunfire resumes once more. The title of the piece alludes to the deteriorating remains of a brick wall as the sole refuge from the relentless onslaught. A significant portion of the ensuing events occurred from a position situated behind the aforementioned wall.

The aforementioned components appear to constitute the essential elements of a minimalist thriller, and prior to the initiation of any action, "The Wall" effectively establishes a palpable sense of tension and anticipation. However, this portrayal showcases a redneck who embodies qualities such as resourcefulness, cleanliness, courage, and a relatively respectful demeanor. In this particular instance, the portrayal of the character Isaac does not exhibit a high degree of cleanliness. One notable strength of "The Wall" is its ability to effectively establish an exceptionally captivating desert ambiance. The dust particles present in the environment are of a size that allows them to be easily inhaled. The intensity of sunlight is high, resulting in a dazzling effect. Furthermore, the characters in the narrative experience an increase in the presence of sand particles, leading to a gritty sensation, as a consequence of each successive misfortune they encounter. The presence of an unrestrained sniper exacerbates the already dire circumstances of water scarcity and severe lower limb injuries.

The individual has remarkable proficiency as a sniper, as seen by their appearance on Isaac's radio transmission. They assume the identity of an American officer in an attempt to deceive Isaac into revealing his precise whereabouts, thereby facilitating their ability to eliminate him. The shortcomings of "The Wall" become apparent with the emergence of an unforeseen adversary. After revealing his identity, the sniper expresses his desire to engage in a conversation with Isaac in order to establish a connection. However, when Isaac responds with vulgar reluctance, the sniper proceeds to issue the menacing threat of shooting the face of Isaac's incapacitated comrade. The sniper in question exhibits signs of personal distress yet has a propensity for open communication. In due course, his discourse shifts towards his underlying purpose, which he asserts to be rooted in the principle of retributive justice. Isaac is informed by the individual that the wall in question was formerly a component of an educational facility. The phrase used might be interpreted as a metaphorical expression, commonly known as "oh, humanity." The irony intensifies when the shooter recites verses from the literary works of Edgar Allan Poe to Isaac. It is noteworthy that the individual from Iraq possesses a greater knowledge of classic American literature in comparison to their American counterpart. At this juncture, one can discern the palpable influence exerted by screenwriter Dwain Worrell, who has previously served as a staff writer for the Marvel/Netflix series "Iron Fist," which was not much acclaimed. Additionally, one can perceive the subtle prompting from director Doug Liman. I felt an inclination to advocate for a reconsideration of their position since I shared the belief that the Iraq War was ill-advised. However, it is important to note that the ultimate decision did not lie within my purview. I did not cast my vote in favor of the individuals who held a positive opinion about the aforementioned matter. Therefore, I fail to see the rationale behind your decision to deliver a lecture to me.

"The Wall" is a war film characterized by minimalism since it predominantly unfolds inside a singular setting, emphasizing the psychological and emotional challenges faced by its protagonists. More emphatically, minimalism is a design and lifestyle concept that is distinguished by its emphasis on simplicity, utilization of basic elements, and prioritization of important components, all while deliberately eliminating superfluous or unneeded decorations. The majority, if not all, of these traits are present throughout the film, contributing to the character's profound feelings of bereavement and disorientation.

The text explores several issues, such as survival, solitude, and the psychological impact of warfare on the mental well-being of troops. The film garnered a diverse range of evaluations from reviewers, who commended its ability to create a suspenseful ambiance, the quality of the acting, and the director's skill. However, a subset of critics expressed reservations over the narrative's limited complexity and its failure to thoroughly delve into its underlying concepts.

The director of the film, Liman, has undertaken an unconventional approach by predominantly confining the whole narrative inside a singular setting. A further aspect pertaining to the film is the absence of visual representation of the Iraqi sniper, which results in the audience frequently being captivated by the profound nature of his utterances. The author's attempt to tie terrorism to Americans is an unconventional perspective that diverges from the prevailing notion of equating terrorism with Muslims. In this particular scenario, individuals are prompted to engage in profound contemplation on the interconnection between the American populace and the military.

According to Klein, the American soldier's identity is inherently intertwined with the economic and technical factors present in their surroundings. The utilization of the equipment by the soldier serves as a representation of the technological elements, while the economic dimension is demonstrated by the association of the events' location with oil. This suggests that, alongside the troops' military role, the economic dimensions of their labor are inextricably intertwined. Prior to the commencement of the film, a multitude of troops perished on the premises, augmenting the distress experienced by both the soldier and the audience in tandem.

In order to elucidate the dynamic between the sniper and the soldier, it is necessary to note that the exceptional precision of the sniper's shots rendered the soldier incapable of utilizing essential communication tools such as the radio and canteen, which are vital for seeking assistance or requesting aid. As a result, the soldier is compelled to seek refuge behind the remnants of a wall that once constituted a now-defunct educational institution. In this context, there are several variables that contribute to the establishment of a relationship between the two entities. This knowledge is crucial for comprehending the individual identities of each entity involved.

The film largely centers on the psychological and physical challenges experienced by a soldier who becomes confined behind a wall in Iraq. Additionally, it delves into topics pertaining to identity, survival, and the emotional impact of warfare. The central focus of the film revolves around Sergeant Isaac, who experiences a state of isolation as a consequence of sustaining a gunshot wound from an unidentified sniper. The individual's prolonged confinement, devoid of any means of contact or external aid, results in a fluctuation in their sense of self, characterized by periods of perplexity and doubt. Consequently, one may argue that their isolation intensifies the necessity for a clearly delineated identity.

Westwell (2001) argued that war movies served as a means of propaganda and subsequently emerged as a prominent genre within the Hollywood film industry. The war films produced during the 1940s served as a means to endorse a fervent and aggressive form of nationalism. These films exalted both individual and collective acts of heroism, the willingness of individuals to prioritize selflessness over personal aspirations, and the efficacy of military leadership and technological advancements. Battle films have been known to promote the importance of robust leadership, glorify battle as a thrilling and remarkable encounter, and depict it as a transformative journey when young boys transition into adulthood, so reinforcing and establishing traditional masculine identities.

The central theme of "The Wall" revolves around the concept of war, encompassing its broad implications since the narrative primarily focuses on the endeavors of troops striving to achieve victory in their own conflicts. Additionally, the movie portrays a singular event that takes place within the context of the conflict in the Iraqi desert. Westwell (2001) added that the incorporation of a somber and graphic portrayal of reality was a crucial element within war films, serving as a poignant reminder to audiences that the foundation of a nation rests upon the noble sacrifices made by its youthful and patriotic soldiers. "The Wall", draws attention to the question of identity in the context of the post-2003 Iraqi war. Hence, it may be said that individuals have the capacity to regain their sense of identity despite protracted periods of its absence. The post-2003 Iraqi conflict constitutes a component of the contemporary political landscape, primarily conceived to dismantle authoritarian rule, emancipate the Iraqi populace, and alleviate their hardships.

VIII. Conclusion

In conclusion, the examination of the notion of identity within the framework of armed conflicts is a multifaceted and continuously developing subject. The topic has various facets, encompassing personal, cultural, national, and global elements. The management of these complexities by individuals and society can have substantial consequences for the commencement and consequences of armed conflicts. The phenomenon of war possesses the ability to both reinforce pre-existing identities and modify them, often in substantial and unexpected ways. The characters in the novel undergo profound transformations in their sense of self as they navigate the challenges and horrors of the conflict, making it a rich exploration of the impact of war on identity.

The literary work portrays the socio-political unease and turmoil that ensued in Nigeria subsequent to the conclusion of British colonial authority. The discussion of Biafran and Igbo traditions has been elucidated by drawing upon various figures, such as Olanna, who symbolizes the nation as a whole. The conflict exerted a pivotal influence on Olanna's sense of self. Richard, a British journalist, has been profoundly influenced by the conflict; nonetheless, he has a divergent perspective on the matter.

The film "The Wall" illustrates the significance of the conflict and its impact on the development of the protagonists' sense of self. The determination of the identities of the sniper and the soldier is primarily contingent upon their present circumstances. Both individuals are driven by certain elements related to their personal characteristics and the objectives they aim to accomplish. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the societal aspects portrayed in the movie differ from those depicted in the novel. This disparity arises due to the movie's focus on a single area, which contributes to the heightened intensity of the action that is visually evident throughout the film. Furthermore, the text portrays a reversal of the traditional distinction between the educated and the less educated, since it attributes supremacy mostly to the sniper rather than the American soldier.

REFERENCES

[1] Adichie, C.N. (2006). *Half of a Yellow Sun.* New York: Knopf.

[2] Afzal, T. (2016). Warring identities: Metaphor of war in chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's: Half of a Yellow Sun. *Man in India 96 (11).* Retrieved June 29, 2023, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316940880_Warring_identities_Metaphor_of_war_in_chimamanda_Ngozi_Adichie's_Half_of_A_Yellow_Sun

[3] Beyers, J. (2019). Reconstructing Black Identity: The Black Panther, Frantz Fanon and Achilles Mbembe in conversation. *Herv Teol study*, *75*(4). Retrieved June 29, 2023, http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v75i4.5469

[4] Dogan, M. (2021). *The Unhomed Self: A Postcolonial Study of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun.* [MA thesis,]. Retrieved May 25, 2023, http://acikerisim.karabuk.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/1260/10398928.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[5] Gustav, R. (2019). *Fragments held in a fragile clasp: The struggle for identity in Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun*. [project in English, Centre for Languages and Literature Lund University].

[6] Karambiri, S. (2002). *Shaping identity under colonial systems: A comparison of African and Canadian- Métis texts by Chinua Achebe, Maria Campbell, James Ngugi, and Beatrice Culleton.* Retrieved April, 2023 http://savoirs.usherbrooke.ca/handle/11143/2259

[7] Lindecrantz, N. (2023). Identity in Half of a Yellow Sun. *English, Creating the Contemporary Literary Canon*, *7*(5). Retrieved June 25, 2023, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/367298361_Identity_in_Half_of_a_Yellow_Sun_Nicky_Lindecrantz.

[8] Muhammad, A.M. (2018). Divergent Struggles for Identity and Safeguarding Human Values: A Postcolonial Analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun. *international Journal of Management & social sciences*, *11*(2), 60-68. Retrieved 22 May, 2023 doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.21013/jmss. v11.n2.p1

[9] Mullaney, J. (2010). *Post-Colonial Literature in Context.* New York, United States: Continuum International Publishing Group.

[10] O'Riley, R. (2001). *Post-Colonial Literature: Contexts in Literature.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

[11] Ojinmah, U. (2012). No Humanity in War: Chimamanda Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun. *Journal of Nigeria Studies*, *1*(2). Retrieved May, 2023 https://www.unh.edu/nigerianstudies/articles/Issue2/Half_of_a_Yellow_Sun.pdf.

[12] Ruth, Issack. et al. (2021). Identity Construction in Adichies two texts Half of a Yellow Sun, and Purple Hibiscus. *Stratford*, *4*(1), 70-81. Retrieved 14 April, 2023 https://stratfordjournals.org/journals/index.php/journal-of-marketing/article/view/951.

[13] Strehle, S. (2011). Producing Exile: Diasporic Vision in Adichie's Half of a Yellow Sun. *Modern Fiction Studies*, *57*(4). Retrieved 12 April, 2023 https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/currentstudents/undergraduate/modules/fulllist/special/globalnovel/secread/57.4.strehle.pdf

[14] Westwell, G. *In country: Mapping the Iraq War in Recent Hollywood Combat Movies*. Retrieved 22 July, 2022 from file:///C:/Users/AD/Downloads/In_country_mapping_the_Iraq_war_in_recen.pdf

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

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 807-814, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.13

English-Medium Master's Degree Programs at a Saudi University: Attitudes, Experiences, and Obstacles

Majed Abu Dabeel
Department of English Language and Literature, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—English-medium instruction has become a prevalent strategy for increasing the internationalization opportunities of Saudi universities and the international employability of their graduates. The findings of an interview (12 professors and 30 students) and an observation of three established Science, Social Science, and Engineering master's degree programs at a major Saudi university in Riyadh are presented in this article. In order to facilitate the implementation of English-taught master's degree programs, the purpose of this study was to identify the perspectives, experiences, and obstacles of higher education stakeholders regarding English-medium instruction. Findings showed that English-medium instruction is generally preferred by both professors and students. Although the need for support measures was not as high as expected, certain challenges remain, which can be addressed through focused initiatives. Notable issues include stakeholder unhappiness, a high workload for students, varying degrees of prior knowledge among students. The research highlights how crucial it is to include English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction in the curriculum and recommends adding more tools and resources to support teacher development. These measures could involve voluntary participation and incentive programs.**

***Index Terms*—EMI, ESP, Higher Education and University Support**

I. Introduction

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recognizes the importance of education for the continued expansion and growth of the economy (see Alghamdi, 2018). The nation has made significant investments in education and is dedicated to providing its citizens with the best opportunities for learning and professional development that are currently available. Instruction for master's degrees that are given in English is one way that universities in Saudi Arabia can improve the services they provide. The reasons for teaching courses leading to Master's degrees in English at Saudi universities will be discussed below.

First and foremost, offering master's degree programs in English will increase Saudi universities' global competitiveness. Because English is the language most commonly used in international trade and communication, many students from other countries would rather have their classes taught in English. The ability of Saudi universities to offer Master's degrees in English will enable them to attract a greater number of international students, which will, in turn, enhance the country's universities' global competitiveness and reputation. Second, the awarding of Master of Arts degrees in English education will help Saudi Arabia in its efforts to diversify its economy. The country needs to cultivate new industries and market niches if it wants to reduce its reliance on revenue from oil and gasoline exports (Al-Haidari, 2018). One strategy for achieving this objective is to successfully compete for investment and talent from other countries. Because they will be able to better attract international talent, Saudi universities will be able to stimulate the economy and foster growth as a result of their decision to offer Master's degrees in English.

Last but not least, master's programs in English instruction will contribute to the improvement of the educational system in Saudi Arabia. Because of their commitment to providing instruction in English, Saudi universities will have access to a vast store of international knowledge and expertise, which they will be able to incorporate into their course offerings. This will contribute to the overall improvement of the education system in the country and ensure that Saudi graduates are competitive on the job market in other countries. It is essential for Saudi universities to offer master's degree programs taught in English if they wish to increase their competitiveness, attract international talent, and improve the quality of education offered throughout the country. If Saudi Arabia takes this step, it will be in a better position to diversify its economy, reduce its reliance on oil and gas exports, and drive growth and development (Alghamdi, 2019; Alshumaimeri, 2017; Al-Tamimi & Shuib, 2009).

II. Literature Review

In the fields of academia, science, and technology, English is the language of choice because it is one of the languages that are spoken by many people around the world. A large number of universities around the world offer master's degree programs that are instructed in the English language in order to maintain their position as competitive players in the global market for higher education and to attract students from other countries. Students have the opportunity to learn in a diverse environment and improve their command of the English language through participation in these programs. However, there are potential challenges that come along with English-medium programs. These challenges include language barriers, cultural differences, and academic expectations. In this review of the relevant literature, we will conduct an investigation into the perspectives held by students and faculty members at a university regarding English-medium master's degree programs, with a particular emphasis on the difficulties and opportunities presented by these programs.

Students enrolled in English-medium master's programs have the opportunity to study in an environment that is rich in cultural diversity, which is a significant benefit of these programs. Additionally, students have the chance to improve their English language skills. However, a significant number of international students experience difficulty communicating due to language barriers, cultural differences, and academic expectations. According to the findings of a study that was carried out by Dearden et al. (2008), the academic writing and speaking skills of international students who are enrolled in English-medium master's degree programs in the United Kingdom frequently present challenges for the students. In a similar vein, Li and Kaye (2013) found that language and cultural barriers were commonplace for international students attending English-medium master's degree programs in Australia.

However, not all international students who are enrolled in English-speaking master's degree programs are confronted with the same challenges. According to the findings of a study that was carried out by Liu and Jin (2016), some international students who were enrolled in English-medium master's programs in China reported that they had experienced a significant improvement in their English language skills as a result of participating in the program. In a similar vein, Sercu and Bandura (2017) found that some international students enrolled in English-medium master's programs in Belgium felt the program provided them with opportunities to learn about different cultures and develop intercultural competence. These students felt that the program was beneficial to their academic growth.

Master's degree programs that are offered in English present challenges for professors as well, as they may need to adapt their pedagogical practices and the expectations they have of their students in order to accommodate international students. Hellekjaer et al. (2014) discovered that professors in Norway teaching English-medium master's degree programs frequently had the impression that students from other countries had different academic expectations and needed extra help with academic writing and speaking skills. Similar to what was discovered by Matsuda and Gobel (2004), it was found that lecturers in English-medium master's programs in the United States frequently struggle with language and cultural barriers when communicating with international students.

Despite this, a number of instructors teaching in English-language master's degree programs have a positive outlook on these programs and believe they offer opportunities for both personal and professional growth. Sawir et al. (2008) found that lecturers in English-medium master's programs in Australia believed that these programs provided opportunities for students to improve their English language skills, learn about different cultures, and prepare for careers on the global job market Tatzl (2011). In a similar vein, Tang and Zhang (2015) discovered that lecturers in English-medium master's programs in China believed that these programs provided students with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills and engage in cross-cultural dialogue. This supports the findings of the previous paragraph.

Students enrolled in master's degree programs that are taught in English have the opportunity to learn in an environment that is rich in cultural diversity and to improve their English language skills. However, these programs also present additional challenges in the form of barriers relating to language, cultural differences, and academic expectations. It is possible that students from other countries will have difficulty with academic writing and speaking, and as a result, professors may need to adjust their teaching methods and the expectations they set for their students. In spite of these challenges, a sizeable percentage of international students and lecturers enrolled in master's programs taught in English have favorable attitudes towards these programs and believe they provide opportunities for both personal and professional growth. As universities continue to offer these programs in an effort to attract students from other countries, it will be essential for them to provide support and resources to address the challenges that are associated with English-medium programs. This support and resources should include things like language classes, academic writing workshops, and cross-cultural training for both students and faculty.

As was mentioned earlier, master's degree programs taught in English are gaining popularity at educational institutions located all over the world. This pattern is a consequence of globalization, the progression of technology, and the rising demand for professionals who are fluent in multiple languages and cultures. The use of English as the medium of instruction (EMI) has resulted in both challenges and opportunities for students and teachers in terms of language proficiency, communication, and pedagogical approaches to education. In this section, we investigate the perspectives of both students and teachers enrolled in Master's degree programs taught in English. The benefits of pursuing a master's degree in the English language Students, professors, and universities can all stand to benefit from master's degree programs that are delivered in English. Students have the opportunity to improve their language skills through the EMI program, which focuses on English as the language of academic and professional communication around the world (Huang & Brown, 2019). Second, EMI enhances cross-cultural communication and contributes to the development of inclusive and diverse educational settings (Wang, 2018). Lastly, EMI is an effective method for universities to attract international students, increase the institution's global visibility and competitiveness, and enhance the institution's global competitiveness. These goals can be accomplished by increasing the institution's global visibility and competitiveness (Rao, 2019).

Both the students and the teachers face difficulties when dealing with EMI. To begin, students are confronted with linguistic and cultural barriers, both of which have the potential to lead to communication difficulties as well as academic underachievement (Jin & Cortazzi, 2020). Second, students might have trouble understanding academic concepts and jargon when they're presented in English, which could have a negative impact on their overall academic performance (Hu & Zhang, 2021). Thirdly, it may be challenging for instructors to adjust their methods of instruction to meet the varied requirements and preferences of their students in terms of how they learn (Liu & Hua, 2021). Fourthly, it may be difficult for instructors to ensure effective communication with students, particularly when conveying difficult academic concepts in English. This is especially true when the language of instruction is English (Jin & Cortazzi, 2020) student accounts from master's degree programs taught in English with regard to their experiences.

Some students in English-language Master's degree programs have difficult experiences, while others have enriching experiences. According to Li and Li (2020), students who have had prior exposure to English and who have studied in an international setting may find the programs easier to understand and follow than those students who have had limited prior exposure to English. Students who have a strong academic background in their respective fields may find it easier to comprehend difficult academic concepts when they are presented in English. This is in contrast to students who do not have such an academic background. This latter group might profit from receiving language support in addition to additional academic assistance in order to improve their academic performance (Hu & Zhang, 2021). Additionally, the cultural backgrounds of students may have an effect on their educational experiences, with some students discovering that it is difficult to adapt to the teaching and learning strategies used in contexts where English is spoken (Wang, 2018).

The perspectives of English-language teachers and their experiences Master's degree programs Master's degree programs that are offered in English are typically instructed by professors who have a broad range of professional experiences. It's possible that some professors, especially those who aren't native English speakers, will find it challenging to instruct in English (Liu & Hua, 2021). It's also possible that these professors have trouble conveying difficult academic ideas in English, and they might benefit from receiving additional language instruction to help them improve their proficiency. However, there is a possibility that some educators will find EMI rewarding due to the fact that it provides them with the opportunity to engage in conversation with students who come from a wide variety of backgrounds and to gain knowledge about the educational practices of a variety of cultures (Huang & Brown, 2019).

EMI necessitates a shift in the pedagogical approaches taken in English-medium master's degree programs in order to accommodate the varied requirements and learning styles of students. The level of student comprehension can be improved through the use of a variety of strategies, including the introduction of visuals and examples from the real world (Jin & Cortazzi, 2020). In addition, professors may use a communicative method of teaching, which places an emphasis on the application of language to situations that occur in everyday life (Wang, 2018). Students are able to acquire language skills that are applicable to their academic and professional contexts through the use of this methodology.

EMI is gaining popularity among students, professors, and universities all over the world where English is spoken as a first language because it provides a variety of useful benefits to all three groups. While EMI helps to improve cross-cultural communication and creates a diverse and welcoming learning environment, it also presents challenges, such as language and cultural barriers, which must be overcome. Nevertheless, these challenges can be conquered with the right kind of linguistic support and instructional strategies.

In conclusion, students who enroll in Master's programs taught in English have the opportunity to improve their command of the English language, foster intercultural communication, and cultivate an inclusive learning environment. On the other hand, there are challenges to overcome, such as language and cultural barriers. For English Language Instruction (EMI) programs to be successful, universities and instructors need to provide sufficient language support and put into practice effective instructional strategies. From above, the purpose of this study is to determine teachers' and students' attitudes towards English-medium master's degree programs at a Saudi university, as well as their best practice experiences, the effects of English-medium instruction on teaching methods, and their perceptions of challenges. Hence, the primary research inquiries were as follows:

1. What are the attitudes of teachers and students towards English-medium instruction in their specific degree programs?
2. Which aspects of their work do they find most satisfactory?
3. What challenges have they encountered and successfully addressed?

III. Research Methodology and Design

In qualitative research, common research methods include observation and interview. They enable researchers to collect information about the experiences, behaviors, and attitudes of individuals in a naturalistic setting (Patton, 2002). In this section, I will describe the observation and interview techniques used in a study conducted at a Saudi university. The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' and students' perceptions of English-medium master's degree programs at a Saudi university, as well as their best practice experiences, the effects of English-medium instruction on teaching methods, and their perceptions of challenges.

Participants included 30 male and female students and 12 male and female academic lecturers from a Saudi university's Computer Science and Engineering Colleges. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants, which entails selecting individuals who meet specific criteria related to the research question. In this instance, the requirements included being a university student or academic lecturer and having experience with English-language master's degree programs.

Regarding data collection, data were gathered through observation and semi-structured interviews. The observation consisted of the systematic documentation of participants' classroom behaviors and interactions. The researcher observed the activities of the participants during class, including their engagement with the course material, interactions with their peers, and instructors' instructional strategies (see Creswell, 2013). In field notes, the observations were documented. To gain insight into participants' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions of master's degree programs taught in English, semi-structured interviews were conducted with them. For analysis, the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. The questions were open-ended, allowing respondents to freely express their experiences and opinions.

Data were collected through interviews as well as through observations, and then subjected to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This requires identifying recurring themes and patterns in the data, which are then sorted into categories based on how pertinent they are to answering the research question. In order to guarantee the reliability and validity of the findings, the analysis was carried out with NVIVO, the most cutting-edge technology available at the time.

IV. Findings and Discussion

The following findings offer a deeper understanding of the perceived benefits and challenges among lecturers and students enrolled in existing English-language master's degree programs. It is noteworthy that professors and students generally hold a positive view of their degree programs, but they differ in their perceptions of obstacles and areas for improvement. Notably, more students highlighted the positive impact of English-medium instruction on their English language skills. This could be attributed to the fact that lecturers implicitly believed an enhancement in linguistic competence was inherent in their statement regarding the international employability of graduates, considering English as the global lingua franca across various economic sectors.

During the interviews, both students and professors acknowledged that international experience played a significantly more vital role in improving English language skills compared to lectures conducted in English. Lectures were still thought to be advantageous for students, though. One lecturer noted that teaching in English encourages students to practice the language when questioned about the impact of English-medium instruction on students' language skills. However, this lecturer did not observe any noticeable linguistic development among learners, attributing it to the students' already high level of English proficiency. Only a few lecturers mentioned the importance of exposure to subject-specific vocabulary as a positive effect of English-medium instruction. Additionally, a male lecturer confirmed that students showed "*substantial improvement in English terminology from the first to the second year*." Another female lecturer mentioned, in a general sense, that English-medium instruction had a positive impact on students' language skills without providing further details. When asked about students' linguistic progress, a female interviewee was unable to discern any specific improvements but noted that students seemed to experience reduced anxiety and increased confidence in public speaking. Another male lecturer commented, "*Of course, students face speaking difficulties, just like us teachers*." This tension between English as both a means for linguistic improvement and a potential barrier is well summarized by another student who remarked, "*On the one hand, it can be a tool for skill development, but on the other hand, it can limit the participation of some students in class*".

However, it is worth noting that students demonstrate a greater awareness of language compared to lecturers (Swales & Feak, 2009). Several students underlined the value of English-medium master's programmes in acquainting students with the language on a daily basis during interviews and observations. However, during the interviews, very few lecturers mentioned the same thing. This result validates the theory that employing English as the medium of instruction in content courses increases students' exposure to the target language while improving the relevance and efficacy of language learning (Tatzl, 2011). Students recognize the feasibility of incorporating the foreign target language into their daily lives and university education.

Furthermore, the majority of lecturers mentioned another advantage of English-medium instruction in terms of providing access to English books, papers, magazines, and newspapers during the interviews. A female lecturer stated, "*English-language programs offer a significantly broader perspective on global knowledge*". This aspect was seen as beneficial for enriching students' content knowledge, according to the source.

In the context of student papers and theses, the lecturers' response was relatively low, considering that this is a tertiary institution where research and teaching interests intersect to advance both academic pillars. However, their responses indicate that scientific writing and thesis supervision motivate them and yield satisfactory outcomes. Students also found projects and practical aspects of their work rewarding, partially aligning with their professors' views. As scientific writing assignments typically build upon previous projects or industry-related tasks, the sources of motivation for both students and instructors overlap to varying degrees. Nearly all students expressed satisfaction with the acquisition of subject-specific knowledge and the use of English, indicating that the integrated content and language approach yielded satisfactory outcomes in both areas. However, it is surprising that so few students highlighted the improvement in their English language skills as the most important advantage of English-medium instruction.

The question about challenges faced by instructors and students during the course revealed a range of issues. According to professors, one of the challenges identified was the varying levels of English language proficiency among students. One male lecturer confirmed this observation during the interviews, acknowledging that students have different levels of language proficiency due to their unique backgrounds, strengths, and weaknesses. This issue tends to be more pronounced in degree programs with international students, where the student groups are more heterogeneous in terms of educational backgrounds. Instructors also mentioned the difficulty of motivating students, which is likely connected to the most frequently mentioned challenge by students: time management and workload. Students who face a dense curriculum with mandatory attendance may struggle with limited study time, leading to exhaustion and a lack of willingness to actively participate in class and lectures. One female lecturer confirmed the issue of a heavy workload for students during the interviews, noting their preference for a lecture-based approach instead of independent assignments during class time.

From a linguistic perspective, students highlighted vocabulary and technical terms as challenging areas that could be addressed through the inclusion of English language courses in the curriculum or through content lecturers providing more extensive explanations. The interviews supported this observation made by students. They stressed the importance of instructors being aware that students may struggle to grasp important points due to a lack of understanding or reluctance to seek clarifications. The lecturer recommended adopting a discussion-based approach to encourage student engagement with the subject matter, rather than relying solely on asking if students understood what was said.

As a result of detailed explanations during courses and other factors, English-medium lectures typically cover less material compared to lectures delivered in the native language. During the researcher's observation, it was noticed that one class proceeded at a slightly slower pace. In another class, it was estimated that the content covered might be reduced to 55-75 percent compared to 100 percent in the native language, resulting in a 25-35 percent reduction. This suggests potential linguistic challenges for lecturers during courses, as acknowledged by a female lecturer who stated, "*As a lecturer, you may struggle to meet students' demands if you haven't traveled much, especially since they already have a good command of English*". Additionally, during the observation, it was observed that non-native lecturers may encounter significant difficulties when orally describing mathematical formulas.

Regarding course and exam preparation, it was observed and confirmed through interviews that instructors face challenges due to students' varying language and content proficiency. Similarly, to language skills, students' content knowledge depends on their educational backgrounds and motivation to engage with the subject matter. Therefore, motivating students and sparking their curiosity are crucial factors in promoting student achievement. However, instructors need to find a balance between providing digestible material and presenting complex concepts to accommodate students with different skill levels during course and exam preparation. As new groups of students enter the program each academic year, maintaining this balance becomes an ongoing challenge for professors. In course materials and exams, the choice of words becomes significant as using incorrect terminology can lead to misunderstandings. This highlights the importance of language as a means of conveying content. Therefore, instructors must exert additional effort to overcome linguistic barriers in content instruction.

During the observation and based on their responses regarding course and exam preparation, it was evident that students' primary concern is the availability of study time. The heavy workload necessitates effective exam preparation, which often results in long and intensive study periods depending on the number of exams students need to take. As mentioned by the lecturers in the interviews, difficulties related to exams may arise during the assessment phase of seminar-style courses. One lecturer specifically mentioned the challenge of evaluating and grading students, particularly when grading is conducted in a foreign language. However, none of the professors explicitly stated that language considerations were taken into account when despite the indications from the interviews that both professors and students do not perceive difficulties in producing written English content, integrating scientific writing instruction in English into bachelor's degree programs can help address issues related to academic writing and citations. However, during the observation, writing was observed to be a demanding language skill for both lecturers and students, which contradicts the earlier results. This apparent discrepancy may be attributed to different types of learners and subgroups of respondents.

The observational data and responses from both groups confirm the importance of spoken interaction not only in higher education but also in graduates' future careers. Effective communication through speech is crucial for professionals to interact with partners, colleagues, superiors, subordinates, and clients. The fact that both professors and students rated this skill as the most difficult emphasizes the challenges that both speakers and listeners face, such as the speed of conversation, limited time to formulate responses, regional variations in accent and dialect, and social variations in pronunciation, register, and idioms.

The observation suggests a clear need for assistance in English-language master's degree programs. However, the measures mentioned by some professors indicate a need for support in the preparation of course materials, although a larger sample size would have provided a more diverse perspective. One female lecturer emphasized the need for proofreading slides by language specialists and proposed co-teaching, lecture observations by English language teachers for improvement suggestions, and lecture training meetings in small peer groups with feedback from English specialists. Another female lecturer advocated for mandatory proofreading services for student theses before submission, while two other lecturers mentioned the necessity for students to take additional English language courses. The interviews supported the notion of low demand for support measures among lecturers but also revealed the importance of having a suitable learning infrastructure to facilitate English-language instruction.

During the observation, it can be inferred that lecturers in English-medium programs must dedicate more time to clarifying subject matter compared to instructors in monolingual education, as students often request additional explanations. The need for extra English language instruction, tutorials, and study assistants is plausible but may present budgetary challenges for institutions with limited resources. However, because most of the professors in the interviews insisted that there was no difference between lectures given in Arabic and those given in English, the interviews offered further insightful information that was missed during the observation. However, one male lecturer mentioned incorporating "*more drill and practice*" and repeating the lecture's main points in Arabic at the end. Most lecturers acknowledged that access to English-speaking literature through English-medium programs facilitated the use of advanced teaching methods and strategies. On the other hand, some lecturers identified difficulties in delivering content and their lecturing style due to English being a foreign language, which hinders the incorporation of anecdotes, personal stories, and jokes into their lectures. The interviews did not directly address adaptations to courses resulting from English-medium education, but one student reported that in the upcoming academic year, students would be given more time or fewer reading materials to prepare for class discussions. While some students suggested adding more images to slides and translating key terms as previous steps taken to meet students' needs, these suggestions were not implemented.

In terms of lecturer qualifications, the best cases would include dual degrees in a content area and English linguistics or language teaching. These combinations are very uncommon in higher education environments, though. As a result, the most typical scenario is that subjects are taught in English by non-native English speakers with differing degrees of foreign experience and language competency. Language franca English is becoming more and more regarded as an equally desirable alternative in academic settings, despite the fact that lecturers and students in the current survey emphasize native-speaker English as a performance model (Tatzl, 2011; Belcher, 2009).

V. Conclusion

This research study examines the attitudes of teachers and students towards English-medium master's degree programs at a university in Saudi Arabia. It investigates their experiences with best practices, the impact of English-medium instruction on teaching methods, and their perceptions of challenges. Consequently, the results provide a number of suggestions for the effective execution of English-medium higher education. While stakeholders may have viewed the need for support as less pressing than they had previously believed, the study demonstrates that additional steps can help bring English-taught programmes into existence. In order to help all parties involved, the study concludes by summarising suggestions for institutions making the switch from mother tongue to English-medium instruction. Lecturer and student participation based on perceived needs should be the main idea driving these support strategies (Tatzl, 2011). However, institutions with limited budgets face the risk of entering a cycle where they can only compensate for the lack of funding through the creativity and innovation of their stakeholders. However, in order for creativity and innovation to thrive, institutions must actively promote and reward them.

Based on the findings, English language instruction for students should prioritize spoken interaction and academic writing, delivered through integrated-skills courses rather than isolated skill-focused specialized courses. This recommendation is supported by industry feedback that highlights the significance of oral communication (Wulff & Campbell, 2009) and writing (Menekse & Chi, 2013) as essential skills for practicing engineers. However, other linguistic skills, such as listening, reading, and speaking, should not be neglected. The rationale behind these recommendations is that integrated-skills courses tend to enhance student motivation, and teachers can readily adapt and shift the instructional focus when necessary. Additionally, emphasis should be placed on vocabulary development, reading for discussion and writing, study skills, and learning strategies.

It is important to note that subject teachers cannot replace language teachers when it comes to teaching language within their respective courses (Raisanen & Fortanet-Gómez, 2008, p. 48). Conversely, language teachers cannot teach specialized content like programming skills. Therefore, it is crucial to leverage the expertise of both content and language teachers in their respective fields and promote increased collaboration between these groups to integrate content and language effectively. Only through the utilization of language as the medium of content instruction by content teachers and content as the medium of language instruction by language teachers can English-taught tertiary degree programs thrive.

Appendix. Interview Question

(1) What effects do you believe English-medium instruction has on the language skills of students?
(2) What effects do you believe English-medium instruction has on the content knowledge of students?
(3) How does English-medium instruction affect your teaching methods?

(4) What do you consider to be the most urgent issues in your course(s)?
(5) What modifications will you make to your course(s) next semester?
(6) Have you attended any of the university's English language courses for lecturers teaching in English-medium programs?
(7) Which support measures would assist you in teaching English?
(8) What are your future objectives?

REFERENCES

[1] Al-Haidari, F. A. (2018). The impact of the English language on academic performance: A study of Saudi university students. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *8*(2), 62–75.
[2] Al-Tamimi, A., & Shuib, M. (2009). The teaching of English as a foreign language in the Saudi Arabian context: The struggle for balanced development. *RELC Journal*, *40*(3), 338–352.
[3] Alghamdi, M. A. (2018). English language teaching in Saudi Arabia: challenges and solutions. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *8*(4), 49–59.
[4] Alghamdi, M. S. (2019). English as a medium of instruction in Saudi universities: *A case study English Today*, *35*(4), 50–57.
[5] Alshumaimeri, Y. A. (2017). Challenges and opportunities of teaching English as a medium of instruction in Saudi Arabian universities. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *38*(7), 597–609.
[6] Belcher, D. (2009). *Writing your journal article in 12 weeks: A guide to academic publishing success*. Sage Publications.
[7] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101.
[8] Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
[9] Dearden, J. (2015). *English as a medium of instruction—a growing global phenomenon: Phase 1*. London: British Council.
[10] Dearden, J., Ljubisic, A., & Djigunovic, J. M. (2008). The impact of studying a foreign language on second language speech production. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, *5*(1), 1–16.
[11] Doiz, A., Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2013). *English-medium instruction at universities: global challenges*. Multilingual Matters.
[12] Fattah, S. A. (2020). The role of English in higher education in Saudi Arabia. *European Journal of Education Studies*, *7*(7), 89–101.
[13] Flowerdew, J. (2009). Writing for scholarly publication in English: The case of Hong Kong. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *8*(4), 300–313.
[14] Hellekjr, G. O., Groenewegen, P., & Nerland, M. (2014). English-medium instruction in Norwegian higher education: voices of lecturers. *Higher Education*, *68*(6), 929–943.
[15] Huang, R., & Brown, H. (2019). English-medium instruction in higher education: A review of research on pedagogy, learners, and outcomes. *Language Teaching*, *52*(4), 423–466.
[16] Hu, J., & Zhang, L. (2021). Effects of language support on the academic performance of international graduate students in English-medium instruction. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *42*(1), 35–50.
[17] Hyland, K. (2009). *Academic discourse: English in a global context Continuum.*
[18] Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (2020). English-medium instruction (EMI) in higher education in China: A review of research. *Language Teaching*, *53*(2), 249–273.
[19] Li, Y., & Kaye, M. (2013). Learning to write for academic purposes: The experience of a Chinese student on an Australian master's program. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *12*(1), 42–53.
[20] Liu, M., & Jin, Y. (2016). An examination of the difficulties and opportunities associated with English-medium instruction in Chinese higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *35*(1), 163–176.
[21] Liu, L., & Hua, Z. (2021). The challenges of teaching English-medium instruction: voices from non-native English-speaking lecturers in China. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum*, *34*(1), 74–90.
[22] Li, J., & Li, Y. (2020). The impact of prior study-abroad experience and English proficiency on international students' academic performance in English-medium instruction programs. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *41*(3), 233-249.
[23] Matsuda, P. K., & Gobel, P. (2004). Writing in academic departments: a curricular history. *Written Communication*, *21*(3), 259–294.
[24] Menekse, M., Stump, G. S., Krause, S., & Chi, M. T. (2013). Differentiated overt learning activities support effective instruction in engineering classrooms. *Journal of Engineering Education*, *102*(3), 346-374.
[25] Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
[26] Rao, Z. (2019). English-medium instruction in China: A review of the literature. *Language and Education*, *33*(4), 305–322.
[27] Sawir, E., Marginson, S., Deumert, A., Nyland, C., & Ramia, G. (2008). Loneliness and international students: An Australian study. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *12*(2), 148–180.
[28] Sercu, L., & Bandura, E. (2017). International master’s students in Flanders (Belgium): expectations and experiences of academic and social integration. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *38*(6), 509–525.
[29] Starfield, S. (2009). Disciplinary and genre conventions in doctoral writing: A case study. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *14*(4), 435–447.
[30] Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2009). *Academic writing for graduate students: essential tasks and skills.* University of Michigan Press.
[31] Tang, H., & Zhang, J. (2015). English-medium instruction in Chinese higher education: A case study. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *36*(4), 379–393.
[32] Tatzl, D. (2011). English-Medium masters' programmes at an Austrian university of applied sciences: Attitudes, Experiences and Challenges. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *10*(4), 252-270.

[33] Ylijoki, O. H. (2013). The multilingual university: Language, identity, and pedagogy in higher education. *AILA Review*, *26*(1), 22–39.
[34] Wächter, B., & Maiworm, F. (2014). *English-taught programs in European higher education: the picture in 2013 Academic Cooperation Association.*
[35] Wang, X. (2018). English-medium instruction (EMI) in higher education: A review of challenges and opportunities. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *37*(1), 129–142.
[36] Wulff, D. H., & Campbell, S. W. (2009). Speaking up in the operating room: how team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, *37*(1), 1–21.
[37] Zhang, J., & Li, L. (2019). International graduate students' experiences of academic adaptation: a phenomenological study. *Higher Education*, *77*(5), 949–964.

Majed Abu Dabeel is a dedicated individual with a profound involvement in educational research ESP, and teaching applied linguistics. He pursued his undergraduate studies in applied linguistics at King Khaled University, graduating with a First-Class Honours degree. He then pursued a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics at the University of Westminster, where he excelled and earned distinction. Driven by a desire for further exploration, Majed embarked on a doctoral journey. He successfully completed his PhD at the University of Southampton in 2010, specializing in the philosophy of applied linguistics mainly ESP and teacher education.

With a wealth of experience, he has made significant contributions to the field. The author's passion for research and education led him to chair the Research Committee for postgraduate students, where he played a crucial role in fostering academic growth and knowledge dissemination. His commitment to advancing knowledge is reflected in his published research articles. The author's work covers a wide range of topics, including second language learning ESP and teaching, teacher education, a wide range of topics, including second language learning and teaching, teacher education, philosophy, and research methodology. Through his scholarly contributions, Majed has shared valuable insights and contributed to the development of the field.

Dr. Majed has been working as an assistant professor of English at Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia since 2010. His teaching and mentorship have positively impacted students, shaping their language skills and fostering a deep understanding of the subject matter. Recognizing his outstanding contributions, the author was appointed as the Dean of the Community College and Continuous Learning at Al-Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud University in 2019. In this leadership role, he continues to champion education and drive meaningful initiatives to enhance the learning experience for students.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 815-821, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.14

An Ecofeminist and Taoist Reading of Louise Glück's *A Village Life*

Yeting Hu
School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia;
Anhui Institute of Information Technology, Anhui, China

Agnes Liau Wei Lin
School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Suzana Muhammad
School of Humanities, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia

Abstract—**Born and bred in the Western lands in the context of ecological crisis and feminist movement in the 1970s, ecofeminism views men's rule over women and human's rule over nature as two aspects of the same issue, and believes that there is an inherent connection between them. By criticizing the oppressive status of women and nature, and eliminating the dualism rooted in western patriarchy, ecofeminism aims to promote equality and harmony among all things. Taoism, an ancient Eastern philosophy with a history of thousands of years, also places great emphasis on harmony among individuals, nature, society, and the universe. Its principles of "the unity of man and nature", and balance between "Yin" and "Yang" provide philosophical support for ecofeminism which rejects dualisms and encourages wholeness and harmony. As society and economy develop rapidly, humanity faces a series of crisis, and this paper just intends to combine ecofeminism with Taoism to make an analysis on Louise Glück's poem collection of *A Village Life* to explore her ecofeminist consciousness and how she advocates the establishment of a diverse but harmonious world without hierarchical differences in her poems.**

Index Terms—**Louise Glück, *A Village Life*, ecofeminism, Taoism, harmony**

I. Introduction

A Village Life is the winner of Nobel Prize for literature of Louise Glück's later collection of poems published in 2009. Unlike her early works full of autobiographical materials and mythology rewriting, in this collection, Glück returned to a more direct depiction of a peaceful village and its inhabitants, as well as the plants and animals that live there and the events that take place on a daily basis which is filled with strong natural atmosphere and feminine connotation.

Indeed, Louise Glück's poetry is inherently influenced by her multiple female identities with rich feminist themes of love, marriage, divorce, and women's roles and responsibilities that cannot be ignored. Glück's poems are believed to explore and illustrate the truth of the perilous journey a young woman takes as she grows up and becomes a woman of and beyond her body and mind (Cooke, 2017). Besides, Louise Glück is also adept at using natural images, primarily incorporated into the color of female characters and her poetry also expands the types of natural images and her unique personal experience as a female, which not only illustrates the unfairness between women and men but also illustrate the relationship between nature, female group, and the entire human society.

The year of 2020 has witnessed a global crisis year with the global outbreak and spread of COVID-19 which might be a fortuitous, but significant factor in Glück's winning the 2020 Nobel Prize for Literature. When faced with grief and quarantine brought by COVID-19, Louise Glück's poems probably provide readers with comfort and guidance by re-examining the relationship between man and nature and man and man.

At present, aside from COVID-19, both the ecological crisis and the female crisis are serious issues facing the whole humanity at present. Overexploitation and pollution of natural resources result in natural ecological crises, including global climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation, while the female crisis is reflected in the restriction and discrimination of women in the political, economic, social, cultural aspects and so on. Those series of crisis just confirm to us that the current development mode must be changed, the anthropocentrism must be abandoned, sustainable development must be pursued and a community with a shared future must be created by promoting harmony among human beings.

In light of the above, the purpose of this article is to examine Louise Glück's poetry selection of *A Village Life* from dual lens of ecofeminist perspective and Taoist perspective to explore her ecofeminist concerns and how Taoist principles of harmony are reflected in her poems, as well as Glück's vision of a harmonious society, in which she envisions nature, both female and male, the relationship between humans and nature, the relationship between oneself and oneself, mutual care, and equal assistance for all. In *A Village Life*, Louise Glück' primarily describe nature, survival, love, marriage, and daily life in a way that is rich and simple in its ecological wisdom. By examining the relationship between women and nature from an ecofeminist perspective through poetry, we can increase the spiritual connection between women and nature, resulting in a relationship of empathy and a reassessment of how human culture and nature interact and conflict. From the perspective of Taoist philosophy, it is possible to see what kind of ideal harmonious world exists in the heart of Louise Glück who has experienced the joys and sorrows in her old age.

A. Ecofeminism

In the context of global ecological crisis, which has posed a serious threat to the entire world during the second wave of feminist activism, Faneoise d'Eaubonne, a French biologist, first introduced "ecofeminism" through her work *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* in 1974 which marked its birth. She asserted that male control of production and of women's sexuality brings the twin crises of environmental destruction (Mellor, 1997). In her opinion, women cannot be liberated without liberating nature from patriarchal oppression. Ecofeminists believe that there are strong similarities between women and nature. Physically, women and nature share similar characteristics, both creating and reproducing life in an ecological manner. Historically, women and nature have had an intimate relationship, which is rooted in matriarchy and ancient cultural memory, representing mankind's collective unconsciousness and embracing life, mothers, and harmony. Culturally, in the dichotomy between civilization and nature, women are seen as nature, representing emotions and passivity, in need of rational and strong men to guide them. For that, K.J. Warren, pointed out clearly that "controlling nature and controlling women operate under the same system, which is the patriarchy central system" (Karen, 1994, p. 102). Thus, ecofeminism primarily "analyzes the interconnection of the oppression of women and nature" (Bressler, 1999, p. 236) and "one task of ecofeminists has been to expose these dualisms and the ways in which feminizing nature and naturalizing or animalizing women has served as justification for the domination of women, animals and the earth" (Garrard, 1993, p. 5). In other words, the core of ecofeminism is to combine women's issues with environmental issues, to oppose oppression of women and the environment under patriarchal values and dualistic thinking, advocate the establishment of a new relationship between humans and nature as a means of fighting gender oppression, pursuing women's liberation, and resolving ecological crises.

Since the birth of ecofeminism, scholars from many disciplines, such as history, philosophy, literature, anthropology, biology, and others, have contributed to ecofeminism and have provided their own interpretations of ecological feminist issues. In this cultural atmosphere, scholars in the field of literary studies have gradually begun to engage in ecological thinking and actively attempt to construct a literary research and criticism theory that integrates ecofeminist perspectives. According to Garrard, "as a sub-branch of ecocriticism, the main focus of ecofeminist criticism was on the configuration and representation of male and female in relation to culture and nature" (Garrard, 2007, pp. 359-383). So, ecofeminist literary criticism just explores the relationship between literature and nature and women from a perspective that emphasizes the natural and feminine aspects, revealing the connection between two forms of oppression within the literary field and examining the androcentric dualism of man/woman in relation to the natural world (Garrard, 2004).

B. Taoism

The Taoist school of thought is one of the ancient Chinese philosophical thought systems, mainly represented by Taoism, is a component of traditional Chinese culture, which "contributed to the making of Chinese culture and society and has continued to evolve for the past two thousand years" (Girardot et al., 2007, p. 56). Nature is Taoism's basis, and its core concept is "the unity of man and nature", which is Taoism's best integration with nature. The Taoism philosophy provides a true philosophical foundation for the development of an ecological society and provides a means of resolving the historical conflict between humans and nature (Marshall, 1992).

The Taoist philosophy is based on the concept that all things are transformed and generated by "Dao", which is the theoretical foundation of Taoist thought. In *Tao Te Ching*, originally named Laozi "The Dao produced the One, The One produced the Two; The Two produced the Three; The Three produced All Things. All Things carry "Yin" and hold to "Yang"; Their blended influence brings Harmony" (Tzu & Mitchell, Chapter 42). As described by Laozi, "the One" which is produced by "Dao" (or the natural course) refers to the entire universe. "The Two" represents Yin-Yang, and "The Three" represents heaven, earth, and humans, which produce "All Things." "All Things" also have "Yin" and "Yang" whose influence brings "Harmony" or the Yin-Yang oneness is the foundation of Taoist harmony (Fei, 1984; Lee et al., 2008). In addition, as the highest philosophical category in Taoist thought, "Dao" has been endowed with a significant feminine quality. According to Wikipedia, in *Tao Te Ching*, which contains just over 5,000 characters, the word "mother" appears seven times, whereas the word "father" only appears once, which is sufficient to demonstrate the Taoist reverence for feminine characteristics.

Taoism emphasizes equality in all things, respect for all living beings, and the harmonious development of men and women, animals and nature, which is just consistent with the ecofeminist ideas born in the 1970s. According to the Western scholar C. Spretnak, "Ecofeminist thoughts is a parallel concept to ancient Chinese Taoist thought, which aims to create a world of gender equality, harmony between humans and nature, humans and animals, humans and others, and tranquility" (Jenkins, 2002, pp. 39-52). American scholars of Sharon Rowe and James D. Sellmann also maintained that ancient Chinese Taoist thought provided strong support for ecofeminist criticism of dualism, and Chinese Taoist thought has remarkable consistency in seeking non-dualism and harmony with ecofeminism (Rowe & Sellmann, 2003).

II. Discussion

A. The Relationship Between Nature and Women in A Village Life

In *A Village Life*, there are three perspectives on women and nature: affinity between women and nature, empathy between women and nature, as well as both being the victims of patriarchy.

(a). Affinity Between Women and Nature

According to cultural ecofeminism, women are more closely connected to nature than men, emphasizing that women and nature share many biological similarities, such as the ability to reproduce, nurture, and care for children. *Primavera*, a short poem from *A Village Life* just captures the fragile and tender quality of early spring with an evocative sense of femininity. With just a few lines, Glück captures the beauty and fragility of early spring, as well as the power and resilience of the female spirit behind it.

Spring comes quickly: overnight
the plum tree blossoms,
the warm air fills with bird calls.
How beautiful the blossoms are—emblems of the resilience of life.
The birds approach eagerly. (Glück, 2021, p. 603)

From the excerpted stanzas, it is evident that spring is a scene full of vitality when plants sprout and blossom and animals reproduce, representing the feminine capacity to nurture life, a renewal of nature, and the beginning of a new era. Here, a feminine image of rejuvenation and renewal is painted, featured by maternal qualities by Louise Glück. Warm air filled with bird calls depicted in the spring scene with blooming plum blossoms is simply a perfect symbol of motherliness and femininity, associated with gentleness, nurturing, and sensitivity as exemplified by the plum blossoms and birds of spring. Due to their beauty, gentleness, fragility, and fleeting youth, women are often compared to flowers. Consequently, the plum blossom, a symbol of strength and resiliency, may also be seen as a tribute to mothers and women. Today's society presents women with many pressures and challenges, yet they remain resilient, adaptable, and passionate about life despite these challenges. A woman's resilience is cleverly illustrated in Glück's last sentence of "The birds approach eagerly", which indicates that the birds are attracted to them since they appreciate the strength of women so much.

(b). Women and Nature Under Patriarchy

According to Warren, nature and women are ruled by the same system: the patriarchal logic system. Androcentrism is the essence of anthropocentrism, which positions man in a dominant position and oppresses nature (Warren, 1990). As a consequence, women and nature under the control of patriarchy frequently appear as 'others', who are frequently marginalized and ignored and considered to be objects of dominance.

1. Women Under Patriarchy

Identity is people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others (Abrams, 2016), which is a characteristic that is distinct from others. However, in a patriarchal society, women are defined by men from a subjective perspective, as attachments and objects constructed by them. In Glück's poems, women are frequently depicted as women whose identities are lost or marginalized.

In her poetry, Glück emphasizes the lack of women's identity, in which many women are confined to the role of 'other' and are unable to fully realize their social significance. Here is the excerpt from the poem called *Fig* in which women's subordinate role can be seen clearly.

I make these things for my husband,
but he doesn't like them.
He wants his mother's dishes, but I don't make them well.
When I try, I get angry
He's trying to turn me into a person I never was.
He thinks it's a simple thing
you cut up a chicken, throw a few tomatoes into the pan.
Garlic, if there's garlic.
An hour later, you're in paradise.
He thinks it's my job to learn, not his job
to teach me. What my mother cooked, I don't need to learn. (Glück, 2021, p. 604)

The first stanza of the excerpt begins with the wife preparing food for her husband, but he is not satisfied. Traditionally, women are expected to be proficient in the kitchen and prepare delicious meals for their families. In this excerpt, however, the heroine is not good at being her husband's mother's favorite dish. As Glück illustrates here, women are expected to fulfill certain roles in traditional families that may not be aligned with their actual interests. To her husband, cooking is a woman's responsibility, not a man's. Furthermore, he doesn't feel that it is his responsibility to teach her how to cook the dishes that his mother has prepared, which just reflects that women are often expected to assume more responsibilities and obligations within the family in response to this social expectation.

The line of “He’s trying to turn me into a person I never was.” just shows her husband is attempting to change her into someone she has never been before. A woman in a marital relationship may be under pressure and expected to alter her personality, interests, and abilities to meet her husband’s expectations and needs, which may cause women to feel confused, anxious, and helpless, since they may feel that they must give up their own identity and sense of self to accommodate their husband. Additionally, this reflects a patriarchal ideology in which husbands believe they should dominate and control their wives.

Indeed, the title of *Fig* itself just has metaphorical implications of women’s inferior position to men. As the flower and fruit of fig are fused together and its flowers do not compete with other flowers but silently preparing fruit, therefore, fig itself has an introverted and silent dedication to the language of flowers. As a symbol of quiet dedication, the fig just suggests that women’s efforts and sacrifices may often go unnoticed or unappreciated, which further illustrates their disadvantaged position in a patriarchal society.

2. Nature Under Patriarchy

In a patriarchal society, nature share the same destiny as women as victims of the oppressed. In the poem of *Sunset*, the poetess just depicts a farmer burning dead leaves.

At the same time as the sun’s setting,
a farm worker’s burning dead leaves.
It’s nothing, this fire.
It’s a small thing, controlled,
like a family run by a dictator.
Still, when it blazes up, the farm worker disappears;
from the road, he’s invisible. (Glück, 2021, p. 567)

In this poem, during the setting sun, a farm worker burns the dead leaves. It shows that humans often view nature as their own resource and tool, ignoring the inherent value and existence of nature in favor of their own utility. For human, this behavior is nothing which is compared to a family ruled by a dictator, suggesting human’s control over nature. The fire is viewed here as a tool, much like how a dictator controls a family, as humans attempt to satisfy their needs and desires by manipulating the nature. Based on the discussion of women’s social status in patriarchal societies, the word “indicator” here just refers to men and cleverly highlights the dual oppression imposed by men on both nature and women. The “invisible” in the following stanza is a pun which refers to both the farmer disappearing from view as well as human ignorance and neglect of the nature.

The oppression and control of nature by humans are even more explicit and direct in another poem called *Burning Leaves.* Here is the excerpt from it.

The fire burns up into the clear sky,
eager and furious, like an animal trying to get free,
to run wild as nature intended
When it burns like this,
leaves aren’t enough—
it’s acquisitive, rapacious. (Glück, 2021, p. 591)

At the beginning of the poem, it describes a blaze which is “eager and furious”, simply symbolizing humanity’s unbridled behavior towards nature. “When it burns like this, leaves aren’t enough” literally means that intense fire cannot be satisfied by just a few leaves. Here the fire has metaphorical meaning of greed which indicates humanity’s insatiable desire and greed for natural resources. Therefore, the following sentence just further complement humanity’s greedy behaviors with “acquisitive, rapacious”.

From the above it can be found that nature’s status is similar to women in society in an anthropocentric view. In a patriarchal society, both nature and women are oppressed, and ecological crisis and gender oppression are the root causes of human social crisis (Sun, 2011).

(c). The Empathetic Relationship Between Women and Nature

Ecofeminists believe that women are intimately connected to nature and are intertwined with it. “In literature, this connection is primarily expressed through symbolic or metaphorical means. Nature becomes feminized as women become more naturalized” (Luo, 2004, p. 175). In *A Village Life*, there is a poem called *First Snow* which just reflected this kind of metaphorical meanings.

Like a child, the earth’s going to sleep,
or so the story goes.
But I’m not tired, it says.
And the mother says, You may not be tired but I’m tired
You can see it in her face, everyone can.
So the snow has to fall, sleep has to come.
Because the mother’s sick to death of her life
and needs silence. (Glück, 2021, p. 574)

In this excerpt of the poem, such images of “child”, “earth sleeping”, and “mother” just personify the earth as a child and the natural world as a mother, which connects the earth and mother through figurative means, suggesting the close connection between women and nature. As a physical characteristic of women, maternity is not only concerned with giving birth and rearing children, but also with protecting and nurturing the next generation. Women often care for and protect others. Moreover, nature's maternal nature is also evident in the propagation of life and its continuation.

Due to the exploitation and exploration of the earth's natural resources, human activity has had a significant impact on the planet's ecosystems and so the earth needs to rest and recover just like a vulnerable as a child. In this context, the poetess used the word "sleep" to convey the earth's eagerness to rest. Unfortunately, humans do not intend to stop abusing nature but continue doing so.

Then the poetess continues to say "And the mother says, You may not be tired but I'm tired". In analogy with the "earth", "mother" refers to mother of nature, which has been depleted by the excessive usage of natural resources by humans. And there is an important detail worth noting here, which is the use of a comma after "says", indicating that the sentence is incomplete. However, the capitalization of Y in "You" after the comma suggests a special significance of emphasis: a complaint is made about human greed and exploitation of nature in this text, which captures the readers' attention. In the following "I", an echoing "you" just express an exhaustion and desire for quietness. Additionally, this maternal role depicted in the poem implies the fragility of the environment abused by human beings.

The earth needs rest due to the over exploration from mankind, the mothers also confront pressure from traditional culture who are expected to give birth to and raise their children, which can also bring them both physical and mental exhaustion and challenges. By feminizing nature and naturalizing women, the empathetic connection between women and nature becomes increasingly apparent, as both of them are oppressed.

B. Harmony in Glück's Poems Through Taoist-Inspired Perspectives

In *A Village Life*, Louise Glück returns to the depiction of everyday life and the plain pastoral of the ordinary in which she not only reveals the strong connection between women and nature but also experiences an arcadian life outside of modern urban civilization where she offers her insights on how men and women, as well as people in general, can harmoniously coexist and relate to one another.

(a.) The Ecological Awareness of "the Unity of Man and Nature"

The relationship between man and nature is an important part of Taoist philosophy which embodies the basic concept of "the unity of man and nature". In chapter 25 *of Tao Te Ching*, it says: "Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Tao. The law of the Tao is its being what it is" (Tzu & Mitchell, chapter 25). Here, "The law of the Tao is its being what it is" simply explains the nature and logic of the existence and development of all things in the world and the harmonious relationship between the things in it is coexistence. In Zhuang zi's *On the Equality of all Things*, it says "The universe and I came into being together; I and everything therein are one" (Zhuangzi, 2021). From these, it can be found that in Taoism, humans and nature are homologous as an organic whole and all things in the universe, including humans, are interconnected, highlighting the ideal state of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. In Taoism, the ultimate goal is to achieve a state of oneness with the universe and to live in accordance with the *Dao*, which is considered as the origin of all things. And "the unity of man and nature" just focuses on harmony between man and nature, and each has its own unique nature. According to Taoist culture, man can only live and thrive if he is united with nature.

In *A Village Life*, Glück just enjoys nature's beauty and interacts with it wholeheartedly as a part of nature who describes a beautiful experience of becoming one with nature that is marked by love, closeness and participation mediated by all the senses. Here is the excerpt from *Sunrise*:

This time of year, the window boxes smell of the hills,
the thyme and rosemary that grew there,
crammed into the narrow spaces between the rocks
and, lower down, where there was real dirt,
competing with other things, blueberries and currants,
the small shrubby trees the bees love
Whatever we ate smelled of the hills,
even when there was almost nothing.
Or maybe that's what nothing tastes like, thyme and rosemary.
Maybe, too, that's what it looks like
beautiful, like the hills, the rocks above the tree line
webbed with sweet-smelling herbs,
the small plants glittering with dew
It was a big event to climb up there and wait for dawn,
seeing what the sun sees as it slides out from behind the rocks,
and what you couldn't see, you imagined;
your eyes would go as far as they could, to the river, say,
and your mind would do the rest—
and the smell of the past is everywhere

the thyme and rosemary rubbing against your clothes,
the smell of too many illusions— (Glück, 2021, p. 614)

In this excerpt, by using all human senses, Glück immerses herself completely in the natural world, allowing the readers to experience the freshness and vitality of it. The poem begins with the scent of the mountains and connects it to the various plants growing on the windowsill, all of which originate from nature. Such senses conveyed the words as "the smell of hills", "thyme and rosemary", "blue and white", "sweet-smelling and glittering" which are related to human emotions just integrate seamlessly with the natural environment. Thus, humans can participate in nature with their senses to experience the beauty and magic of the natural world and achieve a sense of unity with nature.

In the third stanza, it describes the experience of climbing to the top of a mountain to watch the sunrise, expanding one's vision beyond and merging with nature. In this context, the word "imagine" refers to transcending one's immediate surroundings through imagination and integrating with nature in order to realize "the unity between man and nature", which enables one to feel as if there is no boundary between man and nature. In this experience, one uses one's imagination to envision things that cannot be seen directly, and immerses oneself in the scenery. Poetic elements refer not only to the external landscape, but also to people's emotions and feelings. The "past" as described in the line "the smell of the past is everywhere" is not only a matter of time, but also an emotional experience. Through the integration of natural elements and emotions, people can experience nature's beauty and the intimate relationship between humans and nature in a more vivid way.

Based on the above, it can be seen that Glück is very adept at capturing nature's signals, seeking out the joint of harmony between nature's changes and inner emotions' resonances, so that the poetess's individual existence is intimately intertwined with the existence of nature in an incredibly subtle manner.

(b). Harmony Between "Yin" and "Yang" in Gender Relationship

In Taoist philosophy, there is a strong emphasis on the harmony between "Yin" and "Yang" throughout the universe. Yin/Yang divide corresponds to the differentiation of female/male, Earth/Heaven, Sun/Moon, Body/Mind, and many other polarized terms. "The Dao produced the One, The One produced the Two". "Yin" and "Yang" make up the two which produce more things. "All things leave behind them the Obscurity and go forward to embrace the Brightness, while they are harmonized by the Breath of Vacancy (Tzu & Mitchell, Chapter 42). It shows that a coexistence of "Yin" and "Yang" exists within everything, as well as the existence of differences within it. "Yin" and "Yang" indicate gender differences, which contribute to the creation of the colorful world we live in today.

In traditional Chinese culture, male stands for "Yang" and female is "Yin". Thus, harmony between "Yin" and "Yang" refers to an interaction between men and women in which neither party oppresses the other. Instead, it is only when men and women are able to retain their natural characteristics on the basis of independent personalities and play to their strengths that "Yin" and "Yang" can be harmonious. In Glück's poems, Gender differences are acknowledged, but they should not be used as a basis for inequality. Instead, these differences should be embraced, comprehended, and mutually respected. Here is the excerpt from *In The Café*:

Every month or so, we meet for coffee.
In summer, we'll walk around the meadow, sometimes as far as the mountain.
Even when he suffers, he's thriving, happy in his body.
It's partly the women, of course, but not that only.
He moves into their houses, learns to like the movies they like.
It's not an act—he really does learn,
the way someone goes to cooking school and learns to cook.
He sees everything with their eyes.
He becomes not what they are but what they could be
if they weren't trapped in their characters.
For him, this new self of his is liberating because it's invented— (Glück, 2021, p. 568)

In the first stanza, Glück describes the harmonious relationship between men and women who met monthly, tasted coffee, and walked the meadows in summer. Despite setbacks, a man can remain optimistic since the women are by his side. While in the second stanza, the man "learns to like the movies they like", the man does not reject the woman's preferences. Rather, he learns to appreciate her taste through movies in a similar manner to learning a skill like cooking, which illustrates his respect and appreciation for the women. The characteristics and preferences of men and women are different, but by balancing their differences can a harmonious atmosphere be created. And this complementary relationship not only promotes each other's growth and progress, but also creates an atmosphere of harmony between "Yin" and "Yang".

Based on the above, it can be found that the relationship between men and women is characterized by complementarity, harmony, and balance. By absorbing and merging with each other, men and women create a new, rich self, while also creating an atmosphere of harmony, which simply stems from balance and respect between each other, and this is also the focus of Taoist Yin-Yang thought. As a result, there must be mutual appreciation, respect, and understanding between men and women in order to grow and progress together in harmony.

III. Conclusion

As a work of Glück's later years, *A Village Life* embodies her simple life wisdom which not only reflects a kind of reverence for nature, but also includes her experience as a woman and her concern for gender issues. Her poems present the ecofeminist view that women are inextricably linked with nature and both belong to the oppressed group in need of mutual support and protection. Additionally, she draws on the Taoist idea of "the unity of nature and man", which argues that humans and nature are interdependent and interconnected, and that harmonious coexistence is possible only when nature is respected. The Taoist view of "Yin" and "Yang" without superiority or inferiority implies that the sexes are not separated but tolerate each other despite their gender-related differences. Through her poems, Glück simply conveys her ecofeminist and Taoist views on returning to nature and equality between men and women, as well as her efforts to change the marginalized status of women and nature and the wish to establish a harmonious world.

References

[1] Abrams, D. (2016). *Social identifications: A social psychology of intergroup relations and group processes.* Routledge.

[2] Bressler, C. E. (2011). *Literary criticism: An introduction to theory and practice*. Longman.

[3] Cooke, A. (2017). Full issue. Papers & Publications: *Interdisciplinary Journal of Undergraduate Research*, *6*, Article 1. Retrieved March 13, 2023, from https://digitalcommons.northgeorgia.edu/papersandpubs/vol6/iss1/1

[4] Fei, W. Z. (1984). *Investigating and editing Laozi's Dao De Jing.* Taiwan, Taipei: Emishi Library Press (in Chinese).

[5] Garrard, G. (1993). *Ecofeminism: Women, animals, nature*. Temple University Press.

[6] Garrard, G. (2004). *Ecocriticism*. Routledge.

[7] Garrard, G. (2007). Ecocriticism and education for Sustainability. *Pedagogy, 7*(3), 359–383.

[8] Girardot, N. J., Miller, J., & Liu, X. (2007). *Daoism and ecology: Ways within a cosmic landscape*. International Society for Science and Religion.

[9] Glück Louise. (2021). *Poems 1962-2012*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

[10] Hogg, Michael and Dominic Abrams. (1988). *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes*. London: Routledge.

[11] Jenkins, T. N. (2002). Chinese traditional thought and practice: Lessons for an ecological economics worldview. *Economics, 40*(1), 39-52.

[12] Luo, T. (2004). *Feminist literary criticism in the West and China*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press.

[13] Marshall, P. (1992). *Nature's web: Rethinking our place on Earth*. New York, NY: Paragon House

[14] Mellor, M. (1997). *Feminism & Ecology*. Polity Press.

[15] Rowe, S., & Sellman, J. D. (2003). An uncommon alliance. *Environmental Ethics*, *25*(2), 129–148.

[16] Sun, L. J. (2011). The dilemma and way out of ecological feminist criticism. *Foreign Literature Review*, *(02)*, 196-203.

[17] Tzu, L., & Mitchell, S. (1991). Tao te ching: A new English version. New York: HarperCollins ebooks. https://docdrop.org/download_annotation_doc/-Perennial-Classics-Lao-Tzu-Stephen-Mitchell---Tao-Te-Ching_-A-New-English-Version-Harper-Perennial-Modern-Classics-2006-2-4--pDMw9.pdf

[18] Warren, K. J. (1994). *Ecological feminism.* Routledge.

[19] Warren, K. J. (1990). The power and the promise of Ecological feminism. *Environmental Ethics*, *12*(2), 125–146.

[20] Warren, K. J. (1997). *Ecological feminism*. Routledge.

[21] Zhuangzi. (2021). Wang, R. (Trans.). Wang, R., & Cai, H. (Eds.). *Zhuangzi: Chinese-English Bilingual Edition (Volume 1)* Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House.

Yeting Hu is a doctoral student who is studying in School of Humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), whose area of study is American literature. Contact: heyhuyeting@163.com

Agnes, Liau Wei Lin is working as a senior lecturer in School of Humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), who got a doctoral degree in Cambridge University on Literature. Contact: agnes@usm.my

Suzana Muhammad is working as a senior lecturer in School of Humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), who got a doctoral degree in Indiana university of Pennsylvania (America) on literature. Contact: szna@usm.my

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 822-832, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.15

Social Issues During the Victorian Era Lead to the Formation of Nice Girl Syndrome in Gaskell's *Ruth*

Madeline Yudith
Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Muslim Indonesia, Makassar, Indonesia

Burhanuddin Arafah
English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Herawaty Abbas
English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Ahmat Jaelani
English Language Studies Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University,Makassar, Indonesia

Franco Gabriel Sunyoto
English Language Studies Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University,Makassar, Indonesia

Azhariah Nur B. Arafah
Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Gunadarma, Depok, Indonesia

***Abstract*—This study aimed to elaborate on the relationship between social issues during the Victorian era and Nice Girl syndrome, as demonstrated in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth*. A qualitative descriptive method was employed to achieve this objective, incorporating Alfred Adler's Individual Personality approach and Beverly Engel's Nice Girl syndrome as the grand theory. Data on female characters' behaviour and thoughts in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth* were collected and analyzed using Adler's and Nice Girl syndrome theories, respectively. Furthermore, the dialogue and monologue of female characters were also considered. The results showed that social issues such as social class, Victorian family, Victorian ideal womanhood, and Victorian religion and morality related to Nice Girl syndrome during the Victorian era influenced and contributed to the formation of *Ruth's* female characters.**

***Index Terms*—*Ruth*, Nice Girl Syndrome, psychoanalysis**

I. Introduction

The topic of women is highly engaging when discussing various aspects of society. According to Afiah et al. (2022), numerous themes are interconnected with women, such as discrimination, gender, freedom, inequality, independence, slavery, and women's rights and desires. Throughout history, women have frequently faced discrimination due to the perception of their vulnerability. However, in recent times, Beta (2020) reported that approximately 31 million women between the ages of 16 and 31 years in Indonesia are actively engaged as entrepreneurs or workers in the fashion industry, contributing US$ 8.2 billion to the country's economy. Mehrad and Zangeneh (2015) stated that women also significantly contribute to society's economy, especially in today's manufacturing and industrial sectors. Despite their contribution, they still encounter various obstacles related to societal roles.

Over the past three decades, social inequality has prevailed, leading to intense competition among groups striving for the highest societal position (Fadillah et al., 2022). Women's roles remain relatively low in various domains such as education, health, social culture, politics, law, and the economy (Purnawati & Utama, 2019). Purnawati and Utama further stated that power, agency, resources, and achievement explain and describe the global issues surrounding women's empowerment. These factors contribute to the limited participation, restricted access, and inadequate benefits experienced in fulfilling societal roles. This situation has violated women's social norms, but they cannot complain or fail to fulfil their needs and expectations (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). One of the primary challenges in this regard is that many communities still do not fully support the realization of gender equality and justice (Prantiasih, 2014). The community creates a perception and puts men as the dominant, leaving women in a lower position (Asri et al., 2023).

This lack of support perpetuates the undervaluation of women's roles, rooted in pervasive gender inequalities deeply embedded in societal systems worldwide. Consequently, their essential contributions often go unrecognized, a phenomenon that strongly connects to the emergence of Nice Girl syndrome.

Nice Girl syndrome is a condition where women consistently prioritize being kind and pleasing to others, often disregarding their feelings or rights (Engel, 2008). According to Kompasiana (2020), psychologists believe that childhood experiences play a significant role in the development of this syndrome. During childhood, individuals are often taught and expected to be friendly and obedient, catering to the desires and happiness of others. These behaviour patterns may persist into adulthood, where individuals constantly strive to maintain a friendly image to appease people.

During the Victorian era, science's development profoundly impacted art and literature, causing the emergence of various genres in literary works (Suhadi et al., 2022). The lives of men and women are captured and written in literature. Furthermore, literary works typically serve as mirrors, reflecting the realities of a specific era (Arafah et al., 2021). Literature can build its world through limitless imagination (Arafah et al., 2021), not only in fiction but also in the existing reality at a particular time (Arifin et al., 2022). It is also a form of art that expresses meaning and language beauty (Arafah, 2018). Literary works convey an author's thoughts, manners, behaviour, and attitudes, providing readers with insights into their distinct styles and enabling a deeper understanding of their work (Hasanah et al., 2021). Additionally, the literature study delves into personal, cultural, societal, and aesthetic values, understanding the human experience in life (Sunardi et al., 2018). Literature, functioning as a form of communication, can serve as a gateway to explore and introduce culture, social dynamics, and the intricacies of human existence (Mutmainnah et al., 2022).

In linguistic communication, users, including senders and recipients, communicate through various mediums, such as social media, either directly or indirectly (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023). In the context of literary work, where the author and reader serve as the sender and recipient, literature functions as a communication medium through which thoughts and emotions are expressed within a socio-cultural framework, utilizing language with cultural backgrounds (Takwa et al., 2022). As an artistic creation, literary work considers language the most crucial element in conveying aesthetic aspects (Manugeren et al., 2023). The language employed should be effectively aligned with the environmental characteristics of the story, as effective communication lies at the core of human interaction (Yudith et al., 2023; Yulianti et al., 2020). Ineffective or incomprehensible language can cause a shift in meaning, as observed in the Tolaki community of Konawe Regency, Southeast Sulawesi, where specific meanings of local languages have been altered due to modernization (Takwa et al., 2022). Literary work can be seen as social products encompassing cultural, political, and social issues (Irmawati et al., 2018). Based on these definitions, literary works serve as manifestations of each author's vision and record of cultural events in the past.

Literature can manifest in various forms, including written works and performances (Asriyanti et al., 2022). It encompasses several types, such as short stories, poems, novels, plays, and songs, offering valuable insights (Arafah, 2018). Among these, novels stand out for their complexity, as they often depict characters' lives in specific forms, times, and places, presenting conflicts and their resolution. Peck and Coyle (1984, p. 102) highlight that novels are prose narratives providing a significant amount of detail on every page and typically explore human values. Hence, the presented characters in novels can be used to teach character education values (Arafah et al., 2024). Despite their form, literary works contain valuable lessons and information about human existence (Purwaningsih et al., 2020). In the age of information and technology, literary works have evolved, enhancing their quality in expressing the diversity of human thought (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019a). Authors employ beautiful language and distinctive writing styles to address unique issues (Hasyim et al., 2020). To enhance the uniqueness of their narratives, they incorporate various characteristics and signs that emphasize the story's distinctiveness (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019b). In some regions, even an ordinary object, such as coffee, can be used as a symbol of a good deed or behaviour of their people (Hasyim et al., 2023). Additionally, local languages may be employed to introduce the cultural heritage of a specific region, including its traditions and rituals that symbolize meaningful values (Arafah et al., 2020).

Some signs are categorized as meaning relation, indicating that the words have additional meaning to be interpreted within their context (Hasjim et al., 2020). In other words, those signs need to be interpreted using an implicit method to achieve an understanding (Kuswanty et al., 2023). The multiplicity of meanings requires a deeper level of interpretation rather than taking them at face value (Baa et al., 2023). Signs and symbols, present in all branches of linguistics, including computational linguistics and emoji, are subject to interpretation, conveying different meanings or specific messages (Iksora et al., 2022). This stylistic approach extends to the language characters employ to communicate in their everyday interactions, as literature serves as a medium to introduce culture, social life, and the realities of human existence (Mutmainnah et al., 2022). Language, shaped profoundly by cultural influences, is integral in navigating the complexities of social interactions and daily life (Arafah et al., 2023). Through the novel, readers gain insights into various aspects of the characters' lives within the depicted world, including their feelings, thoughts, beliefs, traditions, and customs (Arafah, 2018).

The novel is a global phenomenon that exists in different languages. From time to time, literary work grows and develops in line with technology, resulting in it being taught in academic spaces (Arafah et al., 2023). In the advanced era, some popular novels are presented in English as an international language. Indonesian readers, specifically EFL students, can enhance their language skills through easily accessible literary resources offline and online, merely a click away from the internet (Anggrawan et al., 2019; Purwaningsih et al., 2020). Educators have tried providing online material to adapt to the current situation (Arafah et al., 2023). In this digital era, people worldwide can connect through digital media and instantly access information (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). A significant portion of internet usage emphasizes that our generation uses online media more often (Arafah et al., 2023). Digital literacy can function to improve students' skills through various kinds of information provided online (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023). Not only online media but advanced technology also expects the system to use electronic devices through artificial intelligence (AI) to improve students' writing skills (Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Despite being challenging for beginners, with high motivation for learning, students can overcome difficulties and achieve their goals (Arafah et al., 2020). As long as they are severe and pay much attention to it, any difficulty can be handled (Kaharuddin et al., 2023). The students' success in achieving their goals can be assessed by a test at the end of the session or term (Mardiana et al., 2023). Another area for the students to improve in second language acquisition is deepening their cultural knowledge of the language they are learning (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). It also helps students to shape their characters more positively (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). As access to digital media is getting broader and easier, social issues might arise due to the rapid access to information-containing phenomena of the environment (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). This phenomenon is becoming more dangerous as various values and customs slowly decline, especially those related to religious behaviour (Lebba et al., 2023). Furthermore, authors utilize literary work to convey their disappointment or disagreement with the environment, capturing the ever-changing phenomena that unfold over time (Siwi et al., 2022; Sunyoto et al., 2022). Elizabeth Gaskell is a female author specializing in women and their experiences.

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865), born on September 29, 1810, in Lindsey Row, was a highly esteemed female Victorian author. Known for his beloved novels, Gaskell conveyed many messages regarding the importance of social reconciliation and better understanding between employers and workers, as well as among honourable and outcasts of society. The writing was carefully studied and accurately portrayed the northern dialect (Gaskell Society, 2018).

Gaskell made a significant contribution to the literary world through several notable works. These include *Cranford* (1853), *Ruth* (1853), *North and South* (1855), *Sylvia's Lovers* (1863), *Cousin Phillis* (1863), and *Wives and Daughters* (1866). In the early 20th century, these writings were considered ancient and provocative, but today, the writer ranks as one of England's most respected Victorian authors. In this new century, Elizabeth was recognized as an accomplished artist, capturing the attention of literary theorists, academics, and readers who appreciate engaging storytelling. These refined and evocative narratives are now being published for her growing readership. The writing style is bold and progressive, often presenting stories as critiques of Victorian attitudes. Gaskell fearlessly addressed topics such as traditional views on women's roles in society, prostitution, and prohibition, notably exemplified in her novel *Ruth*, which challenged the disapproval of the husband's Unitarian congregation (Gaskell Society, 2018).

Published in 1853 during the Victorian Era, *Ruth* tells the story of a young orphan girl who works as a seamstress after her parent's death. This novel employs a third-person narrator in the past tense about a series of unfortunate circumstances that lead to the girl being fired and expelled from work and home. Throughout *Ruth*'s journey, this novel addresses some social issues in the Victorian era, such as fallen women, the stigma of illegitimacy, gender inequality, and social class. This writing offers an interpretation of traditional views surrounding the role of women in society, which directly correlates to the topic of this study, Nice Girl syndrome. Social issues indicated in *Ruth* during the Victorian era contributed to the gradual development of female characters' experience of this syndrome.

II. Literature Review

Adler (1924, p. 2) introduced a psychoanalysis concept with a unity assumption of the individual and sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of the unified personality regarded as a variant of life manifestations and expression forms. The theory focuses on the fundamental motivations that drive other motivations within an individual. According to Hall and Lindzey's (1978, p. 118) explanation, Adler's theory emphasized that humans possess self-consciousness and the ability to plan and guide their actions with full awareness of the significance of realization.

Beverly Engel first brought attention to Nice Girl Syndrome in 2008 through a book known as *"Nice Girl Syndrome"*. This psychotherapist often observed clients describe painful, shocking, and bizarre experiences. Furthermore, Engel (2008, p. 5) focused on the beliefs and attitudes predisposing women to be used and abused. Nice Girl syndrome is when a woman consistently prioritizes being kind and pleasing to others without thinking about feelings or rights (Engel, 2008). Below are seven types of Nice Girl syndrome (Engel, 2008, p. 17):

A. *The Doormat.*

This individual, characterized as a stereotypical passive female, enables others to exploit their vulnerability. They endure the consequences of "terminal niceness" without gaining insight from past experiences. Regardless of repeated instances of being taken advantage of, manipulated, betrayed, or abused, this individual appears unable to learn from these encounters. Women suffering from Doormat syndrome often fall victim to unscrupulous salespeople and con artists. Moreover, many endure emotional, verbal, or physical abuse, leading to enduring this mistreatment for prolonged periods, ranging from months to years.

B. *The Pretender.*

This woman type has a robust investment in appearing friendly, cooperative, and charming despite potentially harbouring anger and resentment. Despite feeling bored, they pretend to agree with decisions and often show interest in others' conversations or activities.

C. The Innocent.

This particular archetype of the Nice Girl exhibits high levels of naivety and gullibility. They readily accept others' words and can be easily manipulated or deceived. Moreover, their innocence often leads them to defend their partners or children who exhibit selfishness, deceitfulness, or outright abusive behaviour, even when those around them inform them of being taken advantage of or mistreated.

D. The Victim.

This type of woman feels hopeless and helpless when changing life circumstances. In attempts to be friendly, their power becomes repressed to the extent of losing touch completely. Those who suffer from this type of Nice Girl syndrome have been observed to remain in a relationship with a physically abusive partner, even after being hospitalized several times.

E. The Martyr.

This woman makes sacrifices for others, including her parents, partner, and children. These activities encompass time, financial security, and health to help or rescue people around. The entire life of the martyr is often dedicated to helping others, with the feeling of these people being indebted due to the sacrifices.

F. The Prude.

The prude demonstrates a strong inclination towards perfectionism and moral standards. They adhere to rigid standards, such as abstaining from premarital sex and avoiding alcohol, often being actively involved in a conservative religious community. The prude strongly disapproves of specific behaviours and tends to be highly judgmental of individuals who partake in those activities. However, they hide their disapproval behind niceness.

G. The Enlightened One.

This kind of woman firmly upholds the values of tolerance, compassion, and forgiveness to such an extent that she suppresses her anger and refrains from expressing typical emotions such as sadness, envy, anger, or resentment.

Engel (2008, p. 27) mentioned that the four primary origins for the formation of Nice Girl behaviour over time are:

A. Biological Predisposition

Women are naturally inclined to exhibit patience and compassion, prioritizing connection over confrontation. The term "female passivity" often means seeking solutions that are most inclusive of everyone's needs, emphasizing care and restraining aggression. Women have a broader range of behavioural options compared to the seemingly limited "fight or flight" responses. When the oxytocin hormone is released during a woman's stress response, it mitigates the "fight or flight" instinct. Instead, it encourages nurturing behaviour towards children and fosters social bonds with other women.

B. Societal Beliefs

Societal beliefs are transmitted to children through the culture or society in which they are raised. Girls are typically socialized to embody qualities: politeness, appropriateness, pleasantness, and agreeableness, all characteristics of a Nice Girl. For centuries, being nice has often been intertwined with feminity, with girls expected to epitomize the phrase "sugar and spice and everything nice". Regrettably, even in contemporary times, the feminine ideal revolves around pleasing others, being selfless, maintaining a pleasant appearance, and assuming a role as an object in other individuals' lives.

In pursuit of this culturally prescribed ideal, teenage girls often suppress various aspects of their identity. They learn to be silent and stifle their voices and emotions, redirecting their energy towards appeasing others, particularly individuals of the opposite sex.

C. Familial Beliefs

Children inherit familial beliefs either directly through explicit teachings or indirectly by observing the behaviours of their parents or other members. Families often impart specific messages and values that encompass a wide topic range, from interpersonal relationships to the role of women within the family unit. These messages and beliefs significantly influence individuals' thoughts and behaviours, playing a vital role in shaping their personalities.

Several everyday family situations can contribute to developing Nice Girl syndrome in women. These factors encompass various aspects, such as having a passive mother, an abusive or oppressive father or older brother, being brought up in an ultra-conservative or deeply religious household that perceives women as inferior, growing up in a misogynistic family, and having parents who prioritize women embodying fairness, compassion, and pleasant.

The first false belief that prioritizes others' feelings and needs over another stems from early teachings within the home. It can be modelled by a passive or codependent mother who sacrifices for the family or husband, neglecting personal needs. Girls raised in such an environment may internalize the message that being a "good" woman, wife, or mother entails disregarding personal needs and exclusively devoting themselves to the wants of others.

Another way is when women have a selfish or narcissistic parent who considers their needs all-important compared to their children's. Those raised in this environment often believe personal happiness lies in fulfilling others' needs.

D. *Experiential Beliefs*

A child shapes experiential beliefs through personal experiences, including childhood trauma. It is typical for individuals with the Nice Girl syndrome to have faced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse during their childhood or adulthood. Such abuse and neglect can lead to unhealthy attitudes and beliefs, making women more susceptible to adopting the Nice Girl syndrome and frequently becoming victims. For instance, those who fall into the category of Nice Girls or adopt a victim mentality tend to display the following inclinations:

1. They hold themselves responsible when something goes awry.
2. They perceive their own needs as less significant compared to others.
3. They harbour self-doubt, questioning their perceptions, knowledge, and beliefs.
4. They tend to place excessive trust in others, even after experiencing betrayal.
5. They demonstrate naivety regarding the intentions and motives of others.
6. They believe they should fulfil the needs of others, particularly their partner or children, regardless of the consequences or personal hardships they may face. They tend to devalue their needs, considering them less important than others.

III. Methodology

This study applies the procedure and principle of the qualitative method. Data were collected by close reading and deep understanding of the literary work while taking notes of certain words and sentences. They were analyzed using a psychoanalysis approach to identify dialogues and thoughts of female characters, with the overarching framework of Nice Girl syndrome theory serving as the central theoretical perspective. The aim was to identify and interpret the dialogues and thoughts of female characters in the novel who exhibit signs of this syndrome and establish a connection between social conditions prevalent during the Victorian era and the manifestation of Nice Girl syndrome in these characters.

IV. Findings and Discussion

According to Engel (2008, p. 27), the primary origins of Nice Girl Syndrome include biological predisposition, societal influences, familial factors, and experiential beliefs. These four significant origins concluded that concepts and beliefs of social conditions contribute to forming a girl who exhibits this syndrome. This study aims to explore social situations related to the manifestation of Nice Girl syndrome during the Victorian era.

The Victorian era, commonly known as the Victorian Age, is a specific period that coincides with the reign of Queen Victoria in 1837. According to Fletcher (2010, p. 157), Victoria's reign was characterized by changes that made it the most progressive in British history. During the Industrial Revolution, England became a top nation because trade and industry created a new world for Victorians and the texture of their daily life (Williams, 2004, p. 53).

According to Fatima (2013, p. 1), the Victorian era was a significant trade period in English literature. There was an argument about it dealing with the contemporary issues and problems of the day, such as social, economic, religious, and intellectual subjects, troubles associated with the Industrial Revolution, as well as changes in the role of women who were not expected to have interest in literature or any other field and had limited status in Victorian Society.

During the Victorian era, women encounter numerous challenges due to the vision of the ideal woman. This period was characterized by lacking rights, leading to mistreatment and oppression under discriminatory laws. Women were deprived of property ownership and were limited to certain professions, such as teachers, domestic servants, factory workers, or agricultural labourers (Mitchell, 2009).

The following are social issues related to Nice Girl syndrome during the Victorian era.

A. *Social Class*

Maciver and Page (1950, p. 348) defined social classes as spontaneous formations expressive of social attitudes. According to Landis (1974, p. 118), the several factors used to distinguish social classes in society included years of education, income level, type of possessions, and types of furniture quality.

Mckay et al. (1983, p. 847) categorized Victorian society into three class structures: aristocratic, middle, and working. The aristocratic class, consisting of the royal family, held a hereditary landownership and derived their income from property rentals (Mitchell, 2009, p. 21).

The middle class was further divided into three categories, namely (1) the upper-middle-class, composed mainly of the most successful business families involved in banking, industry, and large-scale commerce; (2) the middle-middle class, who lived quite comfortably but lacked great wealth, and (3) the lower middle class which consisted of independent shopkeepers, small traders, tiny manufacturers, and a significant numbers of white-collar employees.

According to Mckay et al. (1983, p. 848), white-collar workers had less property and earned lower income than skilled or semi-skilled workers. Despite this, they were fiercely committed to the middle class and striving to move upward in society. Elementary school teachers largely succeeded in this effort for being miserably paid part-time workers in the early 19th century; they rode on the wave of mass education to respectable middle-class status and income.

Mckay et al. (1983, p. 850) stated that the middle class adhered to a strict, demanding code of expected behaviour and morality. They placed great value on hard work and personal achievement. Society showed no mercy towards those in poverty or engaged in criminal activities. This norm reinforced traditional Christian morality and was vigorously preached by middle-class individuals who took pride in their good deeds. The middle classes needed much more than the aristocracy did to look respectable, even when they inherited wealth or held lucrative occupations, as they faced competition and the need to defend their reputations.

Additionally, Clark (1971, p. 445) stated that the middle class tended to follow social conventions and share standards of education and behaviour. It was noted in history that the middle class played a big role in industrial development. They created many inventions and established the applications of science and technology. Finally, this social class dominated England economically, politically, and socially.

The previous description focused on the working class. According to Mckay et al. (1983, p. 851), approximately 4 out of 5 individuals belonged to the working classes during the 19th century. The classes were divided into three subclasses, namely (1) labour aristocracy class consisting of construction bosses and factory forepersons, who had advanced in their rank and were fiercely proud of their achievements, (2) semi-skilled manual workers who were factory workers who earned highly vulnerable but relatively good wages, and (3) unskilled manual workers, including wagon-driving teamsters, teenagers, and many kinds of helper.

The phenomena of social class during the Victorian era relate to the formation of Nice Girl syndrome, as reflected in Gaskell's *Ruth*. Clark (1971, p. 445) further mentioned that lower-class women faced more hardship than their middle-class counterparts when employed in low-paying jobs. Furthermore, they endured unjust treatment from society. In the novel, hailing from a lower class suppresses personal feeling, fully aware of the stack difference in social standing, as presented by Gaskell:

Data 1

Jemima → “As she threw her head back for this purpose, the eye of the gentleman standing by was caught, and it was so expressive of amusement at the airs and graces of his pretty partner. Infected by the feeling, Ruth had to conceal the smile that mantled by bending down her face” (Gaskell, 1853, 1, p. 31).

According to the given extract, Miss Jemima Bradshaw was forbidden by her parent to eat any cake in Mr Benson's house. This directive was motivated by the desire to assess Mr Benson's economic circumstances, and Jemima, being from the upper class, was expected to exhibit refined behaviour. Despite being hungry, Jemima had to suppress her appetite and maintain an appearance of cultured behaviour, as Gaskell portrayed:

Data 2

Jemima→ "Take no sugar in your tea, Jemima. I am sure the Bensons should not be able to afford sugar due to their limited means. Also, do not eat much, as you can have plenty at home on your return, and remember that the cost of Mrs Denbigh's keep should be a great deal." Therefore, Jemima returned considerably sobered and was afraid of the hunger leading her to forget Mr Benson's poverty" (Gaskell, 1853, 2, p. 74).

As Gaskell displays in *Ruth*, social class plays a significant role in developing Nice Girl syndrome in the female character. Regardless of whether the female character belongs to the lower or upper class, they must behave by suppressing their feelings and needs according to current circumstances and finally displaying the image of a Nice Girl.

B. Victorian Family

According to Arnstein (1989, p. 78), the Victorian family was patriarchal, where a wife's role was not an equal partner to the husband but a household manager. There was recognition of the woman being the mother to the children. Furthermore, Arnstein asserts that the home was regarded as the epitome of moral virtue and a sanctuary against the perceived savagery of the outside world. Victorian families emphasized the duty of women to care for domestic matters and raise children. Concerning Nice Girl syndrome, this patriarchal family strongly influences the female characters in *Ruth*. Gaskell skillfully portrays this phenomenon within the context of the Bradshaw family.

Data 3

Mrs Bradshaw→" Mrs Bradshaw murmured faintly at her husband when his back was turned, but the moment his voice or footsteps sounded from a distance, she would be mute and quickly guide the children into the attitude or action that is most pleasing to their father” (Gaskell, 1853, 2, p. 135).

This information above showed that Mr Bradshaw's wife changed in attitude, pretending to be excellent in front of the husband and teaching the children to behave in ways that would be most pleasing to their father.

C. Victorian Ideal Womanhood

According to Abaker (2019, p. 50), the ideal Victorian woman’s life revolved around her family’s domestic sphere and home. Mitchell (2009, p. 266) described the criteria of a perfect woman as preserving higher moral values, guarding the husband's conscience, guiding the children's training, and contributing to the regeneration of society through a daily display of Christianity in action. When the wife successfully made the home a perfect place, the husband and sons would not want to leave it for an evening's (morally suspected) entertainment elsewhere.

The concept of an ideal woman within the domestic sphere involved instilling moral values in everyone. This figure, often referred to as "The Angel in the House," was expected to uphold the moral purity of the household. McDonnell (2018, p. 11) explains that husbands regarded these women with religious reverence. The term "The Angel in the House" originated from Coventry Patmore's poem of the same name, published in 1854. Patmore's poem portrays women as angelic beings within the home, characterized by their heavenly, dignified, noble, sweet, and sincere personalities.

According to Peterson (1984, p. 677), the notion of ideal women in the Victorian era symbolized oppressed women trapped in the gilded cage of male domination. The expectations placed upon wives during this time greatly influenced how women perceived their roles in marriage and shaped the qualities men sought. This concept of ideal women led to a type of Nice Girl's type known as the martyr. These women tend to sacrifice their needs and dedicate their lives solely to others.

Gaskell demonstrates this phenomenon through the character of Jemima, who is ready to change to become the ideal woman Mr Farquhar wants. Jemima stated, "*For an instant, she planned to become all he could wish by changing her very nature for him*" (Gaskell, 1853, 2, p. 151).

D. Victorian Religion and Morality

According to Sanders (1994, p. 398), religion remained a powerful force in Victorian life and literature. Derry (1963, p. 202) stated that Victorian religious values revolved around family prayers centred on the Bible. Religious experiences were communicated through conventional phrases, usually derived from scripture passages. Edberg (2021, p. 3) mentioned that during the 18th and 19th centuries, Christianity had a firm hold on society, influencing the everyday life of its people. Christian values played a pivotal role in shaping Victorian morality and social values. Mitchell (2009, p. 261) noted that "Victorian Morality" was often used with contempt, implying prudery, hypocrisy, sexual repression, and rigid social control. Furthermore, Derry (1963, p. 201) explained that Victorians are usually remembered for their solid and functional virtues, including thrift, hard work, self-help, temperance, and respectability.

According to McDonnell (2018, p. 20), Christians in the Victorian age espoused the belief that marriage was holy, virtuous, and essential while simultaneously condemning lust and sexuality as immoral, especially for women. Arnstein (1989, p. 79) stated that discussions and depictions of sex were typically considered improper in polite conversation and public discourse. Questions related to sex were rarely addressed, and premarital sexual experimentation was considered illegitimate. McKay (1983, p. 850) noted that middle-class Victorians valued sexual purity and fidelity as virtues. Arnstein (1989, p. 78) argued that purity was indeed the standard for a lady, and continence became at least the professed ideal of a gentleman's sexual freedom as men often experienced intense frustration with sexual desires.

Furthermore, McDonnell (2018, p. 23) noted that Christianity and Victorian moral values portrayed women as innocent and asexual beings not driven by lust. Sexual intercourse was considered a duty for wives, as it was believed necessary for procreation and the ideal of domestic tranquillity. This belief leads to the portrayal of women in *Ruth*, exhibiting the trait of Nice Girl syndrome. For instance, despite desiring marriage, Sally rejects a man's proposal.

Data 4

Sally → "I never considered accepting the fellow and getting married, although I won't deny that I had entertained the idea of being asked. However, I found myself unable to tolerate the man. 'Sir,' I said, attempting to appear bashful as the situation required, though inwardly feeling a suppressed laughter bubbling up inside me, 'Mr. Dixon, I appreciate the compliment and thank you nonetheless, but I believe I would prefer to remain single" (Gaskell, 1853, 2, p. 46).

In the line above, Gaskell portrayed Victorian beliefs surrounding marriage through Sally's decision to reject the proposal. Sally's behaviour aligns with the characteristics of Nice Girl syndrome, particularly the pretender type. This lady tried to hide her sexual desire by appealing to be a nice girl.

According to Sanders (1994, p. 399), Victorian society adhered to a monogamous system. The prevailing moral teachings of Christianity and the influence of Puritan sexual norms played a significant role in maintaining this structure. The emphasis was placed on the virtues of monogamy and family life, but there was also a widespread awareness of moral anomalies within the social system. The supposed blessings of ordered family life were generally announced to be dominant, and many individual Victorians perceived the family as a source of oppression and a means of enforcing conformity.

Gaskell also portrayed this using Mr Bradshaw's family in *Ruth*. Mr Bradshaw forced the daughter Jemima to conform to the expectation of being a nice girl to appear suitable as a potential wife for Mr Farquhar.

Data 5

Jemima → "Her action was so submissive and spiritless; she did all her father desired with a nervous quickness and haste, having the thought that any deviation may lead to Mr Farquhar's interference" (Gaskell, 1853, 2, p. 162).

The line above shows that Jemima became obedient and restrained her emotions from behaving as her father wanted. This belief in the dominance of family life in shaping individuals led to Jemima being portrayed as having the "Nice Girl" syndrome, precisely the pretender type.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Nice Girl syndrome is a pervasive phenomenon that often goes unrecognized, as societal pressures compel women to conform to specific values and norms. This is clearly demonstrated in *Ruth*, where the social issues prevalent during the Victorian era are closely intertwined with the presence of the syndrome. Factors such as social class, Victorian family dynamics, the idealized concept of womanhood, and the influence of Victorian religion and morality all shape the novel's female characters. Exploring these social issues and their impact on the manifestation of Nice Girl syndrome sheds light on the complex interplay between societal expectations and individual identity during that historical period.

REFERENCES

[1] Abaker, B. H. G. (2019). The Image of Victorian Women as Depicted in Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte. *European Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, *7*(6), 49–58.
[2] Adler, A. (1924). *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology.* Translated by P. Radin. New York: Harcourt Brace.
[3] Afiah, N., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). Burmese Women Portrait under the British Imperialism in Orwell's *Burmese Days*. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 213-219.
[4] Anggrawan, A., Yassi, A.H., Satria, C., Arafah, B., & Makka, H.M. (2019). Comparison of Online Learning versus Face-to-Face Learning in English Grammar Learning. *5th International Conference on Computing Engineering and Design (ICCED)*, 1-4.
[5] Arafah, B. (2018). Incorporating the Use of Literature as an Innovate Technique for Teaching English. *KnE Social Sciences, 2018*, 24–36.
[6] Arafah, B., Abbas, H., & Hikmah, N. (2021). Saving the Environment: Environmental Lessons in Colin Thiele's February Dragon. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *12*(6), 935-941.
[7] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2019a). Linguistic Functions of Emoji in Social Media Communication. *Opción*, *35*(24), 558-574.
[8] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2019b). The Language of Emoji in Social Media. *KnE Social Sciences*, *2019*, 494-504.
[9] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2023a). Digital Literacy: The Right Solution to Overcome the Various Problems of Meaning and Communication on Social Media. *Studies in Media and Communication*, *11*(4), 19-30.
[10] Arafah, B., & Hasyim, M. (2023b). Digital Literacy on Current Issues in Social Media: Social Media as a Source of Information. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, *101*(10), 3943-3951.
[11] Arafah, B., Hasyim, M., Khaerana, A.S.A., Soraya, A.I., Ramadhani, R., Ismail, A., & Takwa. (2023). The Digital Culture Literacy of Generation Z Netizens as Readers, Producers and Publishers of Text on Social Media. *International Journal of Intelligent Systems and Applications in Engineering*, *11*(3), 112-123.
[12] Arafah, B., & Kaharuddin, (2019). The Representation of Complaints in English and Indonesian Discourses. *Opción*, *35*(24), 501-517.
[13] Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Hasjim, M., Arafah, A.N.B., Takwa, & Karimuddin. (2023). Cultural Relations among Speakers of South Halmahera Languages. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(1), 168-174.
[14] Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, A., Takwa, T., Azhariah, N. B. A., Kadaruddin, & Marlina, S. (2021). Promoting the Building up of Character Education Based on Literature, Culture, and Local Wisdom. *Linguistica Antverpiensa*, *1*, 2129-2147.
[15] Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Kaharuddin, A., Room, F., Takwa, & Purwarno, P. (2023). Evaluating the Suitability of Printed Materials in the Context of Online Learning. *XLinguae*, *16*(2), 16-32.
[16] Arafah, B., Room, F., Suryadi, R., Hamid, L.O.M.I., Juniardi, Y., & Takwa. (2024). Character Education Values in Pullman's *The Golden Compass*. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *15*(1), 246-254.
[17] Arafah, B., Sirajuddin, J., Thayyib, M., Room, F., Takwa, & Anayati, W. (2023). Emotional Management of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*'s Main Character. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *14*(5), 1414-1421.
[18] Arafah, B., Thayyib, M., Kaharuddin, & Sahib, H. (2020). An Anthropological Linguistic Study on Maccera' Bulung Ritual, *Opción*, *36*(27), 1592-1606.
[19] Arafah, K., Arafah, A.N.B., & Arafah, B. (2020). Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy's Role in Achievement Motivation and Physics Learning Outcomes. *Opción*, *36*(27), 1607-1623.
[20] Arifin, M. B., Arafah, B., & Kuncara, S.D. (2022). Dayak's Socio-cultural Situation through Locality in Lumholtz's Through Central Borneo Travel Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(12), 2695-2703.
[21] Arnawa, I. G. N. E. V. & Arafah, B. (2023). Students' Self-Regulated Strategies in Approaching Second Language Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(3), 690-696.
[22] Arnstein, W. L. (1989). *Britain Yesterday and Today: 1830 to the Present.* Massachusetts: D. C. Health and Company.
[23] Asri, D., Arafah, B., Sahib, H., & Abbas, H. (2023). Male Domination in Helen Garner's *Monkey Grip*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(7), 1651-1658.
[24] Asriyanti, S., Arafah, B. & Abbas, H. (2022). The Representation of Women's Dependence on Men in *Little Women*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(4), 790-796.
[25] Baa, S., Wardani, S. B., Iskandar, Weda, S., & Arafah, B. (2023). Lexical Metaphors in Westlife's Selected Song Lyrics. *XLinguae*, *16*(1), 132-154.
[26] Beta, A. R. (2020). *"Di Mana Perempuan Muda (di) Indonesia?"* [Where are the Young Women (in) Indonesia?]. Retrieved from https:///theconversation.com/di-mana-perempuan-muda-di-indonesia-130394 on April 13, 2021.
[27] Clark, S. G. (1971). *English History*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
[28] Derry, J. W. (1963). *A Short Story of 19th Century England 1793-1868.* New York: Blanford Press Ltd.
[29] Edberg, N. (2021). *Passion and Feeling versus Religion and 'Pure' Affection in Jane Eyre*. Swedia: Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Karlstads Universitet.
[30] Engel, B. (2008). *The Nice Girl Syndrome.* New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
[31] Fadillah, N., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). The Act of Slavery in the 20th Century as Reflected in Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 66–72.
[32] Fatima, M. (2013). *The Status of Women in the Nineteenth Century Victorian England*. Algeria: Kasdi Merbah Ouarglas University.

[33] Fletcher, R. H. (2010). *History of English Literature*. USA: Kessinger Publishing.
[34] Gaskell, E. C. (1853). *Ruth*. London: Chapman and Hall.
[35] Gaskell Society. (2018). *Elizabeth Gaskell Biography*. Retrieved from http://gaskellsociety.co.uk/elizabeth-gaskell/ on April 14, 2021.
[36] Hall, C. S. & Lindzey, G. (1978). *Theories of Personality.* New York: John Willey and Sons.
[37] Hasanah, U., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2021). The Values of Character Education in Pullmans's The Golden Compass. *Multicultural Education*, *7*(1), 142-148.
[38] Hasjim, M., Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Verlin, S., & Genisa, R.A.A. (2020). Principles behind Semantic Relation between Common Abbreviations and their Expansions on Instagram. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, *9*, 2270-2276.
[39] Hasyim, M. & Arafah, B. (2023a). Semiotic Multimodality Communication in the Age of New Media. *Studies in Media and Communication*, *11*(1), 96-103.
[40] Hasyim M. & Arafah, B. (2023b). Social Media Text Meaning: Cultural Information Consumption. *Wseas Transactions on Information Science and Applications*, *20*(2023), 220-227.
[41] Hasyim, M., Arafah, B., & Kuswarini, P. (2020). The New Toraja Destination: Adding Value 'Toraja Coffee' of the Sustainable Tourism Development. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, *575*(1), 1-10.
[42] Hasyim, M., Arafah, B., Kuswarini, P., Masdiana, Saleh, F., Lisani, M., & Sukmal, A.F. (2023). Humane Coffee: Meaning Symbolic Interaction of a Cup of Coffee. *Migration Letters*, *20*(S5), 1095-1105.
[43] Iksora, Arafah, B., Syafruddin, S., Muchtar, J., & Lestari, P.A. (2022). Typos' Effects on Web-Based Programming Code Output: A Computational Linguistics Study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(11), 2460-2469.
[44] Irmawati, Arafah, B. and Abbas, H. (2020). The Lesson Life of Santiago as Main Character in Coelho's The Alchemist. *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya*, *8*(1), 32-56.
[45] Kaharuddin, Ahmad, D., Mardiana, Latif, I., Arafah, B., & Suryadi, R. (2024). Defining the Role of Artificial Intelligence in Improving English Writing Skills Among Indonesian Students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *15*(2), 568-578.
[46] Kaharuddin, Arafah, B., Nurpahmi, S., Sukmawaty, Rahman, I.F., & Juniardi, Y. (2023). Exploring How Reading Aloud and Vocabulary Enrichment Shape English Speaking Skills Among Indonesian Learners of English. *World Journal of English Language*, *13*(8), 436-445.
[47] Kompasiana. (2020). *"Mengenal Apa itu Good Girl Syndrome?"* [Know What is Good Girl Syndrome?]. Retrieved from https://www.kompasiana.com/nakitasabila1930/606419a9d541df680e440e02/mengenal-apa-itu-good-girl-syndrome/ page=all on April 14, 2021.
[48] Kuswanty, W. H., Arafah, B., Budiman, A.N.A., Ali, T., Fatsah, H., & Room, F. (2023). Students' Perception of Explicit and Implicit Methods in Learning Tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(6), 1473-1482.
[49] Landis, J.R. (1974). *Sociology: Concept and Characteristic*. Second Edition. California: Wordsworth Publishing Company Inc.
[50] Lebba, Kaharuddin, Arafah, B., Nur, S., Mardiana, Sarmadan, & Mashuri, S. (2023). The Role of Santri Maghrib Recitation Movement in Islamic Axiology. *Kurdish Studies*, *11*(2), 5624-5633.
[51] Maciver, R. M. & Page, C. H. (1950). *Society: An Introduction Analysis*. New York: Rinehart and Company Inc.
[52] Manugeren, M., Arafah, B., Purwarno, P., Siwi, P., Ekalestari, S., & Wulan, S. (2023). An Ecoliterature Approach to Environmental Conservation: Take Four Selected Literary Works as Examples. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(5), 1318-1327.
[53] Mardiana, Arafah, B., Ahmad, D., Kaharuddin, Room, F., & Barus, E. (2023). Time Allocation Effect on Test Scores for Academic Writing of Indonesian English Learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *14*(6), 1628-1636.
[54] McDonnell, C. A. (2018). Marriage in Victorian England. *BSU Honors Program Theses and Projects.* Massachusetts: Bridgewater State University.
[55] McKay, J. P., Buckler, J., & Hill, B. D. (1983). *A History of Western Society.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
[56] Mehrad, A. & Zangeneh, M. H. T. (2015). Women in Modern Society and Job Difficulties. *Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology*, *4*(2), 93-97.
[57] Mitchell, S. (2009). *Daily Life in Victorian England*. United States: Greenwood Publishing Group.
[58] Mokoginta, K. & Arafah, B. (2022). Negotiation in Indonesian Culture: A Cultural Linguistic Analysis of Bahasa Indonesia Textbooks. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(4), 691-701.
[59] Mutmainnah, Arafah, B., & Pattu, A. (2022). Racial Discrimination Experienced by Black People as Reflected in Langston Hughes's Poems. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(2), 350-356.
[60] Peck, J. & Coyle, M. (1984). *Literary Terms and Criticism.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.
[61] Peterson, J. M. (1984). No Angels in the House: The Victorian Myth and the Paget Women. *American Historical Review*, *15*, 677-708.
[62] Prantiasih, A. (2014). Reposisi Peran dan Fungsi Perempuan (Repositioning the Roles and Functions of Women). *Jurnal Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan*, *27*(1), 1-6.
[63] Purnawati, I. G. A. & Utama, M. S. (2019). Women's Empowerment Strategies to Improve Their Role in Families and Society. *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law*, *18*(5), 119-127.
[64] Purwaningsih, Y. R., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2020). An ambition of infidelity "Emma Bovary" as wife: Sexuality problems. *Medicina Clínica Práctica*, *3*(S1), 100108. 1-3.
[65] Purwaningsih, Y. R., Arafah, B., Abbas, H., & Arafah, A. N. B. (2020). Psychological Disorder of Emma Bovary as a Wife toward Sexuality Dissatisfaction in Gustave Flaubert Madame Bovary. *Talent Development & Excellence*, *12*(3s), 1382-1389.
[66] Sanders, A. (1994). *The Short Oxford History of English Literature.* New York: Oxford Press.
[67] Siwi, P., Arafah, B., Wulan, S., Purwarno, P., Ekalestari, S., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Treatment of Nature: An Ecocriticism Approach in 'Komat Kamit' of Tejo and Kamba's Tuhan Maha Asik. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(7), 1278-1285.
[68] Suhadi, J., Arafah, B., Makatita, F.P., Abbas, H., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Science and Society: The Impact of Science Abuse on Social Life in Well's The Invisible Man. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(6), 1214-1219.

[69] Sunardi, A. M., Arafah, B., & Salija, K. (2018). Looking at the Shared Conception of Teaching Literature in an Indonesian ELT Setting. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 9*(2), 316-327.
[70] Sunyoto, F.G., Arafah, B., Yudith, M., Mokodompit, G.P., & Asnawi, A. E. F. (2022). The Native American Father's Parenting Style in John Ernst Steinbeck's The Pearl. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(12), 2551-2558.
[71] Takwa, Arafah, B., Sopiandy, D., Taqfiah, S. J., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Humanistic Values in Metaphoric Expressions of Traditional Marriage in Tolaki Mekongga Kolaka. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(8), 1602-1608.
[72] Takwa, Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Putra, E., Masrur, & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). The Shift of Lexicon in Traditional Technology System in Tolaki Community at Konawe District of Southeast Sulawesi. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(5), 980-989.
[73] William, C. (2004). *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain*. United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
[74] Yudith, M., Arafah, B., Sunyoto, F.G., Fitriani, Rostan, R.B., Nurdin, F.E. (2023). The Representation of Animalism Issue in Sewell's Black Beauty. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(1), 108-116.
[75] Yulianti, S., Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Idris, A.M.S., Samsur, N., Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Conversational Implicatures on Saturday Night Live Talk Show. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 189-197.

Madeline Yudith obtained her Master's in English Language Studies, majoring in English Literature at the Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University (UNHAS), Makassar, Indonesia. She completed her Bachelor's degree in English Literature at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UNHAS, in 2020. Her scholarly interests are social issues, psychology phenomena, and autobiography novels. She has published some articles in reputable journals such as *The Representation of Animalism Issue in Sewell's Black Beauty*, published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13(1), 108-116, 2023 and *The Native American Father's Parenting Style in John Ernst Steinbeck's The Pearl*, published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 12(12), 2551-2558, 2022. She is currently a lecturer in Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Sastra of Universitas Muslim Indonesia, Makassar, Indonesia.

Burhanuddin Arafah obtained his PhD in English (Australian) literature at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2003. He earned his Master's degree in American literature at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1995 and his Bachelor's degree in English literature at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1988.

He is currently a full professor of English literature at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS, Indonesia. He has published four books in the English language and literature and more than 50 research articles ranked in international journals published in the English language. He also has received 24 Intellectual Property Right Certificates from the Indonesian government. His areas of interest are English literature, language education, and cultural studies. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS from 2009-2017. He is actively involved at the National Accreditation Board-Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in his position as Assessor.

Herawaty Abbas obtained her Ph. D. at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2013, and her Master's degrees from Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1997 and Saint Mary's University Canada in 2001. She is an Associate Professor at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Hasanuddin University Indonesia. Her doctorate thesis examines the potential dialogue between Australian and Buginese cultures regarding feminism. Her research interests are feminist, children's, and Indigenous literature. She has published some articles in reputable international journals, such as *Women Discrimination in Malaysia: Examining 'The Gender Agenda' from the Viewpoints of Lenore Manderson's Women, Politics, and Change*, published in *Linguistica Antverpiensia*, 2021(1), 2204-2222; and *The Values of Character Education in Pullman's The Golden Compass,* published in Multicultural Education, Volume 7, Issue 1, 2021. Dr Abbas is currently a member of the Indonesian Literature Scholar Association and the Indonesian Linguistics Society Association.

Ahmat Jaelani obtained his Bachelor's degree from Sunan Ampel State Islamic University of Surabaya (UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya) and Master's degree from Hasanuddin University (UNHAS), Makassar of Indonesia. He completed her Bachelor's in English Literature at the Faculty of Adab and Humaniora, UIN Sunan Ampel 2017. He earned her Master's degree in English Language Studies Program, majoring in English Literature at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UNHAS Postgraduate Program in 2020. His scholarly interests include psychology, children's literature, and novels. His Bachelor's research focuses on children's ambition to redeem their guilts, as portrayed in Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*.

Franco Gabriel Sunyoto obtained his Bachelor's degree from the State University of Makassar (UNM), Makassar, Indonesia. He completed his Bachelor's degree in English Literature at the Faculty of Languages and Literature, UNM, in 2020. His scholarly interests are parenting issues, the roles of fathers, racism, structuralism, and the sociology of literature. He has published some articles in reputable journals such as *The Native American Father's Parenting Style in John Ernst Steinbeck's The Pearl*, published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 12(12), 2551-2558, 2022 and *The Representation of Animalism Issue in Sewell's Black Beauty,* published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13(1), 108-116, 2023.

He is continuing his study in the English Language Studies Program, majoring in English Literature at the Postgraduate Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, UNHAS.

Azhariah Nur B. Arafah is currently a lecturer in Psychology at Gunadarma University (UG) Jakarta, Indonesia. She obtained her Doctoral degree in Psychology at Gunadarma University in 2024, her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta in 2020, and earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) Makassar in 2017. She wrote some research articles ranked in internationally reputed journals published in English and Indonesian languages. Her areas of interest are Clinical Psychology, Social Psychology, and Interpersonal Relationships. She is also actively spreading awareness about Mental Health on social media (@aware.nessid).

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 833-842, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.16

Undergraduate Translation Courses: Students' Perceptions at Prince Sattam Universities

Norah Al Hanake
Department of English Language, College of Humanities and Social Science, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

Fahad Alsahli
Department of English Language, College of Humanities and Social Science, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The primary goal of this research was to investigate students' perceptions of translation classes in the English language department at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The obtained data underwent fundamental analysis to determine students' concerns and identify components needing alteration to align with their learning objectives. According to the study, students developed an intellectual inclination, focused on recent discoveries, and were motivated to learn more about translation. They comprehended the course's learning objectives, believed it enhanced their professional development, and found it to meet their expectations. Students gained knowledge of translation concerns and key concepts, along with proficiency in translation processes and problem-solving techniques. According to students, the course was thorough, with an appropriate workload, fair evaluation, clear test requirements, and valuable feedback. They appreciated open communication, interaction with tutors, and collaborative problem-solving in translation challenges. The study suggests investigating students' impressions of web-based distance learning courses and how these attitudes evolve during translation courses. Recommendations include faculty training and incentives to participate. This training would assist instructors in becoming more familiar with the material and building effective teaching strategies. It would also guide academics in applying their own research and/or clinical practice, serving as a model for students' reflective practice. It is recommended that students hear from graduates currently applying this knowledge. Finally, future research may focus on translation programs at other universities in Saudi Arabia.**

***Index Terms*—translation, English language, Qiyas, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University**

I. Introduction

Translation is a valuable skill for English language students, especially those who do not intend to become English language instructors. Students must be able to transfer sentences from the source language to the target language without affecting their meaning (Ardi, 2012). Fluency in two languages does not automatically qualify a person as a translator. English departments incorporate translation courses into their curricula to help students develop this skill. Subsequently, this competency can be applied as a fundamental talent for students seeking a job as a translator or starting their own translation firm.

Translation education aims to provide students with the information and abilities necessary to translate a text from a source language to a target language; these knowledge and skills are referred to as translation competence (Hilmi & Safitri, 2022). The Process of Acquisition of Translation Competence and Evaluation established a model of translation competence that includes five sub-competencies as well as psycho-physiological components (PACTE, 2003).

Translation is a subject that not only provides English majors with methods and skills but also an understanding of the pitfalls that must be avoided when translating. Translation is also a required course in the English curriculum of several Saudi universities, notably Prince Sattam University. On the one hand, it was discovered that after finishing this subject, students had varying perceptions of the effectiveness of learning and implementing translation information (Ly, 2022). On the other hand, lecturers who teach translation seek relevant feedback from students to self-reflect on their teaching practices. The primary goal of this research is to explore students' perceptions of translation courses in the English language program at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. Fundamental analysis is performed on the acquired data to assess the students' challenges and identify components that need to be altered to suit their learning goals.

Research Questions:

1. Are the translation courses taken by students in the English department at Prince Sattam University sufficient to master translation?
2. Are the translation courses offered by the English Department at Prince Sattam University compliant with Saudi labor market requirements?

3. What are the students' perceptions of translation courses in the English language program at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University?"

II. Literature Review

A. Students Perception on Translation

According to research, student perceptions are crucial elements in student behavior and may be used to build a teaching style that optimizes learning results. Pupils' perspectives indicate how, why, and what they learn. The goal of this study, as indicated earlier, is to explore students' perceptions of translation courses. Investigating student perspective is deemed critical in EFL instruction, as per Flórez et al. (2012). Students had varying perspectives about the course, its content and aims, its level of difficulty, the time students invested in the course, adults' learning, and the role of the instructor. Wang (2009) discovered both parallels and variations in teacher and student opinions on the role of fluency and accuracy in language teaching and learning. Wang also suggests that translation is a helpful technique for learning and proposes the implementation of additional translation tasks.

B. Problems in Incorporating Translation Into Non-Translation Class

The exploration of students' perceptions also delved into the question of whether translation proves beneficial in non-translation classes and whether students find motivation to learn it when aware of its advantages. Research indicates that introducing translation to students in a non-translation class can pose a significant challenge. Larson (1986) emphasized that students simultaneously grappling with the target language face two primary issues. First, understanding how to address translation-related problems is not equivalent to mastering the language itself, even though these aspects are interconnected. Second, alongside mastering the translation technique, the careful selection of the instructional translation method becomes crucial. In line with this educational perspective, Vermes (2010) suggested that distinguishing pedagogical from practical translation, considering function, object, and addressee, is a crucial criterion for deeming translation a viable instructional tool. In its functional aspect, instructional translation primarily acts as a tool to augment students' proficiency in their second language (L2).

C. Emphasizing the Benefit of Translation

Translation can be considered the fifth fundamental language skill, alongside listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is suggested to be integrated into specific stages of language instruction. According to Ross (2000), translation is the most vital social skill as it facilitates communication and understanding between individuals who are strangers to each other. However, there is a belief held by some that translating skills are innate and cannot be acquired, let alone taught. They argue that certain individuals are inherently equipped to communicate in multiple languages and thus become proficient translators or interpreters.

Contrary to this view, Tisgam (2009) contends that translation is indeed teachable, being a craft like any other. Educators who hold this perspective should guide their students in understanding the nature of translation and recognizing the importance of incorporating translation theories into the honing of their translation abilities. It is crucial for these teachers to be aware that neglecting these criteria can result in students feeling confused, unmotivated, and disinterested in the program. The primary objective of translation education should be to train and prepare skilled professionals who can effectively make a living from their studies, instilling in students a sense of responsibility for the act of translating and its value.

Popovic (2001) suggests that the goal of classroom translation instruction is to help learners enhance their understanding of English, rather than to train specialists. In essence, it serves as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. Nevertheless, some students may progress to become translators, and the foundational understanding of translation acquired in the classroom can serve as a solid basis for developing translation skills. Teachers should ensure that students actively practice translating while participating in a translation course.

It is imperative that a translation course aims to develop students' comprehension of the nature and significance of translation, arising from the interaction between their mother tongue and the foreign language while seeking meaning equivalence. The course should also contribute to expanding students' proficiency in both the mother tongue and the foreign language. The benefits of translation for L2 learning are underscored by Calis and Dikilitas (2012) who demonstrated through research that translation activities are not intended to prepare individuals for a career as top-tier translators but rather to enhance foreign language acquisition.

Kelly and Bruen (2015) noted the role of translation in vocabulary formation, and according to Ivone (2005), translation is the default method of vocabulary learning for English learners. It is an effective tool for teaching and learning that can complement existing pedagogical techniques as part of an eclectic approach to language instruction. Scholars have pointed out that through translation, students can enhance their understanding of the L2, primarily through contrastive analysis, and that language acquisition can be facilitated by interference between the L1 and the FL (Aquado & Solís-Becerra, 2013).

D. Student Motivation

As motivation is acknowledged as a pivotal factor influencing success, the researchers investigated activities perceived as crucial by students for researchers to discern their desires. This information serves as the groundwork for teachers to formulate an effective course design. According to Littlewood (1987), in EFL learning, akin to all domains of human learning, motivation is the central element that dictates whether a student initiates a task, the level of effort invested, and the duration of perseverance. Motivation is a intricate phenomenon with multiple components, including the individual's drive, the need for achievement and success, curiosity, the craving for stimulation and new experiences, and more. These elements manifest in various learning situations. When teachers introduce a new learning activity and encourage student initiative, Reeve (2009) contends that nurturing inner motivating resources becomes crucial. Both internal and external factors, capable of initiating, sustaining, enhancing, or discouraging behavior, contribute to student motivation (Siregar, 2018).

E. Teaching Translation Courses Online

In the past decade, the landscape of translation activity has undergone significant changes (Robinson et al., 2017). The progress of technology has introduced innovative approaches to aid in translation training, streamline translation workflows, and advance translation research. The rapid development of technology necessitates fresh methods for translation training and preparation (Shiyab, 2017). As noted by Dorothy (2007), Garcia (2013), and Roziner and Shlesinger (2010), technological innovation has impacts on translation at various levels, affecting workplaces and educational institutions alike. Traditionally, translation education relied on face-to-face interactions, where the translation faculty conveyed information directly to the learner. However, technology has not only influenced the working environment but has also transformed instructional techniques, leading to the transition from face-to-face to online translation instruction.

According to Gorozhanov et al. (2018) and Bromberg and Irina (2010), teaching translation online involves compliance with norms and rules of social interaction in the virtual environment. It recognizes the tutor as an expert in the theory and practice of translation, serving as a mediator between the student and the virtual environment. Furthermore, it requires the availability of communication channels for regular interpersonal contact between the tutor and the student for experience sharing.

Gorozhanov et al. (2018) conducted a translation course where students practiced translating original BBC articles. They recommended that students translate the article and then engage in a video conference with their instructor to discuss errors and strategies for improvement. The study found that online translation training serves as a valuable method for experts to upgrade their knowledge and enhance their practical work experience.

However, challenges exist, as noted by Al-Batineh et al. (2021) and Baker (2011), who highlighted the difficulty in developing translation assignments resembling real-life situations due to the lack of eLearning platforms for translation. Jirava's (2004) software was proposed in their research, advocating for the construction of e-learning software designed for translator-training purposes.

Felege and Olson (2015) investigated faculty perceptions of online education. They found that instructors with prior experience in online teaching were more likely to hold a favorable opinion of online education. The study also demonstrated that online teaching and its associated responsibilities demand more time than traditional instruction (Almahasees & Qassem, 2021).

F. Description of Translation Courses at Sattam University

Some courses are offered in undergraduate degree at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, including the following:

(a). Course Title: Introduction to Translation

The course serves as an introductory gateway to the field and science of translation. Over the semester, English Language students will explore various translation methods, delve into the meaning and essence of translation, and address potential challenges that novice translators may encounter. This course is designed for level 3 students, aiming to equip them with the ability to articulate the term "translation" and differentiate between literal and free translation, supported by thorough explanations. The anticipated learning outcomes for this course include:

1. Define translation.
2. Identify the characteristics of a proficient translator.
3. Recognize translation errors related to grammar.
4. Articulate the criteria for high-quality translation.
5. Differentiate between various styles of translation.
6. Discern the proper structure of a text when transferring it from one language to another.
7. Explain different methods of translation.
8. Execute the translation of short passages accurately.
9. Implement translation methods that align with the purpose and audience.
10. Collaborate with peers to examine and discuss differences in translation.
11. Evaluate translated texts through group discussions among peers and with the teacher to draw

(b). Course Title: Translation From English Into Arabic

This advanced translation course aims to enhance students' proficiency in translating from English to Arabic, focusing on challenges arising from cultural specificity, syntactic ambiguity, and stylistic diversity. Translation topics span law, politics, and media, with an emphasis on achieving equivalence in the translated text. Students will tackle stylistic, syntactic, cultural, terminological, and technical issues inherent in the English-Arabic translation process. Additionally, the course introduces students to translation theory, providing a foundation for analyzing texts across different genres based on their syntactic structure, stylistic formation, and cognitive orientation. The learning outcomes for this course encompass:

1. Define key concepts in translation studies, emphasizing inter-semiotic, intra-lingual, and inter-lingual translation.
2. Identify distinctive features of texts in various registers.
3. Describe potential equivalents for a given text, considering its nature.
4. Differentiate between literal, free, and communicative translation techniques and strategies.
5. Compare English (Source Language, SL) and Arabic (Target Language, TL) at different linguistic levels.
6. Recognize socio-cultural factors influencing the transfer of texts from English to Arabic.
7. Propose practical solutions to enhance intelligibility during the translation process.
8. Apply knowledge of translation techniques and strategies to translate texts across registers with varying difficulties and styles.
9. Utilize syntactic, morphological, lexical, and stylistic variations for conveying different meanings in written and spoken communications.
10. Implement effective practical solutions to translation issues in group projects.
11. Design comprehensive checklists for editing and proofreading texts, considering textual and contextual clues.
12. Demonstrate soft skills in information retrieval from online dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopedias.

(c). Course Title: Translation From Arabic Into English

This course serves as an introduction to fundamental techniques in translating from Arabic to English. Translation topics from Arabic will progressively become more diverse and challenging, encompassing areas such as economics, law, international relations, and literary and religious texts. Students will be trained to produce clear translations that remain faithful to the original Arabic text and are accurately expressed in English as the target language. The course will also address and resolve stylistic, syntactic, cultural, terminological, and technical challenges encountered in the Arabic-English translation process. Practical aspects of translation will also be discussed. The anticipated learning outcomes for this course include:

1. Identify cross-cultural differences between Arabic (SL) and English (TL).
2. Recall effective theories, techniques, and strategies of Arabic-English translation.
3. Enumerate factors influencing Arabic-English translation.
4. Distinguish different concepts and notions in Arabic-English translation.
5. Differentiate between Arabic-English translation theory and practice.
6. Compare various types of Arabic-English source and target texts.
7. Undertake error analysis of different Arabic-English translated texts.
8. Perform Arabic-English translation ethically and faithfully in real-life situations.
9. Utilize machine translators in translation activities with human intervention.

Graduates of this course are expected to possess the skills to translate and interpret texts between Arabic and English, critically examine current translation theories, and apply this understanding to produce high-quality translations. They should also develop proficiency in various translation techniques, including transference, cultural equivalence, functional equivalence, transposition, and the ability to evaluate the merits and drawbacks of these techniques.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF LEARNING OUTCOMES BETWEEN QIYAS, PRINCE SATTAM BIN ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY, AND KING KHALID UNIVERSITY

Learning outcomes as identified by Qiyas	Course Title	Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University	Course Title	King Khalid University
Recognize the basic principles of translation.	Introduction to Translation	Define translation	Translation 1	Define translation in the broad sense
Identify the key characteristics needed in a good translation.		Identify the characteristics of a good translator		Discuss the way of translating short sentences and proverbs with a focus on meaning
Develop some awareness of some of the problems related to translation.		Identify some translation errors related to grammar		Identify translation problems and how to solve them
Distinguish between the major theoretical issues involved in the process of translation.		State the criteria for good translation		Recognize new techniques in translation
Outline the professional and ethical standards required for professional translators.		Distinguish between different styles of translation		Apply translation rules to all types of text
Describe how theory specifically relates to and impacts the practice of translation.		Recognize the proper structure of a text when transferring it from one		Translate a variety of text types appropriately and accurately from English to Arabic and vice versa

		language to another.		
Recognize modern translation theories.		Explain the different methods of translation		Solve translation problems
Describe the history and development of translation studies and translation theory.		Translate short passages properly		Use different techniques in translation
Demonstrate an understanding of the complex skills required in translation.		Implement the translation method that fits the purpose and the audience		Collaborate efficiently within groups and take on the responsibility of distributing translation tasks when students are organized into teams.
Use translation theories to inform and account for the student's own practice of translation.		Examine their translation with each other and examine differences		Efficiently collaborate within groups and assume the responsibility of allocating translation tasks when students are divided into teams.
Identify the techniques needed to resolve translation difficulties.		Evaluate translated texts to reach conclusions in terms of the group discussions among each other and with the teacher		Assume accountability for their learning and ongoing personal and professional development by supporting and persuasively presenting their own translational choices to the instructor.
Describe the relationship between culture and the use of language in translation.	Translation from English into Arabic	Define key concepts in translation studies with special reference to inter-semiotic, intra-lingual and inter-lingual translation	Translation 2	Define the characteristics of the different types of texts to be translated with examples
Recognize the process of consecutive and simultaneous interpretation.		List the distinctive features of texts belonging to different registers		Recognize the most salient linguistic and cultural problems when translating between Arabic and English
Improve active listening, concentration skills, note-taking techniques, and memory.		Describe possible equivalents for the same text taking into consideration the nature of such text		Recognize and match the socio-cultural differences and similarities as reflected in the two languages
Utilize fundamental skills and techniques in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting between English and Arabic, and vice versa.		Differentiate literal, free and communicative translation techniques and strategies		Identify the linguistic and non-linguistic features that contribute to a better understanding of the text at hand
Evaluate essential aspects of spoken language, including registers, styles, and implicit discoursal organization across various topic areas.		Compare English (Source Language, SL) and Arabic (Target Language, TL) at several different linguistic levels		Apply the principles and methods in translating different genres
Demonstrate proficiency in grammar of both languages and general absence of systemic grammar errors that permeate the entire translation.		Recognize the socio-cultural factors influencing the transference of texts from English into Arabic		Write an error-free translation of religious, instructional, scientific, journalistic, literary, and legal texts
Interpret with accuracy while under significant psychological stress.		Propose practical solutions to overcome barriers to intelligibility during the process of translation		Utilize software applications to access electronic dictionaries, create initial translations, refine translations, and construct a glossary (a compilation of words and their equivalents) for texts within the same domain (e.g., science, economics, and media).
Engage in translation assignments from English to Arabic and vice versa, incorporating various ancillary skills within aspects of textual analysis, such as context, idiom, collocation, register, stylistics, and more.		Apply existing knowledge of translation techniques and strategies to the translation of texts from various registers with varying difficulties and styles		Examine and address translation challenges across different levels, including word order, tense usage, sentence length, verbosity and conciseness, denotations, connotations, metaphors, modality, lexical gaps, idiomatic expressions, presuppositions, and implicatures.
Employ monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, glossaries, thesauri, and other relevant databases utilized by professional translators in a suitable manner.		Employ syntactic, morphological, lexical and stylistic variations when rendering different meanings in written and spoken communications		Translate a variety of text types appropriately and accurately from English into Arabic and vice versa
Generate exceptionally precise translations free from major errors, especially those extending beyond the word/phrase level that might prompt subsequent significant errors in cause/effect		Implement practical solutions to translation issues effectively in group projects		Research websites specializing in translation

relationships, etc.				
Make appropriate choice of vocabulary, particularly medium and high-frequency vocabulary.		Design proper checklists for editing and proofreading texts in terms of textual and contextual clues		Reflect on their own learning experience and explore options to continuously develop their competence as translators and communicators
Verify accurate spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, and, when applicable, ensure the proper formation of script or ideographs.		Demonstrate soft skills of information retrieval from online dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopedias		Communicate appropriately, accurately, and effectively while involved in group tasks
Show expertise in the grammar of both languages, demonstrating a general absence of systemic grammar errors that pervade the entire translation, such as consistently selecting inappropriate tenses, singular/plural forms, articles, etc.	Translation from Arabic into English	Identify cross-cultural differences between Arabic (SL) and English (TL)		Work ethically and professionally as part of a team or independently
Deal proficiently with problems at and above the word level in the source text.		Recall effective theories, techniques and strategies of A-E translation	Translation 3	Define the characteristics of the Islamic genre of translation and give examples
Proofread to eliminate errors such as missed words or phrases.		Enumerate all the factors that influence A-E translation		Identify and analyze the most salient linguistic and cultural problems in translating Islamic texts
		Distinguish the different concepts and notions of A-E translation		Recognize and match the terms/concepts that are specific to Islam but are alien to the English language
		Differentiate between A-E translation theory and practice		Apply the principles in translating Islamic terminology and texts
		Compare various types of A-E source and target texts		Translate a variety of Islamic text types appropriately and accurately from English into Arabic and vice versa
		Undertake error analysis of several different A-E translated texts		Use specialized Islamic paper and electronic dictionaries
		Perform A-E translation in real-life situations ethically and faithfully		Work independently and as part of a team
		Use machine translators in translation activities with human intervention		Manage resources and time
				Communicate results of work to others
				Take responsibility for their own development

Certain learning outcomes at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University and King Khalid University aligned with those specified by Qiyas. However, upon comparing the learning outcomes of Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University with those outlined by Qiyas, it was observed that some outcomes were not met. For instance, objectives like "Outline the professional and ethical standards required for professional translators" and "Describe how theory specifically relates to and impacts the practice of translation" were not achieved. A broader analysis will be conducted to compare Qiyas-identified learning outcomes with those of other universities in Saudi Arabia.

III. Methodology

The quantitative approach is often characterized as a deductive methodology heavily reliant on surveys to collect, analyze, and apply data for testing relative ideas (Bryman, 2007).

In pursuit of the study objectives, this research employed a survey to gather and analyze data. The survey approach is considered semi-deductive, differing from the entirely deductive experimentation approach. Within this study, the descriptive analytical technique was utilized to review literature and construct the questionnaire, forming a theoretical foundation for the research issue. The questionnaire, implemented with a quantitative method, aimed to enhance the understanding of students' perceptions of translation courses in undergraduate degrees at Prince Sattam Universities. Data analysis, rooted in the literature review and questionnaire, was conducted after collecting responses from a random sample of 101 students from Prince Sattam Universities to achieve the study's goals.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability stand out as crucial considerations for researchers, significantly influencing study outcomes and the potential generalizability of results. The efficacy of research tools, their capacity to measure their intended parameters, and the precision of the data they yield all fall under the purview of reliability and validity.

As outlined by Garson (2002), validity refers to the accuracy of a research instrument in evaluating its intended objective. In essence, it gauges the extent to which the research instrument furnishes information pertaining to the research topic directly from the study population.

(a). Validity

SPSS was utilized to calculate Pearson correlation coefficients, confirming the alignment of all survey items with their respective categories (parts) to validate the questionnaire. The results are presented in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
THE INTERNAL CONSISTENCY BETWEEN ITEMS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire sections	No. of item	Pearson Correlation Coef.	Significance level
Exploring students' experience of studying translation courses at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University	1	.680**	0.000
	2	.660**	0.000
	3	.729**	0.000
	4	.785**	0.000
	5	.767**	0.000
	6	.784**	0.000
	7	.807**	0.000
	8	.810**	0.000
	9	.796**	0.000
	10	.749**	0.000
	11	.827**	0.000
	12	.760**	0.000
	13	.742**	0.000
	14	.696**	0.000
	15	.706**	0.000
	16	.781**	0.000
	17	.773**	0.000
	18	.700**	0.000
	19	.743**	0.000
	20	.803**	0.000
	21	.756**	0.000
	22	.571**	0.000

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

Table 2 indicates a strong association between all statements and the designated section of the questionnaire, as evidenced by Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from 0.571 to 0.827, all statistically significant (p=0.000). This underscores the internal validity and consistency of the questionnaire in effectively measuring its intended purpose.

(b). Reliability

Reliability is defined as the ability of an instrument to yield consistent results when measurements are repeated on the same sample under identical conditions (Golafshani, 2003). In this study, Cronbach's Alpha, a widely employed test for reliability, was computed through SPSS to assess the reliability of the questionnaire instrument. Table 2 presents the reliability coefficients tested for the distributed questionnaire, indicating Cronbach's alpha values.

TABLE 3
THE RESULTS OF CRONBACH' ALPHA RELIABILITY TEST

Overall Questionnaire's Items	**Cronbach Alpha coef.**
	0.960

In the preceding Table 3, the Cronbach's alpha value for items across all sections and dimensions was established at (0.960). These results imply a strong relationship between the statements and their respective sections, affirming the relevance of the overall statements in the questionnaire. It indicates that no items require revision or elimination (Graham, 2006).

B. Descriptive Summary

Using SPSS, the descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviation, were computed for the responses and their ranks obtained through a five-point Likert scale. Mean values falling within the ranges (1 to 1.80) were categorized as very low, (1.81 to 2.60) as low, (2.61 to 3.40) as medium, (3.41 to 4.20) as high, and (4.21 to 5.00) as very high.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY FOR THE STATEMENTS

# of question	Statements	Means	Standard deviations	Practices degree
Exploring students' experience of studying translation courses at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University				
Q1	I developed an academic disposition question	4.11	0.773	High
Q2	Attention was paid to recent developments in the field	4.13	0.673	High
Q3	I was inspired to learn more about this discipline	4.01	1.025	High
Q4	The learning objectives of the course were clear to me	4.23	0.847	Very High
Q5	I believe the translation course developed me professionally	4.23	0.746	Very High
Q6	The translation courses met my expectations	4.00	0.872	High
Q7	I assimilated knowledge about translation processes	4.33	0.648	Very High
Q8	I learned to pay attention to the way translation is carried out	4.35	0.623	Very High
Q9	The techniques needed to resolve translation difficulties were explained to me	4.24	0.788	Very High
Q10	The key characteristics of good translation were explained to me	4.22	0.769	Very High
Q11	I have developed some awareness of the problems related to translation	4.15	0.767	High
Q12	My understanding of the most important concepts in the domain has increased	4.26	0.715	Very High
Q13	My understanding of the most important concepts in the domain has increased	4.34	0.620	Very High
Q14	Main theories of translation were introduced in the course	4.26	0.744	Very High
Q15	The load of assignments in the course were appropriate	4.21	0.725	Very High
Q16	The assessment in the course was fair	4.24	0.850	Very High
Q17	Our lecturer it clear how we are going to be assessed and what we need to concentrate on	4.38	0.765	Very High
Q18	Our lecturer gives me feedback and comments that help improve my learning	4.46	0.686	Very High
Q19	I was provided with many opportunities to interact with fellow students on the course	4.26	0.890	Very High
Q20	I was provided with many opportunities to interact with my tutor(s)	4.28	0.826	Very High
Q21	We searched for answers to translation problems together with the teachers	4.23	0.847	Very High
Q22	we searched for answers to translation problems together with the teachers	3.94	1.112	High
	Overall	**4.22**	**0.585**	**Very High**

It can be noticed from the above table that the arithmetic means that the measure (Exploring students' experience of studying translation courses at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University) is high to very high with the mean (3.94-4.46). It can be also seen that question (18), represents the highest agreed-to mean statement (4.46, Std. = 0.686), and the lowest agreed-to mean statement is to question (22) with (3.94, Std. = 1.123). The general perceptions with regard to the student's experience of studying translation courses at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University portion's overall mean were (4.24), which indicates that the majority of the study sample strongly agrees with the items in this component of the investigation.

According to the findings, the majority of the students developed an academic inclination question, and they paid attention to latest advancements in the field. Furthermore, students were inspired to study more about this discipline. According to the findings, students understood the course's learning objectives, and they felt the translation course advanced their professional development; additionally, the translation courses met their expectations. They also gained expertise regarding translation methods. Concerning the outcomes, students report that the procedures required to handle translation challenges and the fundamental qualities of successful translation were explained to them. Students have gained some knowledge of the challenges associated with translation, and their grasp of the most significant concepts in the area has grown.

Students commented that the course covered the major ideas of translation and that the workload of tasks was appropriate. Furthermore, the course evaluation was fair. Students remark that their professor makes it obvious how they will be examined and what they need to focus on, and that their lecturer provides feedback and comments that assist them in better their learning. Students remark that they were given numerous opportunities to communicate with their classmates on the course, as well as numerous opportunities to interact with my tutor(s). Finally, they worked together with their professors to solve translation challenges.

According to Flórez et al. (2012), students had diverse viewpoints about the course, its content and goals, its level of difficulty, the time students put into the course, adult learning, and the instructor's role, which is along with the current study. While establishing a translation course, teachers should guarantee that students who attend the course practice translating as often as feasible (Popovic, 2001), which is in line with the current study which finds that students searched for answers to translation problems together with their teachers and searched for answers to translation, and they had many opportunities to interact with their tutor(s).

The course should, at the very least, strive to enhance the student's comprehension of the nature and importance of translation through the interaction between the mother tongue and the foreign language, aiming for meaning equivalence and the development of competence in both languages (Calis & Dikilitas, 2012). This conclusion is consistent with the findings of the current study. In conclusion, the results indicate that students' learning outcomes align with the outcome learning identified by Qiyas.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research aimed to explore students' perspectives on translation courses within the English language department at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. Analyzing the gathered data revealed students' concerns and highlighted areas requiring adjustments to align with their learning objectives.

According to the findings, students developed an intellectual inclination, staying attuned to recent advancements, and expressed a keen interest in delving deeper into the realm of translation. They demonstrated a solid grasp of the course's learning objectives, acknowledging its positive impact on their professional development while meeting their expectations. Students acquired knowledge of translation intricacies and key concepts, along with proficiency in the processes and strategies for problem solving. The course, as perceived by the students, was comprehensive, maintaining an appropriate workload, fair evaluation practices, clear test requirements, and offering valuable feedback. They particularly valued open communication, tutor interaction, and collaborative problem solving in the face of translation challenges.

Drawing from these conclusions, the study puts forward several recommendations:

1. Investigate students' impressions of web-based distance learning courses and how these perceptions evolve throughout the translation curriculum.
2. Advocate for faculty training along with incentives to encourage participation. This training would empower instructors to familiarize themselves with the material, refine teaching strategies, and apply their own research or clinical expertise, setting an example for students' reflective practice.
3. Facilitate opportunities for students to hear from graduates currently applying the acquired knowledge in real-world scenarios.
4. Encourage future research to focus on translation programs at other universities in Saudi Arabia.

References

[1] Aguado, T. M., & Solís-Becerra, J. (2013). An Overview of Translation in Language Teaching Methods: Implications for EFL in Secondary Education in The Region of Murcia. *RLyLA*, *08*, 38-48.

[2] Al-Batineh, M., Al-Muhaisen, B., and Al-Ramadan, R. (2021). “Towards an eLearning platform for translator training: getting stakeholders involved”. *The Arab Journal for Arts*, *7*(19), 321-344.

[3] Almahasees, Z., & Qassem, M. (2021). Faculty perception of teaching translation courses online during Covid-19. *PSU Research Review*, (ahead-of-print).

[4] Ardi, H. (2012). Is the theory of translation needed to build students' translation competence? *Proceeding of International Seminar on Languages and Arts*, FBS UNP (ISLA), 320-328.

[5] Bromberg, J., and Irina, J. (2010). “Trends in court interpreter training”. *Multilingual*, *21*(4), 35-39.

[6] Calis, E., & Dikilitas, K. (2012). The Use of Translation in EFL Classes as L2 Learning Practice. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *46*, 3026-3030. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.389

[7] Felege, C., and Olson, M. (2015). “Online education: faculty perceptions and recommendations”. *Focus on Colleges, Universities, and Schools*, *9*(1), 1-9.

[8] Flórez, E. G. (2012). EFL Students’ Perceptions about a Web-Based English Reading Comprehension Course. *PROFILE*, *14*(2), 113-129.

[9] Garson, G. D. (2002). *'Guide to writing empirical papers, thesis, and dissertation'*, New York Marcel Dekker, P: 31.

[10] Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding reliability and validity in qualitative research. *The qualitative report*, *8*(4), 597-607.

[11] Gorozhanov, A., Kosichenko, E., and Guseynova, I. (2018). “Teaching written translation online: theoretical model, software development, interim results”. *SHS Web of Conferences*, *50*(1/7), 1-6 doi: 10.1051/shsconf/20185001062.

[12] Graham, J. M. (2006). Congeneric and (essentially) tau-equivalent estimates of score reliability: What they are and how to use them. *Educational and psychological measurement*, *66*(6), 930-944.

[13] Hilmi, L., & Safitri, D. (2022). Project-based Learning in Translation Courses: Implementation and Students’ Perception. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *11*(2), 175-186.

[14] Kelly, N., & Bruen, J. (2015). Translation as a pedagogical tool in the foreign language classroom: A qualitative study of attitudes and behaviours. *Language Teaching Research*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168814541720

[15] Larson, M. (1986). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[16] Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching: An introduction.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[17] Ly, C. K. (2022). English-majored Students’ Perceptions of the Translation Course at Ho Chi Minh City University of Food Industry. *International Journal of TESOL & Education*, *2*(3), 63-74.

[18] PACTE. (2003). Building a translation competence model. In *Triangulating Translation: Perspectives in Process Oriented Research*, edited by F. Alves, 43– 66. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
[19] Popovic, R. (2001). The Place of Translation in Language Teaching. *Paper in English Teaching Forum*, *37*(2), 1-18.
[20] Reeve J. (2009). *Why Teachers Adopt a Controlling Motivating Style Toward Students and How They Can Become More Autonomy Supportive*. Educational Psychologist. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520903028990
[21] Robinson, B.J., Olvera Lobo, M.D., and Gutiérrez-Artacho, J. (2017). *"The professional approach to translator training revisited"*. Universidad de Granada. https://digibug.ugr.es/bitstream/handle/10481/44279/RobinsonBryan_aieti6.pdf;jsessionid=6AC5DB0CB94DDA344538145464F7858D?sequence=1
[22] Ross, N. J. (2000). Interference and Intervention: Using Translation in the EFL Classroom. *Modern English Teacher*, *9*(3), 1-30.
[23] Shiyab, S.M. (2017). "Specialized translation: shedding the 'Non-Literary' tag". Babel. *Revue Internationale de la Traduction/International Journal of Translation*, *62*(4), 686-687.
[24] Siregar, R. (2018). Exploring the Undergraduate Students Perception on Translation--A Preliminary Step to Teach Translation in EFL Classes. *English Language Teaching*, *11*(9), 90-101.
[25] Tisgam, K. H. (2009). Is it possible to teach translation in the classroom? *J. of College of Education for Women*, *20*(2), 528-551.
[26] Vermes, A. (2010). Translation in Foreign Language Teaching: A Brief Overview of Pros and Cons. *Eger Journal of English Studies*, *10*, 83-93.
[27] Wang, P. J. (2009). *A Study of Teacher and Student Perceptions Concerning Grammar-Translation Method and Communicative Language Teaching.* Department of Applied Foreign Language, Nanya Institute of Technology. p. 149.

Norah Al Hanake was born in Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia in 1978. She received her master degree in linguistics from Prince Sattam bin University, Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia in 2023.

She is currently an English teacher in the school of Intermediate grade Forth Intermediate grade school, Al Kharj, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Her research interests include translation and sociolinguistics.

Mrs. Al Hanake, is a member of the Saudi Association of English Teachers.

Fahad Alsahli is an associate professor in the department of English Language, College of Humanities and Social Science, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia.

He received his PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Edinburgh, UK in 2012. His research interest includes teaching, learning, and assessment in translation studies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 843-852, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.17

The Effectiveness of the Incentive Autonomous Learning Strategies (IALS) Module to Improve Chinese Non-English Major Undergraduates' EFL Speaking Proficiency

Asmaa AlSaqqaf
Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia

Yi Yang*
Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia;
Baoding University, Baoding City, China

Ke Hu
Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia;
Hunan University of Information Technology, China

***Abstract*—Very limited research has examined the application of the Incentive Autonomous Learning Strategies (IALS) module to improve the speaking proficiency of English as a foreign language (EFL) among Chinese non-English major undergraduates at a public university in China. Thus, this study attempted to bridge this gap by incorporating autonomous learning with incentive strategies to enhance Chinese non-English major undergraduates' EFL oral performance. Utilising a quantitative research approach, this study adopted a quasi-experimental design to carry out a 14-week intervention. The participants were purposively sampled with the experimental group undergoing the IALS speaking intervention, while the control group received conventional in-situ teaching approaches. A pretest and post-test were conducted on both groups to examine any changes in their speaking proficiency before and after the intervention. Results obtained from the paired-sample t-test demonstrate a statistically significant increase in the experimental group's EFL oral performance, rising from a mean score of 50.52 before the intervention to 71.60 after the intervention. The control group's mean score also improved from a pretest mean score of 51.08 to a mean score of 54.98 in the posttest. These results suggest that the IALS module has proven to be efficacious in improving Chinese non-English major undergraduates' EFL speaking proficiency. It is hoped that the results of this study might provide insights into the effective strategies to enhance English speaking skills among Chinese non-English major undergraduates in EFL contexts.**

***Index Terms*—Chinese non-English major undergraduates, English as a foreign language (EFL), the IALS module, speaking proficiency**

I. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid evolution of the global economy, there has been an increasing emphasis on nurturing qualified talents with an international vision in higher education worldwide. In alignment with the ongoing development of the global economy, the Ministry of Education in China has initiated the Outline of the National Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2020-2030), which highlights the urgency and significance of enhancing China's overall educational level and influence around the world and fostering many talents with a deep understanding of international norms and the ability to engage in international affairs and negotiations effectively. This aligns with the notion that students should develop a global vision and engage in cross-cultural communication and exchange. In this context, the acquisition of English language skills goes beyond enhancing the linguistic competence; it serves as a bridge for communication, enriching students' learning experiences, broadening their horizons, shaping their character, and advancing both cognitive development and spiritual maturity. Within the realm of education, English plays an instrumental role in propelling the internationalization of China's education system.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. English Teaching in China

In 2018, the Ministry of Education in China explicitly stated that one of the objectives of English education is to enhance students' holistic English competence, with a stress on listening and speaking (College English Course

Teaching Requirements (trial), 2018).

In China, English education mainly covers four stages. Primary school with a span of six years starts pupils' English journey in the first stage. Specifically, the year to receive English education in primary school either from Grade one or Grade three, depends on the educational policy of different regions in China. English teaching and learning during this period are characterized by a relatively loose and less focused approach, as language skills and knowledge are revisited in greater detail during junior middle school (Chen, 2016).

The second stage is junior middle school, where students are taught for 3 years. The first stage and the second stage together are regarded as Compulsory Education in China, in other words, the Chinese government affords the education tuition for all the students within these two periods. After this, students need to pay themselves if they would like to pursue further education. The effectiveness of English-speaking teaching during the second period is limited as well (Chen, 2016; Bu, 2018), as speaking instruction primarily manifests in students' engagement with question-answering, reading, and recitation of textual content (Xiao, 2017).

The third stage is high school, also with a span of three years. At the end of this stage, students need to take the College Entrance Examination (CEE), a pivotal determinant for university admission. Under the influence and pressure, teachers equip students to achieve high scores for entrance into the ideal university, thus, speaking skills receive minimal emphasis, resulting from the omission of speaking assessment in the final scoring of CEE (Liu, 2018).

The fourth stage is college education. College English as a compulsory course is learned by Chinese EFL non-English majors in the first two years (two semesters per year). Within this college period, they need to participate in College English Test Band-4 (CET-4) during June or December after the first semester's study, a biannual examination administered by Chinese officials. Some Chinese universities promulgate rules that EFL non-English majors must possess a CET-4 certificate to qualify for a college diploma. Confronted with the burden to excel in CET-4, students often marginalize the skill of speaking, owing to its absence from final examination assessments in CET-4, which may be caused by the inherent challenges in evaluating it objectively and the temporal constraints in testing all participants (Wang & Chen, 2023). In general, the historical underemphasis on speaking instruction in China can be ascribed to various factors (Zhang, 2019).

B. Target Language Speaking

Speaking, as the carrier of language, plays an indispensable role in language acquisition. Researchers asserted that speaking within an EFL context is more challenging than other skills such as reading, listening, and writing (Rao, 2018; Hutabarat & Simanjuntak, 2019). It is not easy to convey opinions or thoughts by using a foreign language, since speakers need to master a series of intricate language skills including but not limited to vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, and stress. Consequently, speaking skills, manifesting an individual's holistic English level and capability to some extent, hold the most significant position among the various linguistic skills (Hemamalini, 2017). Many researchers, both from China and abroad, have underscored the critical role and need for in-depth research into speaking teaching (Dang, 2016; Lartha, 2012; Hughes, 2012; Lukitasari, 2018).

Despite the important role of speaking in language learning, many EFL students still face challenges in learning it well in China (Guo & Wen, 2017). As mentioned above, English education in China spans from primary school to higher education, however, the neglect of speaking teaching and learning has always existed during this process. In primary school, teachers and students don't attach importance to English, due to the repetition of the same content in middle school. In middle or high school, the concern is focused on listening, writing, and reading rather than speaking, as CEE excludes speaking in its scoring (Li & Tan, 2018). Once entering the university, most EFL non-English majors display diminished enthusiasm for dedicating time to English speaking (Jiang, 2020), as CET-4 doesn't incorporate speaking scores within its assessment criteria (Wang & Chen, 2023). In such circumstances, students lost interest in learning speaking and their speaking performance was not satisfactory (Huang, 2021).

There are multiple factors leading to Chinese EFL non-English major students' low speaking performance (Hu, 2016; Wang, 2018), among which, autonomous learning, as one of the learning approaches, plays the motivating role of propelling students to manage their learning process with appropriate learning methods in foreign language acquisition (Jia, 2018), besides that, incentive strategies as one of the instructional strategies are effective in stimulating and developing students from various dimensions (Zhou, 2022). The subsequent sections highlight the significance of these two influential factors sequentially.

C. Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning refers to the capacity to take charge of one's learning process (Littlewood, 2009). Consequently, learner autonomy is conceptualized as an individual's capability, quality, and mindset (Macaskill & Taylor, 2010). Psychologists in the cognitive area have reached a consensus about the close relationship between learner autonomy and learning achievements (Siew et al., 2016; Shu, 2020). Many previous studies also demonstrated that an individual's levels of autonomy are positively associated with his/her language acquisition (Littlewood, 2009; Carr, 2019; Denovan, 2021). Therefore, a deficiency of autonomous learning ability can be one factor resulting in a moderate English-speaking level. Ushioda (2016) held the opinion that cultivating learner autonomy can not only meet different individuals' learning needs, and generate active and optimistic learning attitudes, but establish a foundation for conducting further effective learning independently and critically.

Based on the scholars from linguistics and education (Ellie, 2021; Baleghizadeh & Nasrollahi, 2014), besides the learning approach, teaching strategies are also important factors affecting students' speaking performance. The following section expounds the incentive strategies by Zhang (2022), Gan (2020), and Wang (2022) utilized in this study.

D. Incentive Strategies

Incentive strategies refer to the employment of specific ways or techniques by tutors to inspire student interest, passion, and dedication to enhance learning effects and achieve teaching objectives (Zhang, 2022). The deployment of such strategies is inextricably linked with learners' learning approach (Limeranto & Bram, 2022). Based on previous theories of incentive strategies, the researcher adapted and integrated the incentive strategies by Zhang (2022), Gan (2020), and Wang (2022) that primarily involve the five aspects as follows: interest, participation, goal, confidence, and emotion, to assist Chinese EFL non-English major students' language acquisition journey from various dimensions. In this study, each of the incentive strategies is utilized in different stages of pre-class, in-class, and after-class learning. Besides, these strategies are further situated within the context of the autonomous learning approach, thus the module is also named as Incentive Autonomous Learning Strategies (IALS) module.

Specifically, interest incentive strategies aimed to arouse students' learning interest and curiosity through the pre-learning videos, learning materials, and learning tasks in each unit that were prepared deliberately to fit young undergraduates' favor of fashion, new trends, and innovation (Kashinathan, 2021).

Participation incentive strategies were manifested in pre-learning activities, in-class tasks, and after-class extensions provided for students to engage in each lesson. Active participation in these speaking activities can increase students' opportunities to practice speaking (Zhou et al., 2022), develop collaborative spirits among peers or groups (Wael et al., 2018), and establish self-confidence and a sense of belonging (Gan, 2020).

Goal-based incentive strategies involved setting task-based learning goals in pre-class, in-class, and after-class settings, encouraging students to undertake their speaking autonomous learning with the learning objectives as the driving force (Eltina, 2023).

Concerning confidence-based incentive strategies, the researcher consolidated students' self-assurance in their own English learning by inspiring students' active engagement and efforts in the learning tasks, helping them recognize that practice is instrumental in confidence-building, and giving enough encouragement and praise to them as long as they try and devote in the speaking task regardless their speaking levels (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019).

Emotion incentive strategies strived to provide emotional support (trust, encouragement, and praise) for students in language acquisition (Zakaria et al., 2019). The researcher allowed students considerable independence in conducting autonomous learning and extended backing and approval when they faced challenges or uncertainties in speaking English.

E. Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework is constructed by integrating Butler's (2015) Autonomous Learning Structure in the classroom with incentive strategies proposed by Zhang (2022), Gan (2020), and Wang (2022). This integration results in the development of the incentive autonomous learning strategies (IALS) model that aims at improving Chinese non-English major undergraduates' EFL speaking proficiency in the current research. The application of the five incentive strategies is incorporated into six steps of autonomous learning, with the goal of stimulating students' speaking development. The theoretical framework of the current study is illustrated in Figure 1.

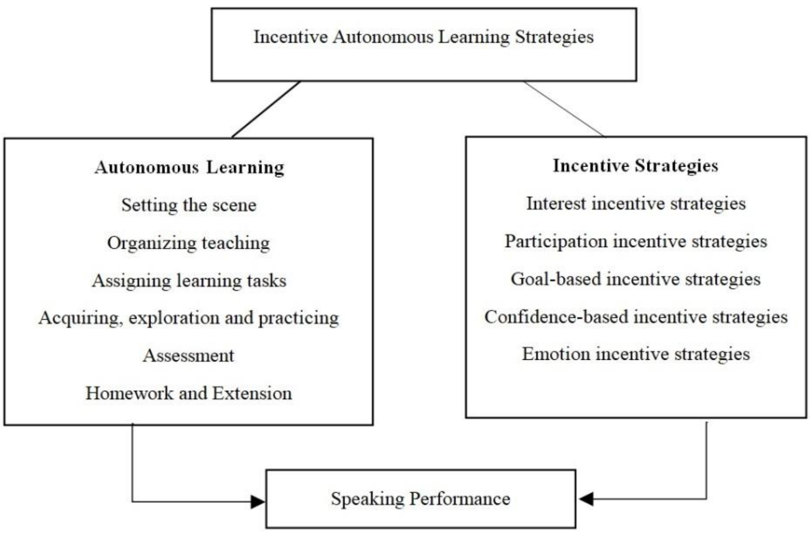


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of the Study
Source: adapted from Butler (2015), Zhang (2022), Gan (2020) and Wang (2022)

Relevant research consistently affirms that effective speaking training among college students is a key solution for enhancing their speaking competence (Anjaniputra, 2013; Safari, 2016; Safiyeh & Mohammed, 2020). Speaking instruction helps revise students' inaccurate expressions, fosters their logical thinking, and instills positive self-consciousness and self-confidence (Wang, 2014). Additionally, targeted instructional scaffolding effectively guides students through the process of comprehending the content of the learning texts, leading to the attainment of optimal learning outcomes (Joannes & AlSaqqaf, 2023). However, reviewing relevant research on teaching speaking modules reveals a notable scarcity of studies investigating students' variation in EFL speaking performance. Specifically, very few studies have been carried out to examine the impact of employing incentive autonomous learning strategies with a particular emphasis on students' linguistic and affective perspectives within an empirical framework.

In response to this research gap identified in the relevant literature, the current study developed the IALS teaching speaking module. The aim was to enhance EFL speaking performance among Chinese non-English major undergraduates at a Chinese public university by emphasizing key factors such as students' interests, goals, participation, confidence, and emotions in speaking learning.

F. Research Question and Research Hypotheses

The analysis of relevant research demonstrated that the IALS teaching speaking module can effectively address students' challenges and difficulties in speaking English (Gou, 2018). In the current study, the following research question was employed to assess the effectiveness of the IALS module:

RQ1. Does the IALS intervention help improve the Chinese non-English major undergraduates' EFL speaking proficiency at a public university in China?

In alignment with the research question, two hypotheses were formulated as follows:

H_0: There is no significant difference in the EFL speaking proficiency of the control group among Chinese non-English major undergraduates before and after the regular instruction.

H_1: There is a significant difference in the EFL speaking proficiency of the experimental group among Chinese non-English major undergraduates before and after the IALS intervention.

III. Methodology

A. Research Design and Sampling Technique

The study employed a quantitative research approach through a quasi-experimental research design to collect and analyze the data (Cohen et al., 2017). The participants of this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique and divided into two groups: the control group and experimental group. While the control group received conventional in-situ teaching methods, the experimental group underwent a 14-week IALS speaking intervention. All data were collected and analyzed through the speaking pretests and posttests conducted before and after the intervention, aiming to understand participants actual speaking performance.

B. Research Instruments

The scores obtained from both the speaking pretest and posttest were compared to assess whether students demonstrated an improvement in their speaking performance. The speaking tests used in the current study were adapted from a previous assessment designed for EFL non-English major students at Baoding University. Students were randomly assigned a presentation topic from a pool of 10 topics.

The IALS intervention, one of the research instruments in the current study, was implemented over 14 weeks, comprising a total of 21 hours exclusively dedicated to the experimental group. The IALS intervention aimed to improve the experimental students' EFL speaking skills and performance. Further details of the intervention are elaborated in the implementation section below.

C. Participants

As previously mentioned, a purposive sampling technique was adopted for its convenient access to the students in current research (Cohen et al., 2017; Ke & AlSaqqaf, 2023). The sample consisted of EFL non-English majors from the Faculty of Teachers' Education at Baoding University. A total of 95 first-year took part in this study, with 42 students forming the experimental group, and 53 students for the control group.

An independent-sample t-test was conducted on the pretest mean scores of both groups to evaluate their EFL speaking proficiency. Results showed no significant difference ($p = .82$) in the mean score of the pretest taken by both groups. This suggests that both groups shared a similar level of EFL Speaking proficiency (refer to Table 5).

The analysis of the collected data shows the descriptive profile of the sample's EFL learning experiences is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Class	Male	Female	Age	Years of English language learning (9-13 years)	Years of English language learning (6-8 years)
Experimental Group (N= 42)	6 14.3%	36 85.7%	17-22	38 90.48%	4 9.52%
Control Group (N= 53)	18 34.0%	35 66.0%	17-22	48 90.57%	5 9.43%

D. Pilot Study

To verify its feasibility, The IALS teaching speaking module underwent a pilot study involving 40 EFL non-English major students (Fraenkel et al., 2019) at Baoding University who were not participants in the main study. Following the established teaching plan, the 40 students were instructed in two sessions spanning a total of three hours. During the pilot study, students engaged in autonomous learning with incentive strategies to complete the corresponding learning tasks. At the end of the pilot study, three students were randomly selected for interviews regarding the learning tasks and objectives. The three interviewees reported a clear understanding of learning contents and expressed a desire to participate in the intervention, citing its innovative and interesting nature.

E. Implementation of the IALS Module

After being piloted, the 14-week IALS intervention was implemented on the experimental group during the first semester of the 2023-2024 academic year at Baoding University. Meanwhile, the control group underwent 14 weeks of regular speaking instruction. The implementation of the IALS intervention in the experimental group was demonstrated in a mini-talk show, which included pre-learning preparations, themed speech tasks through in-class autonomous learning and exploration, and knowledge extension through after-class learning in each unit. These encouraging outcomes suggest that the majority of the experimental group students were able to follow the instructional pace and complete the corresponding tasks in a timely and effective manner. They showed familiarity with the learning approach, comprehension of the learning contents, and the ability to generate meaningful learning output.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

The research question of this study (i.e., does the IALS intervention help improve the Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates' speaking performance at a public university in China?) was addressed by conducting an independent-sample t-test and paired-sample t-test to compare the English-speaking pretest and posttest mean scores within the control group and experimental group.

However, before proceeding with the t-tests, certain assumptions needed to be met. According to Pallant (2016), if a sample size in an experiment exceeds 30, violation of this assumption is unlikely to induce any severe problems. In the current research, the sample size for each group is more than 30. Therefore, the independent-sample t-test and paired-sample t-test could be conducted on these two groups.

(a). Normality Test

Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test was conducted to check the assumption of normal distribution of data in the research (Healey, 2015). According to Hair et al. (2014), *a p-value higher than the significant level of 0.05 indicates the normal distribution of data, whereas a p*-value lower than it signifies the non-normal distribution of the dataset.

1. Control Group

As shown in Table 2, the *p*-values of the control group in the pretest and posttest scores are 0.187 and 0.200 respectively, both greater than 0.05. Therefore, the normal distribution for the two datasets is met.

TABLE 2
RESULT OF NORMALITY TEST OF SPEAKING SCORE (CONTROL GROUP)

Control Group (N=53)	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest Score	0.107	53	0.187
Posttest Score	0.061	53	0.200

2. Experimental Group

As for the experimental group, conducting the K-S test shows that the *p*-value of in the pretest and posttest scores before and after the intervention are 0.090 and 0.200 as shown in Table 3. Both values exceed the significance level, indicating that this pair of datasets is normally distributed.

TABLE 3
RESULT OF NORMALITY TEST OF SPEAKING SCORE (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Experimental Group (N=42)	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest Score	0.126	42	0.090
Posttest Score	0.053	42	0.200

(b). Analysis of the Pretest Mean Score Between the Control Group and Experimental Group

To ensure consistency in comparison and analysis, the two groups underwent the same speaking test before and after the intervention. The full score of the speaking test is 100. The results of the speaking pretest in both groups are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF THE SPEAKING PRETEST (CONTROL GROUP AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control Group (N=53)	51.08	10.412	1.430
Experimental Group (N=42)	50.52	11.035	1.703

As shown in Table 4, the mean score of the speaking pretest in the control group is 51.08, slightly higher than the experimental group's mean score of 50.52. The control group's mean score during the pretest is marginally elevated compared to that of the experimental group. Overall, this suggests that both groups exhibit comparable level of English-speaking proficiency level.

(c). Results of Independent-Sample T-Test of Pretest Mean Score Between the Experimental Group and Control Group

Results obtained from the independent-sample t-test showed a significance value of 0.803, which is higher than the cut-off of 0,05. This indicates that the difference in the two groups' speaking performance during the pretest is not significant. This statistical evidence supports the similarity of these two groups' speaking performance during the pretest. The independent-sample t-test result of speaking pretest in both groups is presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT-SAMPLE T-TEST OF PRETEST MEAN SCORE (CONTROL GROUP AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Pretest	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.05	.82	93	.803
Equal variances not assumed			85.65	.805

(d). Analysis of the Speaking Performance in the Control Group During Pretest and Posttest

In Table 6, the mean score of the speaking pre-test of the control group is 51.08, while the posttest is 54.98. The control group's posttest mean score is slightly higher than the pretest mean score.

TABLE 6
RESULTS OF THE SPEAKING TEST (CONTROL GROUP)

Control Group (N=53)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest Score	51.08	10.412	1.430
Posttest Score	54.98	10.600	1.456

(e). Testing H_0

A paired-sample t-test was conducted to investigate the presence of any significant change between the pretest and posttest mean scores within the same group in the current study. As indicated in Table 7, the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.000, which is lower than the cut-off of 0.05. This demonstrates that there is a significant difference between the control group's pretest and posttest of speaking performance. Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_0) stating that there is no significant difference in the EFL speaking performance of the control group among Chinese non-English major undergraduates before and after the regular instruction is rejected in the current study.

TABLE 7
RESULTS OF PAIRED-SAMPLE T-TEST (CONTROL GROUP)

Pair 1 Control Group (N=53)	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Lower	Upper		
Pretest-Posttest	-3.90	1.757	-4.390	-3.421	-16.183	0.000

(f). Analysis of the Speaking Performance in the Experimental Group Before and After the Intervention

As shown in Table 8, the experimental group's mean score in the speaking pretest is 50.52, while that in the posttest is 71.60. It can be noticed that the experimental group's mean score after receiving the IALS intervention is considerably better than the mean before the intervention.

TABLE 8
RESULTS OF THE SPEAKING TEST
(EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Experimental (N=42)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest Score	50.52	11.035	1.703
Posttest Score	71.60	11.723	1.809

(g). Testing H_1

The results obtained from the paired-sample t-test carried out for the experimental group show that the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.000 below 0.05 as demonstrated in Table 9. This confirms that the difference between the mean scores of the speaking pretest and the speaking posttest in the experimental group is statistically significant. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (H_1) stating that there is a significant difference in the EFL speaking performance of the experimental group among Chinese non-English major undergraduates before and after the IALS intervention) is accepted in this research.

TABLE 9
RESULTS OF PAIRED-SAMPLE T-TEST (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

Pair 1 Experimental Group (N=42)	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	Sig. (2-tailed)
			Lower	Upper		
Pretest-Posttest	-21.071	3.815	-22.260	-19.883	-35.793	0.000

B. Discussion of RQ

The pretest mean scores in both groups (refer to Table 4) reveal that the participants' speaking performance falls below the passing mark of 60/100. This result aligns with the findings of several studies on Chinese students, such as Qian (2021), Lv (2014), and Chen (2018). Qian (2021) argued that despite the favorable scores in the English test paper, Chinese EFL students often face challenges in spoken English. While possessing knowledge of certain words, phrases, or sentences, students encountered difficulties in expressing themselves with suitable and precise expressions or structures on various occasions. Lv (2014) and Chen (2018) both stated that a common speaking problem of Chinese EFL non-English major learners is the frequent use of Chinglish expressions, making it difficult for others to understand their intended message.

One justification for this unsatisfactory speaking performance among Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates can be attributed to the prolonged neglect of speaking teaching in college English courses and the absence of speaking tests in formal English examinations. Additionally, the lack of a conducive environment to speak English in China can be another factor resulting in the weakness of English speaking (Chen, 2018; Qian, 2021). More importantly, it has been observed that the predominant cause of low English-speaking performance among Chinese EFL non-English majors is their inner fear of speaking English (Zhang, 2018; Zhou, 2019). They worry about making mistakes and are reluctant to speak English, a phenomenon supported by previous research (Wu, 2016; Tao, 2018; Zhang, 2019).

After the 14 weeks of regular speaking instruction, the control group's speaking performance improved from the pretest mean score of 51.08 to the posttest mean score of 54.98. Additionally, the statistics of paired-sample t-test in the control group revealed a significant difference between the control group's pretest and posttest mean score. This implies that the conventional teaching method contributes to an enhancement in the control group's speaking performance. However, the improvement is modest compared with the experimental group's great increase in the mean score during the pretest and posttest.

On the other hand, the experimental group's posttest mean score (71.60) significantly surpasses its pretest mean score (50.52) as evidenced by a statistically significant difference observed through the paired-sample t-test on this group. The remarkable improvement of more than 20 points in the experimental group's speaking performance after the intervention underscores the role and significance of the IALS teaching speaking module in enhancing students' English-speaking skills. One of the primary contributors to such a substantial increase can be attributed to the utilization of autonomous learning. In the current research, autonomous learning provided students with more freedom and independence to explore their speaking knowledge and skills using the methods they preferred, thereby fostering the initiatives and potentials of students with different learning levels. This aligns with the findings of Spratt (2017), who emphasized that autonomous learning benefits both the educators and students, as it prioritizes students' self-control and independent learning in the learning process.

Furthermore, the application of five incentive strategies under the instructor's clear guidance in the current study constitutes another influential factor contributing to the improvement of speaking performance. These five incentive strategies played a positive role in enhancing students' linguistic competence by stimulating their interest in participation, setting proper learning goals, and reinforcing their self-consciousness and self-confidence through emotional support. This is consistent with the findings of Qian (2021), who stressed that the effective use of strategies in teaching modules can significantly contribute to the realization of the expected teaching outcomes. Lastly, the well-designed IALS module, incorporating various speaking activities and tasks, along with engaging learning materials prepared for learners, might also exert a positive influence on students' English-speaking abilities. This result is in line with the findings of teaching experiments conducted by Chinese researchers and instructors as demonstrated by Zhang (2019) and Chen (2018). Both Zhang (2019) and Chen (2018) emphasized the necessity of constructing a teaching module with a comprehensive understanding of the target students and research purpose. Based on this understanding, corresponding strategies, appropriate activities, and enjoyable learning materials can be developed to address research issues purposefully and effectively. Therefore, the effectiveness of the IALS teaching speaking module in enhancing the speaking proficiency among Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates has been validated through the comparison and analysis of the mean scores of the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental group and control group respectively.

V. Theoretical and Practical Implications of This Study

This study addressed the research gap in speaking performance through an empirical research method by the utilizing IALS teaching speaking module among Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates in China. It aims to draw attention to the role of effective speaking intervention in addressing actual speaking problems and difficulties among this population (Li, 2020; AlSaqqaf et al., 2023) and propose a long-term strategy for innovating EFL instruction and learning (Nhi & AlSaqqaf, 2023).

The current research has developed the IALS teaching speaking module as a remedial measure to enhance the EFL speaking proficiency of the Chinese non-English undergraduates Understanding the importance of speaking competence in foreign language teaching and learning is crucial for both EFL teachers and learners (Zhang, 2019). It is also essential to recognize the necessity of adopting effective strategies to enhance speaking competence, as effective methods can pave the way for positive learning outcomes (Li, 2020; Song, 2020). Despite the perceived complexity of acquiring spoken English for EFL learners, providing them with appropriate guidance, encouragement, and support, along with stimulating their learning enthusiasm using effective methods, can lead to positive and confident engagement in EFL speaking learning (Denovan, 2021). Following the measurement of the effectiveness of the IALS module in the current research, it is hoped that other EFL instructors will consider it as a reference for further speaking teaching and, based on it, propose more effective measures to enhance the teaching effectiveness of English speaking.

VI. Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of the IALS module in improving the speaking performance of Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates at a public university in China. The findings reveal a significant enhancement in the speaking performance of the experimental group after the IALS teaching treatment, compared to the control group's modest improvement following regular speaking instruction. As a result, this research provides valuable insights into the potential impact of the IALS module for both EFL educators and learners. The hope is that the results of this research will draw attention to effective instructional approaches and strategies for enhancing speaking skills among Chinese EFL non-English major undergraduates.

References

[1] AlSaqqaf, A., Zhang, X., & Sharif, S. (2023). Investigating self-concept in EFL pronunciation among Chinese non-English major learners at a public university in China. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, *12*(2), 117-129.

[2] Anjaniputra, A. G. (2013). Teacher's strategies in teaching speaking to students at secondary level in Sumedang. *Journal of English and Education*, *1*(2), 1-8.

[3] Baleghizadeh, S., & Nasrollahi Shahri, M. N. (2014). EFL teachers' conceptions of speaking competence in English. *Teachers and Teaching*, *20*(6), 738-754.

[4] Butler, Y. G. (2015). English language education among young learners in East Asia: A review of current research. *Language Teaching*, *15*(3), 303-342.

[5] Bu, W. (2018). On problems and countermeasures in oral English teaching in middle schools. *New Curriculum (Part 2), (3)*7, 7-18.

[6] Carr, P. (2019). *The measurement of resourcefulness intentions in the adult autonomous learner.* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. George Washington University.

[7] Chen, G. (2018). Teacher knowledge about oral English instruction and teacher profiles: An EFL perspective. *Teacher Development*, *1*(8), 81-99.

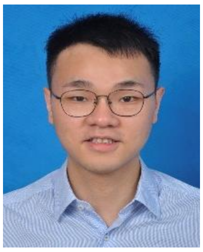
[8] Chen, H. (2016). Research on problems and countermeasures in oral English teaching in junior middle schools. *Xuezhou Magazine*, *6*(13), 63-64.

[9] Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research methods in education.* London: Routledge.
[10] College English course teaching requirements (trial). (2018). Steering Committee on Foreign Language Teaching.
[11] Dang, T. (2016). Stars to improve speaking skill does it work. *Language Education in Aisa*, *5*(1), 28-45.
[12] Denovan, A. (2021). Developing autonomous learning in first year university students using perspectives from positive psychology. *Studies in Higher Education*, *3*(2), 1–19.
[13] Ellie, B. (2021). Learner-centered teaching and learner autonomy. *Social and behavioral sciences*, *4*(2), 1-24.
[14] Eltina, A. M. (2023). Empowering learners' self-regulated learning: A strategy for independent learners. *Journal on Language, Education, Literature and Culture*, *1*(1), 80-90.
[15] Fraenkel, J., Wallen, N., & Hyun, H. (2019). *How to design and evaluate research in education (10rd ed.)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
[16] Gan, S. Q. (2020). English learning motivation and incentive strategies among middle school students. *Overseas English*, *11*(1), 103-106.
[17] Gou, W. (2018). *Problems analysis and solutions of oral English teaching in vocational Colleges.* International Conference on Management, Education, Information and Control. Atlantis Press.
[18] Guo, R. Q., & Wen, Y. F. (2017). The cultivation of independent learning ability in foreign language teaching. *China Higher Education Research*, *7*(3), 142-153.
[19] Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2014). *Multivariate data analysis 7th edition*. Pearson Education.
[20] Healey, J. F. (2015). *Statistics: A tool for social research.* Stamford: Cengage Learning (10th Eds).
[21] Hemamalini, H. C. (2017). *Methods of teaching English.* Hyderadad: Neelkamal Publications.
[22] Hu, S. C. (2016). *Chinese students' psychology of English learning.* Hunan Education Press.
[23] Huang, Y. Q. (2021). Study on the factors influencing college students' independent English learning. *Journal of Shandong Institute of Education*, *6*(2), 122-130.
[24] Hughes, R. (2012). *Teaching and researching speaking.* New York: Pearson Education.
[25] Hutabarat, A., & Simanjuntak, D. C. (2019). A phenomenological study: Speaking anxiety overwhelms English learners. *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature and Culture*, *4*(1), 44–58
[26] Jia. F. X. (2018). *Autonomy in college foreign language learning: From theory to practice.* Beijing: Social Sciences.
[27] Jiang, X. Q. (2020). A study of college English classroom discourse. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *2*(10), 2146-2152.
[28] Joannes, R., & AlSaqqaf, A. (2023). The effect of analytic text-based writing strategies on ESL argumentative writing among Malaysian form-six students in Sabah, Malaysia. *The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies*, *29*(2), 170-185.
[29] Kashinathan, A. A. (2021). ESL learners' challenges in speaking English in Malaysian classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, *10*(2), 983–991.
[30] Ke, H., & AlSaqqaf, A. (2023). Needs analysis for developing a teaching speaking module for Chinese EFL business English undergraduates from the teachers' perspective: Assessing the validity and reliability. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, *12*(4), 478-494.
[31] Lartha, B. M. (2012). Teaching English as a second language: Factors affecting learning speaking skills. *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)*, *1*(7), 1-6.
[32] Li, G. H. (2020). Present situation and solutions of oral English in colleges. *Journal of Heilongjiang College Education*, *3*(2), 154-155.
[33] Li, J., & Tan, Z. (2018). Problems and improvement strategies in the teaching of oral English in junior high schools. *Modern Communication*, *11*(1), 90-92.
[34] Limeranto, J. T., & Bram, B. (2022). Exploring EFL graduate students' perspectives and strategies to improve English speaking skills. *Surakarta English and Literature Journal*, *5*(1), 26-38.
[35] Littlewood, W. (2009). Defining and developing autonomy in east Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistics*, *20*(1), 71-94.
[36] Liu, J. L. (2018). Factors affecting teaching speaking in high school. *Teaching Research and Practice*, *9*(1), 34-35.
[37] Lukitasari, N. (2018). Teachers' strategies in helping students overcome speaking problems in speaking class. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Mahammadiyah Malang.
[38] Lv, J. (2014). Problems and strategies in oral English teaching in higher schools. *English for College Students*, *7*(17), 2-21.
[39] Macaskill, A., & Taylor, E. (2010). The development of a brief measure of learner autonomy in university students. *Studies in Higher Education*, *35*(3), 351-361.
[40] Nhi Nguyen, T. U., & AlSaqqaf, A. (2023). Impact of a DMGA Scaffolding-Based Module on Improving the EFL Speaking Skills among Vietnamese ESP Learners. *Arab World English Journal*, *14*(4): 342-357. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol14no4.21
[41] Pallant, J. (2016). *SPSS survival manual.* Mc. Graw Hill Education.
[42] Paneerselvam, A., & Mohamad, M. (2019). Learners' challenges and English educators' approaches in teaching speaking skills in an ESL Classroom: A literature review. *Creative Education*, *10*(13), 3299- 3305.
[43] Qian, X. (2021). A Study on the teaching methods of improving students' oral English. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *2*(3), 2204-2208.
[44] Rao, S. P. (2018). Developing speaking skills in ESL or EFL settings. *International Journal of English Language*, *5*(2), 286-293.
[45] Safari, A. (2016). The effect of commentary strategy towards students' self-confidence in speaking ability. *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, *4*(1) 25-29.
[46] Safiyeh, H. A., & Mohammed, F. (2020). Investigating the effectiveness of flipped learning on enhancing students' English language skills. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, *9*(1), 193-204.
[47] Shu, J. L. (2020). A review of studies on learner autonomy in China. *Foreign Language Circles*, *6*(1), 138-145.
[48] Siew, F. N., Gary, J., & Confessore, M. A. (2016). Learner autonomy coaching: Enhancing learning and academic success. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, *1*(3), 191 – 204.

[49] Song, P. (2020). Research on problems and countermeasures in oral English teaching in public universities. *Journal of Beihua University (Social Science Edition)*, *7*(1), 140-142.
[50] Spratt, M. (2017). Autonomy and motivation: Which comes first? *Language Teaching Research*, *6*(3), 245-249.
[51] Tao, Y. (2018). On learner training in college English. *Foreign Language Circles*, *3*(1), 67-77.
[52] Ushioda, E. (2016). Motivation, autonomy and sociocultural theory. In P. Benson (Eds.), *Learner autonomy: Insider perspectives on autonomy in language learning and teaching* (pp. 5-24). Dublin, Ireland: Authentik.
[53] Xiao, Q. L. (2017). How to communicate language teaching become acceptable in secondary school in China. *The Internet TESL Journal*, *6*(10), 200-212.
[54] Wael, A., Asnur, M. N. A., & Ibrahim, I. (2018). Exploring students' learning strategies in speaking performance. *Int. J. Lang. Educ. 2*(3), 65–71.
[55] Wang, D. X. (2018). *English discourse analysis and intercultural communication.* Beijing Language and Culture University Press.
[56] Wang, R. M., & Chen, X. Z. (2023). Exploration and inspiration of CET score on college English teaching. *Modern English*, *23*(1), 13-16.
[57] Wang, W. (2022). The reform of college English wisdom classroom teaching based on ARCS incentive motivation model. *Journal of Higher Education*, *8*(4), 140-143.
[58] Wang, Z. Q. (2014). *Developing accuracy and fluency in spoken English of Chinese EFL learners*. Canadian Center of Science and Education.
[59] Wu, Y. A. (2016). English language teaching in China: Trends and challenges. *TESOL Quarterly*, *35*(1)12–20.
[60] Zakaria, N., Hashim, H., & Yunus, M. M. (2019). A review of affective strategy and social strategy in developing students' speaking skills. *Creative Education*, *10*(12), 3082–3090.
[61] Zhang, J. Z. (2018). *Psychology in foreign language education*. Anhui Education Press.
[62] Zhang, L. L. (2022). Incentive strategies of emotion teaching in vocational colleges from the perspective of positive psychology. *Vocational Education in China*, *14*(1), 90-96.
[63] Zhang, Q. (2019). *Learning theory.* Wuhan: Hubei Education Press.
[64] Zhang, Z. Y. (2019). A reflection on basic English teaching in China. Curriculum, *Teaching Method and Material*, *31*(1), 95-99.
[65] Zhou, A. (2022). Exploring EFL graduate students' incentive strategies to improve English speaking skills. *Surakarta English and Literature Journal*, *5*(1), 26-38.
[66] Zhou, S., Zhu, H., & Zhou, Y. (2022). Impact of teenage EFL learners' psychological needs on learning engagement and behavioral intention in synchronous online English courses. *Sustainability*, *14*(17), 104-118.
[67] Zhou, Y. (2019). Socia-psychological factors and language learning. In G. Z. Xv (Ed.), *ELT in China* (pp. 44–49). Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Asmaa AlSaqqaf is a Senior Lecturer of English at the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning (PPIB), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia. Previously, she served for a few years at the TESL Programme, Faculty of Psychology and Education, UMS. She teaches undergraduates and postgraduates and supervises Master and PhD students, both local and international. Currently, she is publishing her work under the Knowledge, Attitude, Practice (KAP) research Group, PPIB, UMS. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2074-4328

Yi Yang is a doctoral student at the Teaching-English-as-a-Second Language (TESL) Programme, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Malaysia. She is also an associate professor at Baoding City, China. Her research interests are TESL and Applied Linguistics.



Ke Hu is currently a PhD candidate at the TESL Programme, Faculty of Psychology and Education, UMS, Malaysia. He received both Master's and bachelor's degrees in TESL from Universiti Malaysia Sabah. His research interests are English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Curriculum and Instruction Development, and E-learning in Language Teaching. Email: hu_ke_dp21@iluv.ums.edu.my

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 853-862, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.18

Bynames in the Baduy Dalam as a Conception of Family Relationships

Cece Sobarna*
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor, Indonesia

Santy Yulianti
National Research and Innovation Agency, Jakarta, Indonesia

Asri Soraya Afsari
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Jatinangor, Indonesia

***Abstract*—The Baduy people of the Banten Province in Western Java are one of many peoples that make up the larger Sundanese ethnic group in Indonesia. The life of the Baduy Dalam (the Inner Baduy people) is interestingly bound to their customary rules and norms including those regulating their naming system. This research discusses the Baduy naming system which has a unique concept of naming a child using part of his/her parents' byname. In the research, 493 people and their bynames were selected from a total population of 1,202. The names were collected from the Family ID Cards of those living in three Baduy Dalam villages — Cibeo, Cikeusik, and Cikartawana. The study also utilized interviews with informants who have considerable knowledge about the bynames of the Baduy people. These interviews were conducted to see when and how the names of *Ayah, Ambu, Ki,* and *Ni* were formed. In Baduy tradition, parents are called *Ayah* (male) and *Ambu* (female) followed by the name of their child. Similarly, grandparents are called *Ki* (male) or *Ni* (female) followed by their grandchild's name. It is not always the first child or a male child whose name is taken for his/her parents' or grandparents' byname. The choice is taken based on agreement among family members. The research was informed by the study of personal names known as anthroponomastics, and more specifically, by Eva Brylla's anthroponomastic theory of the byname (Brylla, 2018).**

***Index Terms*—Baduy Dalam tribe, bynames, anthroponomastics, Sundanese, traditional society**

I. Introduction

The Baduy people have been an interesting topic of scholarly discussions in various disciplines. For instance, there is Ardan's (2008) research on determining whether the Baduy people are Protomalay or Deuteromalay based on both their Upper Integumentary Lip Profile (PUIL) and the research of Purba et al. (2018) on the implications of the Baduy Dalam tribe's closure on Indonesia's rank in the World Economic Forum. Furthermore, The preservation of farming traditions carried out by the Outer Baduy community has been examined (Iskandar et al., 2018) and elements of the local authority of the Baduy tribe regarding environmental conservation through customary law and culture have been examined (Asteria et al., 2021). Moreover, research on the Baduy community concerning character education was carried out (Arif et al., 2021). Indeed, the unique existence of the Baduy tribe as an indigenous community has attracted the attention of many people including both ordinary people and researchers. Still, only the most basic information known by the general public is the division of the Baduy area into Baduy Dalam (Inner Baduy) and Baduy Luar (Outer Baduy).

According to Permana (2006, 2010), however, the Baduy community is divided into three sub-groups: Tangtu, Panamping, and Dangka. Tangtu and Panamping people occupy the Kanekes Village region while the Dangka people live outside of the region. Among the three, the Tangtu people are considered the highest in terms of degree of sanctity and adherence to customs. They are followed by the Panamiping and Dangka people, respectively. Other sources mention that the term Tangtu refers to Baduy Dalam people, while Panamping and Dangka refer to Baduy Luar people. Moreover, some scholars also believe that the word *tangtung* is derived from the Sanskrit noun meaning “thread/yarn”, “heredity/family tree”, and a Sanskrit adjective meaning “certain”. The Baduy people, however, understand Tangtu as the place of origin of their ancestors and the founders of their community (Danasasmita & Djatisunda, 1986).

The Baduy area is divided into three Tangtu settlements: Cikeusik (*Tangtu pada ageung*), Cibeo (*Tangtu parahiyang*), and Cikartawana (*Tangtu kujang*). The three Tangtu are often called *telu Tangtu* (the “three Tangtus”). Other names for *Tangtu* people are Baduy Jero, Urang Kajeroan, or the most commonly known, Baduy Dalam. Such naming may have been based on the fact that the Tangtu area lies in the ‘interior’, surrounded by Panamping areas. The soil on which the Tangtu people live is considered sacred because it is protected. In addition, not just anyone can enter and do as they

* Corresponding Author. Email: cece@unpad.ac.id

please. This inner area is also referred to as *tanah larangan* or "the prohibited land".

Just as it is in nearly every other culture in the world, everyone in the Baduy Dalam culture must have a name whether it be one of good meaning or bad (Chiwanga & Mkiramweni, 2019), and one intriguing cultural aspect of the Baduy Dalam people is their naming system.

Those who have been to Baduy may have often heard the forms of address *Ayah* and *Ambu* meaning "father" and "mother", respectively. These generic forms of address are often followed by a child's name. Thus, a father who has a child named Marno would be called *Ayah Marno* ("Marno's father"). In the same fashion, the byname *Ambu Jana* (Jana's Mother) refers to a mother who has a child named *Jana*.

If Nath (2023) thinks that the state of consciousness and unconsciousness of a particular community finds verbal recourse only through the metaphorical tool of language, then the researcher argues that another way out of language tools is through the use of bynames.

Naming systems are a universal phenomenon in every culture (Peterson, 2019), and the Baduy society is no exception. It is of particular interest to those who study onomastics, a subject that includes toponymy and anthroponymy (Ainiala & Ostman, 2017). Toponymy refers to the study of how the name of a place is derived (Bala Muhammad et al., 2020) while anthroponymy is the study of given names. The convention by which the Baduy people choose which child whose name is to be affixed to the forms of address *Ambu* and *Ayah*, as well as the philosophy behind the practice, is interesting to study.

This convention in Baduy is interesting to examine more deeply how the choice of the child's name will be juxtaposed with the calls *Ambu* and *Ayah* and also the philosophy behind it. The naming system of a culture always takes into account the traditions and unique values of its people (Khoa, 2022). Names, it can be posited then, carry social meaning – affective, emotive, connotational meaning (Heyd, 2022). Ideology and religion is also an important consideration when naming (Sabet & Zhang, 2020). For instance, in Finland, the naming system can open up Christianisation processes that have occurred in the past (Frog, 2020). As such, the proper name is very important for the identification of one's self (Aksholakova, 2014).

This study is a continuation of Sobarna's interest in the naming system of the Baduy people as his first demonstration of this interest was his observation of the names of the Baduy Luar people (2020). Sobarna first studied the concept of the use of *Ayah* and *Ambu* in parents' names. Then, he observed how a daughter took a part of her father's name, and particularly, the first syllable of his name. Likewise, Sobarna states that a son is usually named by taking a part of his mother's name. The philosophical ground for the practice is that children and their parents must protect each other. In this research, Sobarna expanded his scope to the Baduy Dalam people. Thus, the article discusses the concept of naming that is prevalent among the Baduy Dalam people, particularly the practice related to the use of the forms of address *Ayah*, *Ambu*, *Ki*, and *Ni*.

To begin with, the terms "byname" and "nickname" shall first be defined. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online, "byname" refers to a secondary name, while "nickname" refers to a descriptive name given instead of, or in addition to, the one belonging to a person, place, or thing. It can be distinguished by the address form meaning how people address someone with first names, nicknames, etc. (Silaban & Afriana, 2020). In many cultures, a personal name is a person's given name which is usually followed by his or her surname.

Eva Brylla (2016) also explains that bynames can have positive, negative, or neutral meanings and nicknames are limited to the traits of their bearers. Brylla further emphasizes that bynames are more of an inclusive expression, while nicknames are more of a subcategory. Bynames are official names that are added or attached to that person with the intent to specialize, identify, and distinguish themselves from others with similar names (see also Akramy & Aiyaz, 2022; Khudhir & Salo, 2019; Wang & Kałużyńska, 2019). Wang and Kałużyńska (2019) also highlight the fact that bynames differ from given names.

Indeed, bynames differ from given names (or first names) and surnames or long/family/surnames. Bynames are personal names and are handed down. Bynames, like any other self-name, have syntactic rules, one of which is that it can stand on its own, for example:

1. Bynames are used in addition to self-names or official names, such as "Twiggy" (the model, actress, and singer from England born Lesley Lawson), "The Boss" (Bruce Springsteen), "Der Bomber der Nation" (Gerd Müller, German national footballer), and "The Iron Lady" (Margaret Thatcher).
2. Bynames are used with self-names or legal names such as "Tricky Dick" Nixon (Richard Nixon).

Bynames are also mentioned as nicknames or self-names that indicate relationships within a family. Citing McKinley (2014), Brylla mentioned an example of a practice common in England before 1069 when the Latin word *filius* (son) was used to identify a person as someone's son such as Johannes *filius* (son) Edwardi for "Johannes son of Edward". Along those same lines, in later eras, bynames were often derivative names such as Robertson and Harrison.

Hudson and van Langendonck, as presented in *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* (2016), explain that the concept of syntactic-semantic naming always revolves around two elements: the head and the modifier. Examples are Bill Clinton and President Clinton. Both personal names have a fixed structure, and semantically, the head (Clinton) describes a single name. The modifier (Bill/President) became the modifier for Clinton. Similarly, the family name modifies the first name.

Other linguists examine nicknames in terms of interdisciplinary science, especially discourse and pragmatics (Imayo et al., 2022). Nicknames are analyzed based on, among other things, their linguistic, semantic, and sociological elements. One of the conclusions is that the division of official and unofficial names is based on primary-secondary opposition.

A recent study was conducted by Kaziaba and Burkova (2022) which examined the German people’s use of internet media, especially among adolescent girls. The results show that the characteristics of gender and age also determine the choice of name as embodiments such as individual needs, the formation of self-concept, and the need to be accepted as members of a particular group. In other countries, bynames are still in use within some communities, including some areas of Scotland (Bramwell, 2011).

There are quite a lot of studies on names in Indonesia. Widodo's (2013) study reveals that Javanese names are speech forms with exciting forms and meanings. Based on the analyzed data, it seems clear that current names tend to be composed of more than one word. However, single names with only one element can still be found. Through Widodo’s study, one can assert that understanding the construction process of the Javanese name is very important to understanding how the Javanese society's cultural tastes, desires, hopes, and ideals constantly change over time.

In a study on Balinese names, Temaja (2018) explains that three things influence the naming system of Balinese people: name markers that distinguish gender such as *I* and *Bagus* to mark a man's name, and *Ni*, *Ayu*, *Istri*, and *Luh* to mark a woman's name. Naming is based on birth order, such as *Wayan*, *Putu*, and *Gede* for the first child and *Made, Nengah*, and *Kadek* or *Kade* for the second child. Naming is based on four caste systems, such as *Ida Bagus* for men and *Ida Ayu* for women (Brahmins); *Anak Agung, Cokorda, Gusti*, and *Dewa* for men and women, but specifically *Dewa Ayu, Desak,* and *Sagung* are used for women (royals); and so on.

Eugenius M. Uhlenbeck (1978), a Dutch scholar of the Javanese, also touched on the issue of names in terms of morphology. Uhlenbeck explained that a Javanese person's name was syntactically characterized by its possibility to be combined with the so-called personal article *si* (the coarse/crude speech level) or *pun* (the refined speech level) which is morphologically characterized by the absence of a suffix. Furthermore, Uhlenbeck (1978) explained that, in Javanese society, the name had a unique and clear position in the morphological system of the Javanese language. This was possible because naming was differentiated according to the type and class of society. Based on the class of society, the names of the Javanese people could be distinguished by (1) a name that indicated a low social class and (2) a name that did not solely indicate a specific class of society. In addition, other provisions applied specifically to male names. A male name consisted of a first name (a “diminutive name”) or a second name (an “old name for an adult”). The father usually gave the first name to the baby at the naming ceremony (*slametan*) five days after the baby's birth. A son usually handpicked his second name after he grew up, which thus replaced the first name. Sometimes, a person’s name is changed after an important event such as marriage, getting a job, or recovery from illness.

Meanwhile, in Sundanese society in general, as in Javanese culture, Sobarna (1993) mentions that a name reflects not only a person’s social class (*somah* “lower”, *santana* “middle”, *menak* “upper, noble”) but also his/her geographical background. For example, the name *Suria* reflects that the owner is from the Sumedang region; *Wirakusumah* is from Bandung, and *Tanu* is from Cianjur. Sobarna’s explanation concurs with Thomas and Samjose (2022) who state that a name could also describe the position of individuals in a community or cultural space. Furthermore, Sobarna (1993) explains that nowadays, the Sundanese people tend to refer to religion, public figures, unique features, and current trends as the basis of naming their children.

II. Method

In this descriptive-qualitative research, the data were collected from 493 people with bynames who were selected from a total of 1,202 people. The bynames data were obtained from the Family ID Cards of people who were from the three Baduy Dalam Villages, namely Cibeo, Cikeusik, and Cikartawana.

In Kanekes Village, demographic records only began being recorded in 2015. Issuing Family ID Cards and ID cards for Baduy people proved to be difficult. It was not easy to make Baduy people, especially those from the inner villages, understand the importance of having an identity card. The difficulty had a lot to do with the strong belief that they should avoid involvement with worldly affairs. It is their traditional belief that violation of their customary laws would result in a punishment from nature.

Thanks to the persistence of the village officials and Baduy representatives of the Baduy spokespeople, Family Cards and Identity Cards were eventually issued to Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar residents. Another challenge ensued when they were requested to have their names listed on the Family Card (*KK*) and Identity Card (*KTP*). The reported names typically began with the generic *Ayah, Ambu, Ni,* and *Ki*. When asked to mention their original or birth names, the Baduy Dalam people could not answer with certainty. Such a phenomenon could not be separated from their local wisdom. Figure 1 below shows the Family Card of a family in Cibeo Village. Hardly can such a naming custom be found in other ethnic groups in the world. As an illustration, a reverse, patronymic pattern is found in Russia, where it is customary to give a name by taking the name from the father (Crystal, 2010). For example, a child born to a father named Ivan would be named Ivanovich if the child is a boy or Ivanovna if the child is a girl. What is practiced in Baduy is called teknonymy, a practice by which parents are referred to by their children’s names. Teknonymy is also widely practiced by Arab ethnic groups.

No	Nama Lengkap	NIK	Jenis Kelamin	Tempat Lahir	Tanggal Lahir	Agama	Pendidikan	Jenis Pekerjaan
1	AYAH ARTINAH	360206	L	Lebak	26-09-1968	-	-	Petani
2	AMBU ARTINAH	360206	P	Lebak	20-07-1970	-	-	Petani
3	ARTINAH	360206	L	Lebak	16-06-2003	-	-	
4	SARNATA	360206	L	Lebak	17-06-2005	-	-	
5	PULUNG	360206	P	Lebak	20-07-2010	-	-	
6								
7								
8								

No	Status Perkawinan	Status Hubungan dalam keluarga	Kewargan egaraan	Dokumen Imigrasi		Nama Orang Tua	
						Ayah	Ibu
1	Kawin	Kepala Rumah Tangga	WNI			AYAH NARPAH	AMBU NARPAH
2	Kawin	Istri	WNI			AYAH PENDEK	AMBU PENDEK
3	Belum Kawin	Anak	WNI			AYAH ARTINAH	AMBU ARTINAH
4	Belum Kawin	Anak	WNI			AYAH ARTINAH	AMBU ARTINAH
5	Belum Kawin	Anak	WNI			AYAH ARTINAH	AMBU ARTINAH
6							
7							
8							

Kepala Keluarga

Figure1. Family Card. Source: RT (Neighborhood Association) 001/RW (Community Association) 0011

Bynames data that have been collected are then classified, summarized, and finally turned into percentages. Data analysis in the form of bynames and their number is presented in tabular form accompanied by a description.

Interviews were also conducted with informants considered to have some knowledge about bynames in Baduy. Based on Creswell's (2014) and Sudaryanto's (2015) views on the interview technique, the in-depth interviews were directed toward exploring the reasons for using bynames as well as when and how the forms of address *Ayah, Ambu, Ki,* and *Ni* were used. Individual interviews were recorded upon informed consent. The conversations were guided by a list of questions. The interviews were conducted in Sundanese in the presence of a village official from Baduy Luar.

Interviews took place at the house of each Baduy Luar informant. Baduy Dalam informants, however, were interviewed at the village secretary's house since the use of modern technology (digital recorder) was prohibited inside the inner Baduy area. During each interview, information was gathered through a Q&A process based on a prepared list of questions. Supporting documents include newspaper articles, minutes of meetings, activity reports, and personal documents such as personal notes, letters, or emails. The data collected from these supporting documents were used to complement the research. This study is important considering the current lack of studies and scholarly writings on the Baduy tradition of using bynames.

III. Finding and Discussion

Baduy Dalam, also commonly called Baduy Jero, is the nucleus of the indigenous Baduy community. Sitting on the slopes of Indonesia's Mount Kendeng in Banten, the Baduy Dalam area is divided into three villages: Cibeo, Cikeusik, and Cikartawana. the Baduy Dalam community still upholds its customary laws The three villages have various rules for managing life and interaction with both natural and social environments. Studies by Sam and Suwandi (1986), Sihabudin and Kurnia (2010), Permana (2006) and others are mostly concerned with the environment. Therefore, they explore the Baduy people's customary rules regarding food, dress, weddings, marriages, house construction, building materials and village population.

The Baduy people speak Sundanese - the same language spoken by Sundanese living outside Baduy in West Java and the Banten Provinces. The difference is that the Sundanese language spoken by the Baduy people belongs to the Baduy dialect, and while the Banten dialect of Sundanese is influenced by Javanese, the Baduy dialect is not. Moreover, the Baduy dialect does not recognize speech levels, has its own accent, and has its own basic indigenous vocabulary. The Baduys know no writing system except the old Javanese/Sundanese *hanacaraka* script which they use to calculate bad or good days. Due to their oral culture, all information related to customs, religions, stories of ancestors, and others is recorded through their speech. The Baduy Dalam people believe that nature will punish them if they violate their customs.

A. The Concept of a Name With the Initials Ayah, Ambu, Ni, and Ki on the Family Card and Its Hierarchy

Names beginning with *Ayah, Ambu, Ni,* and *Ki* on the Family Card are personal names attached to the Baduy people who have a family. *Ayah* and *Ambu* are bynames for parents. *Ni* and *Ki* are bynames for those who have grandchildren. The conception of changing one's name to *Ayah, Ambu, Ni,* and *Ki* followed by the names of children/grandchildren in the Baduy indigenous people can be seen on the collected Family Card. The number of Family Cards in Cibeo is the highest in Baduy Dalam. The change of a personal name to a combined name consisting of the initial *Ayah, Ambu, Ni,* and *Ki* and the name of a child or grandchild could be seen from the Family Cards collected. The highest number of Family Cards was collected from Cibeo Village.

(a). Cibeo Village (Place Name, Number of Residents, Name in the Family)

Demographically, Cibeo Village has a population of 539 people. Based on the 134 family cards collected from the total population, 294 are male and 244 female. Categorized by age, 77 people are between 0 to10 years old; 158 belong to the 11 to 20 years old group; 81 people fall into the 21 to 30 years old age group; 63 are in the 31 to 40 years age group; 61 people to the 41- to 50-year-old group. Interestingly, it then skips 51- to 70-year-old groups to 8 people falling into the 71 to 80 years of age group and 11 people in the 81 to 121 years of age group. The following table classifies Cibeo residents based on their personal names and bynames.

TABLE 1
CIBEO VILLAGE RESIDENTS' BYNAMES AND PERSONAL NAMES

No.	Name	Number (People)
1	*Ambu* + child's name	103
2	*Ayah* + child's name	97
3	*Ki* + child's/grandchild's name	14
4	*Ni* + child's/grandchild's name	17
5	*Pulung*	7
6	Personal name (one word)	302

As shown in Table 1, the byname constructions *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name are still widely used in Cibeo Village (37%). The byname constructions *Ki* + child's/grandchild's names and *Ni* + child's/grandchild's names are insignificant in number (5%) because it can already be seen from the age group that about 56% of the total population still uses personal names. As evidenced by Family Card data, the naming of *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name in Cibeo Village is based on the name of one of the biological children they have. As illustrated in Figure 1, the head of the family bears the byname *Ayah Artinah* and is married to *Ambu Artinah*. They are the father and mother of Artinah, their first child. According to the Family Card, Ayah Artinah's parents are referred to as *Ayah Narpah* and *Ambu Narpah*, meaning *Narpah's* Father and Mother (*Narpah* being the name of their first child.) The bynames of *Ayah* and *Ambu Narpah*, however, do not change to *Ki* and *Ni*. This is because the Baduy Dalam people mostly adopt the first-degree *Abah* and *Ambu* byname initials. *Ki* and *Ni* are rarely used in Baduy Dalam. Another example is shown in the following Family Card. The head of the family is *Ayah Ardalim* and his wife is *Ambu Ardalim*. *Ardalim* is the name of their first child. As the card shows, *Ayah Ardalim's* parents are called *Ki* and *Ni Enok*, after their first daughter.

No	Nama Lengkap	NIK	Jenis Kelamin	Tempat Lahir	Tanggal Lahir	Agama	Pendidikan	Jenis Pekerjaan
1	AYAH ARDALIM	360206	L	Lebak	18-10-1990	-	-	Petani
2	AMBU ARDALIM	360206	P	Lebak	11-07-1992	-	-	Petani
3	ARDALIM	360206	L	Lebak	17-02-2011	-	-	
4	RASIDI	360206	L	Lebak	16-01-2013	-	-	
5								
6								
7								
8								

No	Status Perkawinan	Status Hubungan dalam keluarga	Kewarganegaraan	Dokumen Imigrasi		Nama Orang Tua	
						Ayah	Ibu
1	Kawin	Kepala Rumah Tangga	WNI			KI ENOK	NI ENOK
2	Kawin	Istri	WNI			KI AWIR	NI AIR
3	Belum Kawin	Anak	WNI				
4	Belum Kawin	Anak	WNI				
5							
6							
7							
8							

Kepala Keluarga

Figure 2. Ayah Ardalim's Family Card Source: RT (Neighborhood Association) 001/RW (Community Association) 0011

Unfortunately, the bynames *Ki* and *Ni* and the names of children/grandchildren still cannot be clarified. Only the constructions *Ayah's* byname and *Ambu's* + the child's name follow the genealogical line in the family.

(b). Cikeusik Village

Based on the 2015 demographic data, Cikeusik Village had a population of 504 people, all of whom were listed in a total of 125 Family Cards. Of the total population, 241 were male and 259 female. The distribution of the population based on age group is as follows: 33 people were 1 to 10 years old; 128 people were 11 to 20 years old; 94 people were 21 to 30 years old; 62 people were 31 to 40 years old; 64 people were 41 to 50 years old; 53 people were 51 to 60 years old; 22 people were 61 to 70 years old); 35 people were 71 to 80 years old; and 5 people were 81 to 100 years old. The following table classifies Cikeusik people's personal names and bynames:

TABLE 2
CIBEO VILLAGE RESIDENTS' BYNAMES AND PERSONAL NAMES

No.	Name	Number (People)
1	*Ambu* + child's name (*Am/Amb/Amu*)	83
2	*Ayah* + child's name (*Ay/Ayh*)	78
3	*Ki* + child's/grandchild's name	16
4	*Ni* + child's/grandchild's name	26
5	*Pulung*	3
6	Personal name (one word)	298

As shown in Table 2 above, the use of the bynames *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name in the village of Cikeusik is almost the same as that in Kampung Cibeo. The pattern is still widely used (32%). The bynames *Ki* child's/grandchild's name and *Ni* + child's/grandchild's name are scarcely used (8%) because about 59% of the total population still retain their personal names, such as *Arsa, Cardi,* and *Jamin*. The formation *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name is based on the name of their biological child. For example, on a Family Card with *Ayah Sadun* as the head of the family, his wife is called *Ambu Sadun*, meaning the mother of *Sadun*, their second child. *Ayah Sadun's* parents are *Ki Darma* and *Saiti*. The byname *Ki Darma* is based on their other child, *Darma*. The bynames *Ayah* and *Ambu Sadun*, however, do not change to *Ki* and *Ni* because the Baduy Dalam people mostly adopt the first-degree *Abah* and *Ambu* byname initials. *Ki* and *Ni* are still used randomly in Baduy Dalam. Some married couples do change their names to *Ki* and *Ni* only after they have a grandchild and the name that follows *Ki* and *Ni* does not have to be that of their first grandchild. For example, a Family Card lists *Ki Awit* as the head of the family. *Ki Awit* is married to his wife *Ni Awit*. They are called so because one of their grandchildren is named *Awit*. *Ki Awit* was born to parents *Ki Narkin* and *Ni Narkin*. The bynames *Ki* and *Ni Awit* are based on the name of one of their grandchildren, who is listed on another Family Card.

(c). Cikartawana Village

Based on the 2015 data, Cikartawana Village is inhabited by 159 people who are listed separately in 37 Family Cards. Of the total population, 86 were male and 73 were female. In terms of age, 13 people were in the 0 to 10 years old group; 45 people were in the 11 to 20 years age group; 24 people in the 21 to 30 years age group; 13 people were in the 31 to 40 years age group; 20 people were in the 41 to 50 years age group; 26 people were in the 51 to 60 years age group; 4 people were in the 61 to 70 years age group; 10 people were in the 71 to 80 years age group; and 4 people were in the 81to 100 years age group. Age grouping was used to see the change in the naming of the Baduy people on the Family Card. The pattern of personal and byname use among Cikartawana Village residents is shown in the following table:

TABLE 3
CIKARTAWANA VILLAGE RESIDENTS' BYNAMES AND PERSONAL NAMES

No.	Name	Number (People)
1	*Ambu* + child's name (*Am/Amb/Amu*)	26
2	*Ayah* + child's name (*Ay/Ayh*)	22
3	*Ki* + child's/grandchild's name	4
4	*Ni* + child's/grandchild's name	7
5	*Baby*	6
6	*Pulung*	1
7	Personal name (one word)	93

As the table indicates, the byname pattern *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name is widely used in Cikartawana Village (30%). The pattern *Ki* + child's/grandchild's name and *Ni* + child's/grandchild's name, however, is scarcely used (7%) because, as seen from the age group, nearly 58% of the total population still uses self-names such as *Sarda, Calip,* and *Nasim*. From the Family Card data, the naming of *Ayah* + child's name and *Ambu* + child's name in Cikartawana Village is based on the name of the biological child they have. Another example is the Family Card with the head of the family named *Ayh Arinah* and *Am Arinah* as the wife and mother of *Arinah,* their first child. *Ayah Arinah*'s parents were named *Ayah Caiti* and *Ambu Caiti*. *Ayah* and *Ambu Caiti's* bynames come from the name of their other child, *Caiti* (their first child). The bynames of *Ayah* and *Ambu Caiti* do not change to *Ki* and *Ni* when viewed from the conception of the naming of *Ki* and *Ni*. This is due to the conception of *Ayah* and *Ambu* alone, which the Baduy Dalam tribal community must use. Moreover, the bynames *Ki* and *Ni* are rarely used.

Many of the names of *Ayah* and *Ambu* are not followed by the names of their first or biological child. For example, *Ayh Damin* and *Am Damin* as wives. Their children's names on the Family Card are *Armin* and *Arni*. *Ayh Damin's* parents were named *Jaro Anteu* and *Ambu Anteu*. *Ayh Damin* was a descendant of *Jaro*, the traditional leader of the Baduy Dalam tribe. *Am Damin*'s parents were named *Ayah* and *Ambu Nasinah*. *Ayah* and *Ambu Caiti's* bynames come from the name of their other child, *Caiti* (their first child).

Names beginning with the *Ambu*, *Ayah*, *Ki*, and *Ni* are substitute names or bynames for those with a family, children, and grandchildren. The concept of renaming this became the customary law of the Baduy people. For Baduy Dalam, this concept is still firmly held. They are conscientious that their names will automatically be *Ayah* A and *Ambu* A and *Ki* A and *Ni* A. They no longer use or even remember their personal or birth names because retaining their old name violates customs and, therefore, is taboo.

B. Naming Shifts in Baduy Dalam (Age Group)

Generally, a byname consists of a first/personal name + a surname/byname. The byname *Ambu* (*Amb/Am*) is a substitute name that will always be used. It even becomes a woman's official name and is registers as such on the Family Card if she already has a child or children. Furthermore, it is the name of the first child that usually follows *Ambu*. Similarly, the byname of *Ayah* (*Ay/Ayh*) replaces a father's personal name. He will continue to use that byname as his official name as printed and registered on the Family Card. Usually, the byname *Ayah* is followed by the name of the first child. The following table shows the pattern of bynames for married men and women.

TABLE 4
AYAH AND *AMBU* BYNAME PATTERNS

Village	Child's Name	Father	Mother
Cibeo	*Artinah*	*Ayah Artinah*	*Ambu Artinah*
	Yana	*Ayah Yana*	*Ambu Yana*
	Karmah	*Ayah Karmah*	*Ambu Karmah*
	Jama	*Ayah Jama*	*Ambu Jama*
	Asid	*Ayah Carsah*	*Ambu Carsah*
	Ambu Karwi	*Jaro Bongkok*	*Ni Pongkok*
Cikeusik	*Sadun*	*Ayah Sadun*	*Ambu Sadun*
	Yalis	*Ayah Yalis*	*Ambu Yalis*
	Caniti	*Ayah Caniti*	*Ambu Caniti*
	Nadip	*Nadip*	*Nadip*
	Yaipah	*Ayah Yaipah*	*Ampu Yaipah*
	Nani/Pulung/Nana	*Ayah Ena*	*Ambu Ena*
Cikartawarna	*Dalkin*	*Ayah Dalkin*	*Ambu Dalkin*
	Arinah	*Ayh Arinah*	*Am. Arinah*
	Sarwati/Heni	*Jaya*	*Asinah*
	Armani/Sanip/Heni	*Ayah Kasiti*	*Ambu Kasiti*
	Jasih	*Ayah Jasih*	*Ambu Jasih*
	Yama/Yana	*Ayah Yaldi*	*Ambu Yaldi*

Instead of the most commonly used byname pattern *Ayah/Ambu* + first child's name, some Baduy Dalam people also use another byname pattern, namely *Ayah/Ambu* + other names. In Cibeo Village, for example, a married couple uses the bynames *Ayah Carsah* and *Ambu Carsah* which would usually mean that they are the parents of their first child, Carsah. However, their first son is *Asid* and their second child is *Sangsang*. Another case was found in Cikeusik, where a married couple chose to use the bynames *Ayah Ena* and *Ambu Ena*, but their children's names are *Nani*, *Pulung*, and *Nana*. Similarly, in Cikartawana Village, *Ayah Yaldi* and *Ambu Yaldi* do not have a child named *Yaldi*. They do have sons, but their names are *Yama* and *Yana*. Such a naming pattern occurs in all Baduy Dalam villages, though not significantly (>10%). Based on the interviews, in a case where *Ayah* and *Ambu* are not followed by a child's name, the name occurring after *Ayah* and *Ambu* usually refers to a birth or given name.

The byname initials *Ki* and *Ni* are substitutes that will be used and registered on the family card once a married couple becomes grandparents. Usually, *Ki* and *Ni* are followed by the name of the first grandchild. In one family, however, the parents retain the initials *Ayah* and *Ambu* even after they became grandparents, but the name that follows was changed to that of their first grandchild. The following table shows the patterns of grandparents' bynames:

TABLE 5
KI AND *NI* BYNAME PATTERNS

Village	Child's Name	Grandfather	Grandmother
Cibeo	*Ayah Nadi*	*Ki Nadi*	*Ni Nadi*
	Ambu Nadi	*Ayah Sadi*	*Ambu Sadi*
	Nadi	*Ayah Nadi*	*Ambu Nadi*
	Ambu Cipot	*Ki Jarki*	*Ni Jarki*
	Ambu Sarka	*Ki Buntung*	*Ni Buntung*
	Ni Amir	*Ki Pendek*	*Ni Pendek*
Cikeusik	*Kata*	*Ki Kata*	*Ni Kata*
	Ayah Caniti	*Ki Caniti*	*Ni Caniti*
	Ambu Caniti	*Ki Cardi*	*Ni Cardi*
	Arman	*Ki Dakin*	*Ni Dakin*
	Armain	*Ki Sarda*	*Ni Nardi*
	Yadip	*Ki Nolip*	*Ni Nadip*
Cikartawarna	*Ayah Sali*	*Ki Sali*	*Ni Sali*
	Ambu Sali	*Ki Sana*	*Ni Sana*
	Sarda/Dalis/Sala	*Ayah Sali*	*Ambu Sali*
	Ayah Yaldi	*Ayah Tarisah*	*Ambu Tarisah*
	Ambu Yaldi	*Ki Yaldi*	*Ni Yaldi*
	Sarikah	*Ki Surman*	*Ni Surman*

Ki and *Ni* are generally used in extended families with three existing generations. As indicated in Table 5 above, *Ki Nadi* has a son who already has his own family and a son called *Nadi*. *Nadi's* father, therefore, chose the name *Ayah Nadi*, while *Nadi's* grandfather calls himself *Ki Nadi*. Furthermore, a couple who call themselves *Ki* and *Ni* do not have to pick the name of someone from two generations after them. For example, there is a married couple who has a son called *Yadip*, but *Yadip's* parents are called *Ki Nolip* and *Ni Nadip*. However, because the Baduy naming system for *Ki* and *Ni* involves three generations and several children and grandchildren in the extended family, the initials *Ki* and *Ni* need further study.

Drawn according to the analysis above, the chart below visualizes the concept based on which the bynames *Ayah*, *Ambu*, *Ki*, and *Ni* are used.

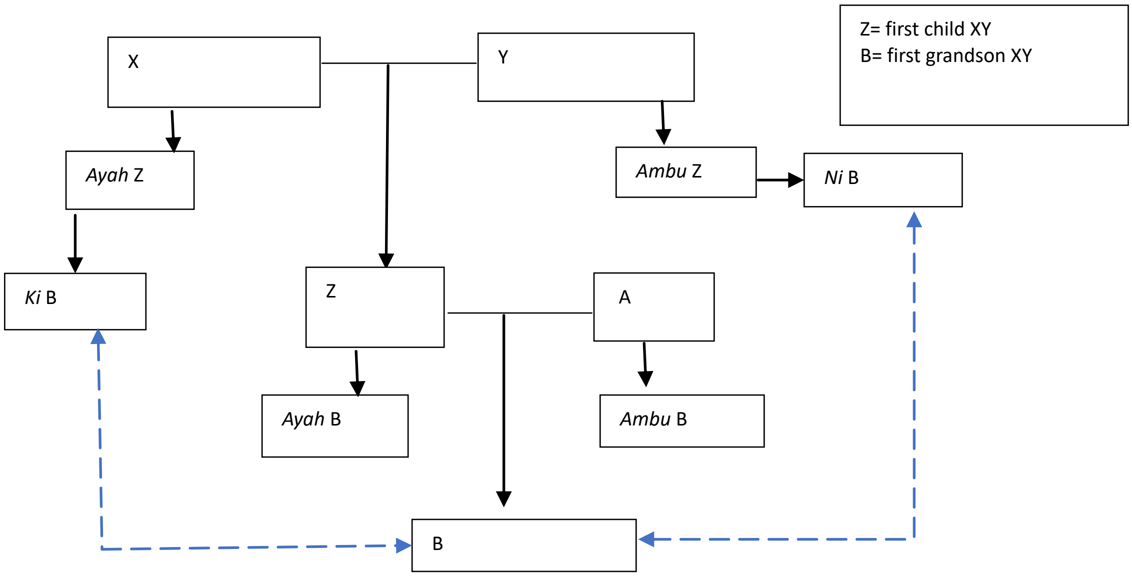


Chart 1. Baduy Dalam Byname Scheme

The majority of those living in the three Baduy Dalam Villages, namely Cibeo, Cikartawana, and Cikeusik, adopt bynames that reflect a span of three coexisting generations. The bynames *Ayah* and *Ambu* are usually followed by the name of a child while *Ki* and *Ni* are followed by the name of a grandchild. It is usually the name of the first child or grandchild that is picked as part of the parents' or grandparents' bynames. However, *Ayah* and *Ambu* do not always have to be followed by the name of the first child. Similarly, grandparents do not always pick the name of their first grandchild to follow the initial *Ki* and *Ni*. It is also possible for parents and grandparents to pick the name of their daughter and granddaughter. The unique naming system, however, does not span beyond three generations.

IV. Conclusion

The naming system discussed in this article is specific only to the Sundanese sub-ethnic group of Baduy. The Baduy people, and particularly the Baduy Dalam people, have an intricate concept of personal names and bynames, and the unique naming system of the Baduy people is a part of their unique local wisdom. Moreover, the life of these indigenous people is based on a traditional principle that does not allow them to violate their sacred customs.

The Baduy Dalam people are referred to by their personal or birth names if they are not yet married. Based on the Baduy Dalam naming system, the initial *Ayah* and *Ambu* are followed by the name of a child, while *Ki* and *Ni* are followed by the name of a grandchild, regardless of birth order or sex. The bynames *Ayah* and *Ambu* are used only by those who are married and already have a child. The byname formation *Ayah* and *Ambu* plus the name of their child will continue to be used until they have a grandchild. The birth of a grandchild marks a shift from *Ayah* and *Ambu* to *Ki* and *Ni*, followed by the name of their child or grandchild. The decision regarding which name will be picked is subject to agreement in the family.

Unfortunately, incomplete demographic data made it difficult to trace the family lineage of those living in Kanekes Village, especially those living in Baduy Dalam and Baduy Luar. The local administration, therefore, is advised to consider the three-generation span when filling out a Family Card.

Further studies about Baduy people and customs are needed as part of the measure to protect and preserve the Baduy culture in particular and the Sundanese culture in general. Further study is also needed to trace personal names that are discarded or taboo to mention.

Acknowledgements

This paper is the output of research fully funded by DIKTI (Directorate of Research and Community Service, Directorate General of Research and Development, Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education, the Republic of Indonesia) through the National Competitive Research Basic Research scheme, number: 1207/UN6.3.1/PT. 00/2021.

REFERENCES

[1] Ainiala, T., & Ostman, J. (2017). *Socio-onomastics and Pragmatics* (T. Ainiala & J.-O. Ostaman, Ed.). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
[2] Akramy, S. A., & Aiyaz, A. K. (2022). Afghanistan women's sensitivity to the negative nicknames addressed by men in public. *Cogent Social Sciences*, *8*(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2134256
[3] Aksholakova, A. (2014). Proper Name as a Clue Symbol of Identity. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *112*, 465–471. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1190
[4] Ardan, R. (2008). *The profile of upper integument lip of Baduy and the nearby living Sundanese in South Banten, West Java, Indonesia* (Vol. 41, Issue 3, 118-122).
[5] Arif, A., Marini, A., & Utomo, E. (2021). Character Education in Baduy Tribe Communities in Indonesia. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, *8*(4), 646. https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v8i4.2626
[6] Asteria, D., Brotosusilo, A., Soedrajad, M. R., & Nugraha, F. N. (2021). Adat law and culture: The local authority elements of Baduy tribe on environment preservation. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, *716*(1), 012049. https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/716/1/012049
[7] Bala Banki, M., Muhammad, I. B., Danladi Isah, A., Banki, M. B., & Salawu, A. (2020). SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES Toponym and Evocation of Cultural Landscape Heritage: A Case of an African Community. *Pertanika J. Soc. Sci. & Hum*, *28*(3), 2427–2440.
[8] Bramwell, E. (2011). Colours in the community. In *New Directions in Colour Studies* (pp. 161–170). John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/z.167.20bra
[9] Brylla, E. (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199656431.001.0001
[10] Chiwanga, F. E., & Mkiramweni, N. P. (2019). Ethno-ornithology and onomastics in the Natta community, Serengeti district, Tanzania. *Heliyon*, *5*(10), e02525. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2019.e02525
[11] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design (Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches).* Sage.
[12] Crystal, D. (2010). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[13] Danasasmita, S., & Djatisunda, A. (1986). *Kehidupan Masyarakat Kanekes*. [Kanekes Community Life]. Bagian proyek penelitian dan pengkajian kebudayaan Sunda (Sundanologi) Direktorat Jenderal Kebudayaan, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
[14] Frog. (2020). Calling people gods: Theonyms as bynames in medieval Finland and Karelia. *Onoma*, *55*, 35–55. https://doi.org/10.34158/ONOMA.55/2020/3
[15] Gao, S. (2020). Developing PowerPoint Standards for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *11*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1101.01
[16] Heyd, T. (2022). First names and sociolinguistic enregisterment: Digital tropes of linguistic mobility. *Language & Communication*, *87*, 271–283. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2022.09.003
[17] Hudson, & van Langendonck. (2016). *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199656431.001.0001
[18] Imayo, A., Raimkulova, A., Begembetova, G., Ilyassov, Z., & Nussupova, A. (2022). National and cultural specifics of nicknames based on Internet discourse. *XLinguae*, *15*(3), 166–174. https://doi.org/10.18355/XL.2022.15.03.14
[19] Iskandar, B. S., Iskandar, J., & Partasasmita, R. (2018). Strategy of the outer Baduy community of south Banten (Indonesia) to sustain their swidden farming traditions by temporary migration to non-Baduy areas. *Biodiversitas*, *19*(2), 453–464. https://doi.org/10.13057/biodiv/d190212
[20] Kaziaba, V., & Burkova, T. (2022). Adoleszenz – Name – Internet: wie nennen sich deutschsprachige Mädchen im Netz? *Alman Dili ve Edebiyatı Dergisi / Studien Zur Deutschen Sprache Und Literatur*, *0*(47), 81–108. https://doi.org/10.26650/sdsl2021-1027807
[21] Khoa, N. V. (2022). Revisiting Semantic Issues of Proper Names. *Names*, *70*(1), 40–49. https://doi.org/10.5195/names.2022.2378
[22] Khudhir, H. T., & Salo, I. K. (2019). BYNAMES IN ENGLISH AND KURDISH: A SOCIO-CULTURAL STUDY. *Journal of University of Duhok*, *22*(2), 365-377.
[23] Kurnia, A., & Sihabudin, A. (2010). *Saatnya Baduy Bicara*. [It's Baduy Time to Speak]. PT Bumi Aksara.
[24] McKinley, R. (2014). *A History of British Surnames*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315846637
[25] Nath, S. D. (2023). Two Theoretical Frameworks of Folklore Studies and Two Selected Tales from the Collection of the Assamese Folktales Entitled Burhi Aair Sadhu: A Discursive Analysis. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, *31*(1), 25–40. https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.31.1.02
[26] Permana, C. E. (2006). *Tata Ruang Masyarakat Baduy*. [Baduy Community Spatial Planning]. Wedatama Widya Sasta.
[27] Permana, C. E. (2010). *Kearifan Lokal Masyarakat Baduy dalam Mitigasi Bencana*. [Local Wisdom of the Baduy Community in Disaster Mitigation].Wedatama Widya Sasta.
[28] Peterson, P. R. (2019). Old Norse Nicknames: Origins and Terminology. *Names*, *67*(2), 89–99. https://doi.org/10.1080/00277738.2018.1452886
[29] Purba, A. S., Hufad, A., Negara, C. P., Nasrawati, N., & Ramdani, A. M. (2018). The implication of Baduy Dalam tribe's closure on Indonesia's rank in the World Economic Forum. *Proceedings of the Annual Civic Education Conference (ACEC 2018)*. https://doi.org/10.2991/acec-18.2018.98
[30] Sabet, P. G. P., & Zhang, G. (2020). First names in social and ethnic contexts: A socio-onomastic approach. *Language & Communication*, *70*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2019.09.004
[31] Sam, S., A. Z., & Suwandi. (1986). *Tata Kehidupan Masyarakat Baduy di Provinsi Jawa Barat*. Proyek Inventarisasi dan Dokumentasi Kebudayaan Daerah. [Baduy Community Life Order in West Java Province. Regional Cultural Inventory and Documentation Project].

[32] Silaban, H. S., & Afriana, A. (2020). Address Form Analysis in the Movie "Mortdecai." *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, *4*(1), 25–33. https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v4i1.1391

[33] Sobarna, C. (1993). *Makna Nama: Cara Berpikir Masyarakat Sunda. Dalam Makna Nama dalam Bahasa Nusantara: Sebuah Kajian Antropolinguistik. Robert Sibarani & Henry Guntur Tarigan (ed.).* [The Meaning of the Name: The Way of Thinking of the Sundanese People. In the Meaning of Names in Archipelago Languages: An Anthropolinguistic Study. Robert Sibarani & Henry Guntur Tarigan (ed.)]. Bumi Siliwangi.

[34] Sobarna, C., & Afsari, A. S. (2020). Pola Nama pada Masyarakat Baduy. [Name Patterns in the Baduy Society]. *Ranah: Jurnal Kajian Bahasa*, *9*(2), 287. https://doi.org/10.26499/rnh.v9i2.2939

[35] Sudaryanto. (2015). *Metode dan Aneka Teknik Analisis Bahasa: Pengantar Penelitian Wahana Kebudayaan secara Linguistis*. [Methods and Various Techniques of Language Analysis: Introduction to Linguistic Research on the Vehicle of Culture]. Universitas Sanata Dharma.

[36] Temaja, I. G. B. W. B. (2018). Sistem Penamaan Orang Bali. [Balinese Naming System]. *Humanika*, *24*(2). https://doi.org/10.14710/humanika.v24i2.17284

[37] Thomas, C. A., & Samjose, B. (2022). "My Name Is..." *Names*, *70*(4), 18–30. https://doi.org/10.5195/names.2022.2468

[38] Uhlenbeck, E. M. (1978). *Studies in Javanese Morphology*. The Hague.

[39] Wang, X., & Kałużyńska, I. (2019). Contemporary By-Names of Chinese Places. *Onomastica*, *63*, 241–261. https://doi.org/10.17651/ONOMAST.63.13

[40] Widodo, S. T. (2013). Konstruksi Nama Orang Jawa Studi Kasus Nama-Nama Modern Di Surakarta. [Construction of Javanese Names Case Study of Modern Names in Surakarta]. *Humaniora*, *25*(1), 82–91.

Cece Sobarna (corresponding author) is a professor of linguistics at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia. His expertise is in the fields of linguistics, Sundanese, Indonesian, arts science, language and culture, and sociolinguistics. He graduated from Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia in the Undergraduate Program in 1988, Master's Program in 1995, and Doctoral Program in 2003. He is also active in various scientific activities both nationally and internationally.

Santy Yulianti, graduated from Magister Linguistics of Universitas Indonesia, active as language and culture researcher at National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), and focusing on indigenous languages for the last 10 years.

Asri Soraya Afsari graduated from Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia in the Undergraduate Program in 2001 and Master's Program Majoring in Linguistics in 2013. She is currently a Doctoral student in the Doctor of Literature Sciences with a concentration in Linguistics, Postgraduate Program at Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia. She is also a member of the Linguistics Department of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 863-872, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.19

Incorporating Flipped Model in Learning English Grammar: Exploring EFL Students' Intrinsic Motivation and Attainment

Ashwaq A. Aldaghri
Department of English Language and Literature, College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, 3204, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—Flipped Classroom (FC) is an educational approach that has gained considerable attention. It incorporates technology to deliver direct instruction outside of class, while in-class time is limited to contextualized collaborative activities. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation (IM) is a fundamental objective for educators, as it helps learners pursue learning throughout the year. It is the internal drive to engage in learning activities for the sake of personal fulfillment and satisfaction. Recognizing the vital role of IM, the paper investigates the efficacy of flipped learning (FL) in raising students' IM in grammar courses within the framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). A total of forty-one (n= 41) Saudi EFL university students were normally distributed into two groups. The experimental group receives FC instruction, while the control group is taught using traditional explicit instruction. A pretest and a posttest were administered to both groups. Furthermore, a questionnaire was further distributed to the experimental group. The findings of the present quasi-experimental study demonstrate that FC enhances students' IM by providing a student-centered, supportive, positive, and collaborative technology-based environment that promotes their language attainment and satisfies their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Finally, to ensure its successful implementation, it is recommended that teacher training and thorough content planning are vital before implementing FC.**

***Index Terms*—flipped classroom, intrinsic motivation, university students, EFL, grammar attainment**

I. Introduction

In the field of language education, fostering IM among learners is a key objective for educators (Al-Osaimi & Fawaz, 2022). IM refers generally to an individual's internal drive to engage in an activity for its inherent satisfaction and personal fulfillment. How motivated a person is depends on why and how they are learning the language. According to Busse and Walter (2013), the decrease in students' efforts to participate in language learning during the year relies heavily on the decreasing levels of IM, which were attributed to the lack of opportunities to practice language. Therefore, to overcome the limits of traditional teaching approaches and increase students' motivation, more learner-centered teaching approaches have emerged recently.

On the other hand, the advent of technology has made radical changes in the field of education, as it offers the advantage of accessibility anytime and anywhere, as well as a large range of materials that accommodate various learning styles (Pudin, 2017). According to Alotebi (2016), it is an effective way of providing learners with plenty of opportunities to search, receive, and communicate with peers as well as with native speakers in an enriched and effective manner. The realization of such a fact led researchers to incorporate technology in foreign language classrooms, creating what is known as blended learning.

One of the shapes of blended learning classrooms is FC, which flips the typical structure of a classroom. It involves moving direct instruction, such as lectures or grammar explanations, outside the classroom through pre-recorded videos or other resources. Class time is then dedicated to active learning activities, such as discussions, group work, and application exercises (Pudin, 2017). This approach is mainly a student-centered approach, allowing students to engage with the content prior to class and fostering collaborative and interactive learning experiences. It aims to enhance student engagement and promote deeper learning.

II. Literature Review

A. Flipped Classroom (FC)

FL is one form of blended learning where technology is employed along with conventional practices. FCs reverse traditional classroom activities by giving students access to online readings or other resources they might study before class. This makes it possible to employ class time for tasks like problem-solving, discussions, discourse, and analysis. This strategy aims to achieve profound and significant learning (Pudin, 2017). As a result, the role of the teacher in the classroom has changed to that of a facilitator, an instructor, and a resource, while the role of the learners has changed to that of partners and recipients (Aldaghri, 2023). This method enables students to study at their own pace, revisit challenging material (Alharbi & Alshumaimeri, 2016; Ivanytska et al., 2021; Vuong et al., 2019), engage in self-directed learning, and improve communication (Bezzazi, 2019). The benefits of using an FC in a grammar class include more effective active learning, a stronger teacher role, better time management, increased peer learning, greater control over content delivery, the ability to monitor student assimilation of knowledge, and on-demand learning (Pudin, 2017; Aldaghri, 2023).

B. Intrinsic Motivation

IM is an effective and beneficial way to learn a language. Research shows that intrinsically motivated foreign language students tend to use the target language more “independently, creatively, and personally” (Alotaibi, 2016, p. 52). When students are intrinsically motivated, they are more likely to actively participate, explore, and take ownership of their learning process (Khazaie & Mebash, 2014; Alotaibi, 2016). IM also contributes to long-term language learning success and autonomy. They are likely to spend more time on learning and perform higher in language proficiency (Shabani, 2017).

IM basically refers to the inner desire and drive to engage in an activity for its own inherent satisfaction and enjoyment, without relying on external rewards or pressures. In an EFL context, it refers to the students’ inherent interest, curiosity, and enjoyment in learning the target language. Deci and Ryan (1985) proposed a continuum of different types of motivation, where amotivation is the lowest degree, followed by extrinsic motivation, and ending up with IM as the highest degree. Amotivation refers to the absence of motivation. In other words, individuals tend to believe that their behavior is a result of forces beyond their control and, consequently, feel incompetent and incapable of reaching the desired outcome. Extrinsic motivation is related to the accomplishment that results from a behavior meant to satisfy an external demand. It has four types: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. IM refers to accomplishing a task freely and willingly without any extrinsic coercion or pressure. Supporting the theory, Vallerand, Fortier, and Guay (1997) proposed three types of motives that contribute to IM; IM to know, IM to accomplish, and IM to experience stimulation. The first one, IM to know, is manifested in the individual’s motivation to perform a certain task for the pleasure resulting from learning something new. The second one, IM to accomplish, is displayed in the individual’s engagement in an activity to master a challenge or create something. The third one refers to the individual’s performance of a task to experience pleasure as well as fun and joy.

Several researchers have asserted that several factors influence learners’ IM. Giving learners a sense of autonomy and letting them make decisions about their education can improve their IM (Ebata, 2008; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Also, activities that allow students to choose topics, resources, or learning assignments depending on their preferences and interests might help achieve this. Furthermore, relevance and authenticity, which refer to making connections between language learning and personal interests, relevant circumstances, and real-world situations, can boost IM (Alotaibi, 2016; Noels et al., 2000). Students are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn when they believe that language instruction is authentic and relevant. Moreover, competence and mastery, giving pupils the chance to feel competent and in control of their language learning, encourages IM (Ebata, 2008). This can be accomplished through offering pertinent challenges, helpful criticism, and recognition. Furthermore, promoting students' interest in and enjoyment of their education is crucial for fostering IM. Students' interest and satisfaction in studying EFL can be increased by including interesting and varied instructional approaches, multimedia materials, and interactive exercises (Alotaibi, 2016).

C. Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

The present study clearly employed SDT as its theoretical framework. The theory of self-determination focuses on human motivation as the natural tendencies that drive a person to actively engage within a certain social context, and the degree to which their behaviors are volitational or self-determined (Maherzi, 2011). It is based on three basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of an FC, the need for autonomy refers to the need for self-determination, where students feel a high degree of control over their learning experience and have a great deal of choice in their learning path. The need for competence focuses on the individual's belief that they can be competent in learning activities, and finally, the need for relatedness refers to the sense of belonging that students feel towards their peers, teachers, and the overall learning community (Mai & Liu, 2021).

The first examination of SDT in the language learning context was conducted by Noels et al. (2000). They surveyed 159 participants at a French-English bilingual university who were English speakers and were learning French as their second language. The study used a questionnaire with three sections to evaluate the participants' learning orientations. The study found that individuals who have high levels of IM tend to be more involved in learning. It concludes by suggesting that fostering IM requires creating supportive classroom environments that encourage autonomy, competence, and relatedness and providing interesting and challenging learning activities that promote personal satisfaction, enjoyment, interest, and inherent curiosity in language learning.

D. Empirical Research on FL and IM

The use of technology-based tools for learning foreign and second languages has become more frequent in recent years. Numerous studies have examined the effects of such tools in developing various language skills and subskills. IM has been studied among other aspects in relation to pronunciation (Yousofi & Naderifarjad, 2015; Shabani, 2017), strategic use of language (Khazaie & Mebash, 2014), or involving non-majoring university students (Zhou, 2012). Linking SDT to blended learning, Mai and Liu (2021) adopt SDT as their theoretical framework to analyze the impact of the FC model on students' internal needs throughout the learning process. SDT is a theory of human motivation and personality .The study found that the FC paradigm can satisfy students' psychological needs and raise their level of learning pleasure. However, to successfully implement the model, consideration must be given to its challenges and potential pitfalls, as well as the requirement for educational institutions to offer sufficient infrastructure and support to ensure its successful integration into college learning experiences. Likewise, Alotaibi (2016) discussed the impact of blended learning on students' motivation in his article. Within the framework of SDT, blended learning can be a means to promote students' autonomy by extending the use of technology, resulting in higher levels of language proficiency. He points out that teachers need to pay attention to the fact that not all students have the same level of technology skills, which may constitute a limitation in the implementation of blended learning in EFL classroom.

Afzali and Izadpanah (2020) shed light on the relationship between FC and motivation and engagement in English grammar for elementary and upper-intermediate students. In their quasi-experimental study, Afzali and Izadpanah (2021) attempted to determine the effect of FL on learners' engagement and motivation. According to the study's findings, the FL approach increases learners' motivation and engagement. The study suggests using FL as a productive teaching strategy to raise students' motivation and involvement.

In the same vein, specifically within the context of Saudi Arabia, Ibrahim, Ahmed Ali, Al-mehsin, and Alipour (2022) investigated the impacts of FL, a type of technology-based instruction, on Saudi Arabian high school students' motivation, anxiety, and attitude toward language learning. The research involved selecting 58 intermediate-level students from a high school in Riyadh, who were then assigned randomly and equally to either the flipped or traditional instruction class. The researchers used pre- and post-tests of anxiety and motivation questionnaires, along with feedback questionnaires from the flipped class, to measure the impact of the intervention. Results showed that the flipped class outperformed the traditional class in both motivation and anxiety posttests. The outcomes suggest that implementing FL instruction can increase motivation and alleviate learning anxiety among EFL students. Additionally, the students in the flipped class showed positive feedback on the flipped instruction, indicating that they valued it highly. This finding could encourage EFL teachers to incorporate technology to enhance learning outcomes.

Similarly, Oraif (2018) surveyed 55 EFL female undergraduate learners in Saudi Arabia, comparing flipped and non-flipped teaching methods. A mixed-method approach was used, with sociocultural theory underpinning the FC design. The results showed that the FC group improved writing outcomes and self-esteem, satisfying psychological needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy more than the non-flipped group. The study also found a positive correlation between IM, learning outcomes, and the supportive environment.

With the previous background considered, it is obvious that IM has its key role in the learning process. Therefore, it needs to be measured in FC to see how it affects students' learning and to determine the success of using FC in teaching grammar. However, academic research into student IM and the effectiveness of a FC in an EFL context is relatively overlooked at present. Moreover, Williams and Burden (1997) stated that IM is a culturally bound matter. It follows that the findings of other research cannot be generalized to all contexts. To the best of the author's knowledge, no study has investigated university EFL students' IM in a grammar FC, and particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the IM of Saudi EFL learners' majoring in English in a grammar FC. It attempts to answer the following questions:

1- Does using FC affect students' IM to learn grammar?
2- Is there any relationship between the students' motivation in FC and their attainment in grammar?
3- How does FC foster students' IM to learn grammar?

III. Methodology

Using a mixed-method approach, this study conducts quantitative and qualitative analyses to assess the effectiveness of the FL model on students' motivation and to investigate the relationship between IM and grammar attainment. The quantitative section looks at the students' IM in the pre- and post-test and how it relates to their language performance, while the qualitative section looks at their perspectives on IM in FC. Sixty-four students out of a total of 110 students volunteered to take part in the study. However, only 41 participants (21 in the control group and 20 in the experimental group) completed all the experiment's requirements. All the students are Saudi female EFL students between the ages of 19 and 20. They were in college's first year. Their English level was upper intermediate, according to the placement test required by the university for enrollment in the College of Languages and Translation. Aside from the required grammar course, they were also taught the four basic English language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Study design

This research is part of a larger project on the use of the FC in grammar instruction. The participants' consent was obtained prior to the start of the study. A pretest and a posttest were given to both the experimental and control groups to investigate the students' IM in the FL model. Prior to the start of the experiment, both groups completed a questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. Following the pretest, the students in the control group received only traditional, explicit teaching in class. Meanwhile, the FC was used on the experimental group for twenty-one lectures

(50 minutes each) over the course of eight weeks. The experiment was carried out in a grammar course that concentrated on the past progressive, simple past tense, and present perfect. The tenses mentioned above were purposefully chosen to be the focus of the FC because students frequently get confused about how to use each of them correctly. Microsoft Teams, an online learning platform, was used to send lesson materials, assess students' performance, submit homework, and receive feedback.

According to the FL model, the students in the experimental group are provided with three links to watch at home. These links are video clips that provide an explanation for the tense in focus and several contextual examples. Two of these links have the same information but in different teaching styles, and the students are free to choose one. The third one includes a representation of the tense in focus, e.g., a story or a conversation. To ensure that they watched the videos attentively, the students are asked to answer some questions about the videos as their homework. In that way, the students come to the lecture prepared to answer questions and ask for clarification when needed. On the other hand, most class time is allocated to several contextualized communicative group activities where the students are competing within their groups and with other groups. The activities include storytelling, turn-taking, guessing, and role-playing. At the end, they are asked to draw a mind map summarizing each chapter and providing examples to ensure their full understanding of the grammatical tense in focus.

Upon the completion of the experiment, both groups took a posttest. Furthermore, to explore their perceptions towards FL, the participants in the experimental group received a questionnaire that had closed-ended questions and ended up with some open-ended questions. The open-ended questions of the questionnaire were adopted from Pudin (2017), while the closed-ended questions were originally an IM scale adopted from Oraif (2018). The scale consisted of 11 items using a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). The items are subdivided into: 1) items related to knowledge, i.e., the sense of performing an activity for the sake of acquiring new knowledge (Items 1-3); for instance, ‘For the pleasure I experience when I learn more about how to write a good essay’; 2) items related to stimulation, i.e., the sense stimulated by performing an interesting task (Items 4-7), e.g., ‘Because I believe the English writing course is stimulating’. Items related to accomplishment, i.e., the sense of mastering a task (Items 8-11), such as ‘For the pleasure I experience when I can work out difficult writing activities.’ At the end of the scale, there was an open-ended question focusing on getting a comprehensive understanding of the students’ perceptions about FL in terms of IM. The questionnaire took 10 minutes to be electronically filled out and submitted through Google Forms. Throughout the process, the data remained confidential and anonymous.

The pre- and post- test was face-validated by three specialists in the field, and their comments were taken into consideration before applying the test. To evaluate the content validity of the questionnaire, it was reviewed by two specialists in the field. As for the reliability of the questionnaire, Alpha Cronbach is used, and it was 0.965.

After collecting the data, the quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 26 after it had been coded. The qualitative data, on the other hand, were analyzed in terms of frequency. To ensure the normal distribution of variables, the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted.

TABLE 1
TESTS OF NORMALITY

test	Group	Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	do	Sig.
Pretest	Control Group	.884	21	.018
	Experimental Group	.936	24	.130
Posttest	Control Group	.937	21	.188
	Experimental Group	.953	24	.310

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The previous table shows the results of the first assumption (the normality assumption). In this table, the normality assumption for perceived usefulness is evaluated using Shapiro-Wilk tests. From the previous table, it is obvious that the data follow a normal distribution, and, therefore, parametric tests will be used: Independent Samples Test and Paired Samples Statistics. Normally distributed data were presented in terms of means and standard deviation (SD). However, qualitative data from open-ended questions was coded in Excel and presented in terms of percentage and frequency.

IV. RESULTS

A. *Does Using FC Affect Students’ Motivation to Learn Grammar?*

TABLE 2
WILCOXON SIGNED RANK FOR PRE-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Wilcoxon W	Z	P value
Pre-Experiment Questionnaire	Control Group	21	22.95	482.00	379.000	-1.072	0.284
	Experimental Group	20	18.95	379.00			
	Total	41					

From the data in the previous table, it is shown that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) in the questionnaire between the control group and the experimental group (p >0.05).

TABLE 3
WILCOXON SIGNED RANK FOR POST- EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Wilcoxon W	Z	P value
Post-Experiment Questionnaire	Control Group	21	16.50	346.50	346.500	-2.468	0.014
	Experimental Group	20	25.73	514.50			
	Total	41					

From the data in the previous table, it is clear that there are statistically significant differences at the level of significance (0.05) in the questionnaire between the control group and the experimental group, in favor of the experimental group (p < 0.05).

TABLE 4
WILCOXON SIGNED RANKS TEST FOR CONTROL GROUP

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asim. Sig. (2-tailed)
Post- Experiment Questionnaire - Pre-Experiment Questionnaire	Negative Ranks	11[a]	10.00	110.00	-.191-[b]	0.848
	Positive Ranks	10[b]	12.10	121.00		
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	21				

From the data in the previous table, it is clear that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the questionnaire in the pre- and post-measurements of the control group (p > 0.05).

TABLE 5
WILCOXON SIGNED RANKS TEST FOR EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Post- Experiment Questionnaire - Pre-Experiment Questionnaire	Negative Ranks	2[a]	8.75	17.50	-3.268-[b]	0.001
	Positive Ranks	18[b]	10.69	192.50		
	Ties	0[c]				
	Total	20				

From the data in the previous table, it is clear that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) in the questionnaire in the pre- and post-measurements of the experimental group in favor of the dimensional measurement (p< 0.05).

Through Tables 2-6, it was found that the use of FCs positively affects students' motivation to learn grammar.

TABLE 6
MEAN AND STD. DEVIATION FOR CONTROL GROUP AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Item	Control Group				Experimental Group			
	Pre-Experiment Questionnaire		Post- Experiment Questionnaire		Pre-Experiment Questionnaire		Post- Experiment Questionnaire	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
For the pleasure I experience when I learn more about how to form a correct structure.	4.10	1.758	4.24	1.578	4.55	1.820	5.40	1.142
For the satisfied feeling I get on finding out about different types of tenses and grammatical structures.	3.90	1.868	4.10	1.513	4.05	1.905	5.10	1.021
Because I enjoy the feeling of learning more about various components of different types of tenses.	3.62	1.564	4.19	1.569	4.05	1.986	5.05	0.887
Because I have lots of fun in the English grammar class.	4.14	1.526	4.05	1.564	4.20	1.704	5.20	1.056
Because I like to have the teacher's feedback on my grammar.	4.29	1.848	4.10	1.700	3.80	2.016	5.55	0.759
Because I believe the English grammar course is stimulating.	3.90	1.729	4.05	1.746	4.80	1.322	5.15	0.875
Because I feel good when I form structures properly in English in the class.	4.33	1.853	4.90	1.546	4.25	2.023	5.50	0.827
For the positive feeling I experience when I communicate my ideas to my classmates in the grammar class.	4.00	1.871	4.05	1.936	4.15	1.137	4.45	1.317
For the pleasure I experience when I can work out difficult grammar activities.	4.14	1.740	4.24	1.786	3.95	2.012	5.10	1.294
For the satisfaction I feel when I understand a difficult idea related to grammar.	4.43	1.805	4.86	1.652	4.30	2.130	5.20	1.056
For the positive feeling I get when I am able to modify my structures.	4.43	1.859	4.33	1.653	3.55	2.012	5.35	0.875
Mean	4.12	1.553	4.28	1.391	4.15	0.895	5.19	0.798

B. Is There Any Relationship Between the Students' Motivation in FC and Their Attainment in Grammar?

TABLE 7
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN FC AND THEIR ATTAINMENT IN GRAMMAR

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	P value
attainment in grammar	41	8.17	1.595	.328*	.036
students' motivation	41	4.72	1.216		

From the data in the previous table, it is clear that there is a relationship between the students' motivation in the FCs and their attainment in grammar ($R=0.328$, $p<0.05$).

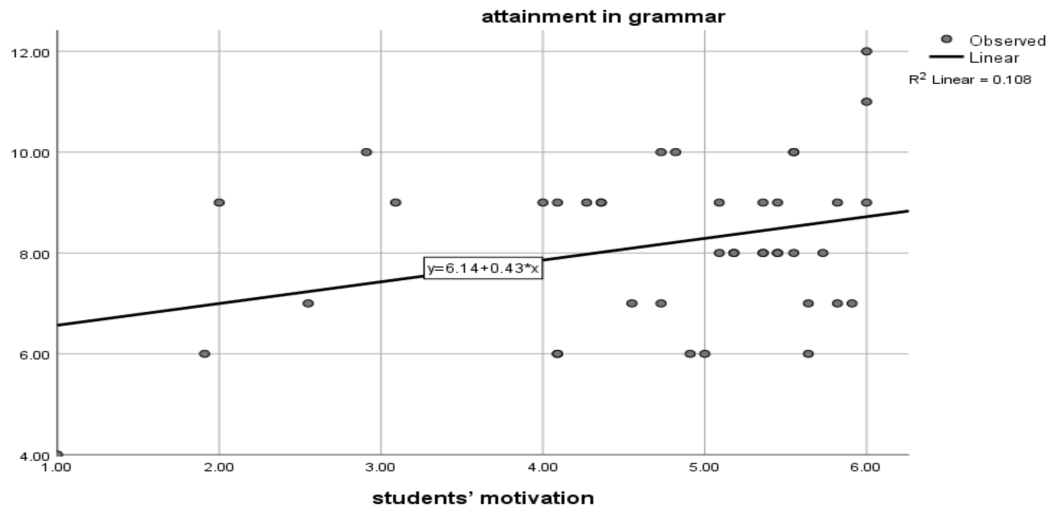


Figure 1. Correlation Between Students' Motivation and Their Attainment in Grammar

To get an in-depth understanding of the learners' IM and the factors that will help fostering it in FC, a comparison between the traditional explicit teaching and FC in terms of IM in learning grammar was held for discussion and the learners' replies varied as seen in Table 8.

TABLE 8
A COMPARISON BETWEEN TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM AND FCS IN GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION

Students' Preference	Percentage	Factors	Examples
Flipped Classroom	70%	Foster knowledge attainment	in the FC way, students can understand the idea easily.
			because I can understand the lesson better
			FC is better than traditional because it increases my knowledge
			it's better, it makes me understand more
		Self-paced learning	Yes, it can be sometimes because you can choose what time you like to see the lecture .
			Yes, it saves time and effort .
			FC is better, you can watch it during your free time, and repeat it if you don't understand.
		Self-autonomy	Yes, it's helped me improve my studying skills, it's proper me to study for my exams
			Yes. It helps make the student become more independent and work hard to understand new information.
		Student engagement	it is in some aspects. it encourages me as a person who's professionally diagnosed with social phobia to participate more in in-class discussions
			I think yes because it prepares the student for the course which can make them participate more.
			It's better because i have background knowledge about the lecture and can participate more in class
		Facilitate communication	Yes, it's a new way of learning and it helps to save time and share thoughts between students
			That is because you have information and prior knowledge about the lesson so it is easier to participate and interact with the lecture
Traditional Classroom	30%	Need for explicit teaching by the instructor	because you'll be clueless
			it is more comfortable, and easy to get the point

Table 8 shows that most of the students preferred the FC driven by several factors. These factors included fostering knowledge attainment, self-paced learning, self- autonomy, engagement, and facilitating communication. A few number of students still prefer the conventional approach in teaching grammar because of their need of the teacher's explicit teaching.

V. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to examine the potential role of FC on Saudi EFL university students' IM and the effect of the latter on grammar attainment. The findings of the study clearly show that there is a significant positive relationship between FC and raising students' IM. This main finding is compatible to the findings of Alotaibi (2016), who confirms that FL improves students' IM as well as their language abilities. FL helps in “lowering the affective filter of the language environment by providing a place beyond the classroom to practice the target language safely” (Alotaibi, 2020, p. 52).

Furthermore, upon drawing a comparison between the traditional classroom and FC in teaching grammar, the results also show that students are mostly motivated in FC for several reasons, which include fostering attainment, developing self-autonomy, fostering communication, raising engagement, and self-paced learning. FC has the advantage of the availability of online material that enables the students to watch videos at any time and place and repeat them in accordance with their own needs. Such a finding agrees with Ibrahim et al. (2022), Mandasari and Wahyudin (2021), Vaezi et al. (2019), as well as Pudin (2017). Sucaromana (2013) emphasizes that technology provides a more interesting learning environment. In the same vein, according to Alotaibi (2016), to achieve successful language learning, four conditions need to be met: high quality input, ample opportunities for practice, providing high quality feedback, and individualized content. Accomplishing these four conditions, along with face-to-face experiences in FC, can enhance students’ IM. Alotaibi (2016) and Mai and Liu (2021) affirmed that the FC provides a student-centered and exploratory learning environment that satisfies students' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are the three essential psychological needs according to SDT. Ibrahim et al. (2022) commented that implementing FL instruction can boost their motivation as it provides an opportunity for learners to feel connected to their teacher and peers through teacher feedback and classroom interaction with peers. Such collaborative participation helps students in their homework successfully.

In addition, the findings indicate that the FC model enhances students’ autonomy. It allows students to have control over their learning experience and to learn at their own pace. In the same way, Maherzi (2011) stated that FC promotes personal initiative in the way they decide on their time and effort. Ibrahim et al. (2022), justifies that “in this way, students are accountable for their own learning; they study pertinent materials based on their learning rapidity, their anxiety is diminished, and they become enthusiastic to continue learning the language” (p. 10). Afzali and Izadpanah (2021) assert that self-regulated learners, who can set goals, be honest, and enjoy learning, also showed higher motivation levels.

Moreover, the findings point out the importance of teachers' role in the FC model. The role of the teacher is to assist students in constructing their knowledge, providing necessary help and guidance to students in the stage of internalization of knowledge, which helps improve students' sense of competence in learning. Vaeiz, Afghari, and Lotfi (2019), Bezzazi (2019), and Alnaabi (2020) stressed the role of the teachers’ feedback in fostering autonomy. According to Maherzi (2011), “the less the teacher is perceived as controlling and his or her feedback as positive, the more the student seems to be intrinsically motivated” (p. 776) and feels competent. On the other hand, the more the “communication style and feedback are perceived as controlling and negative, the more the student tends to feel incompetent, and to be externally regulated or amotivated” (Maherzi, 2011, p. 776). She highlighted the teachers’ role in creating chances for students to be self-regulated by citing Brown, who stated that “the teachers’ job is not to reward students but to guide and help them discover their potential and be challenged by self-determined goals” (as mentioned in Maherzi, 2011, p. 789). Moreover, Ibrahim et al. (2022) pointed out that students’ competence is improved by understanding and appreciating their viewpoints.

In addition, the findings show that the FC model provides ample opportunities for students to interact with teachers and peers in multiple ways, which fosters a sense of relatedness and collective belonging among students. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the inclusion of activities that trigger the students’ decision-making and critical thinking skills as well as their creativity, such as participating in educational games, role playing, debates, and discussions. Such finding aligned with Maherzi (2011), who stated that the communicative aspect of FC increases the students’ pleasure to study language as EFL learners. Ibrahim et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of the types of activities included in FC. Moreover, Pae (2008) emphasizes giving choices and using interactive activities that agrees with the students’ needs to promote IM. In the same way, Oxford and Shearin (1994), Ebata (2008), and Afzali and Izadpanah (2021) confirmed that the FC, which emphasizes collaborative learning and prior experiences, improved students' motivation, and enjoyment in learning grammar. This was attributed to increased interactivity, participation, and motivation.

Finally, the results indicate that there is a meaningful relationship between IM and grammar attainment in FC. IM has proven to be related to language attainment (Shabani, 2017). Afzali and Izadpanah (2021) further indicate that FC positively changes students’ motivation as well as their language performance. It upgrades students’ academic performance and overall engagement.

VI. Conclusion and Implications

The current study is unique in that it specifically examines the effectiveness of FL as a technology-based instructional approach on IM among Saudi Arabian EFL students. The research explored FCs within the framework of SDT. The results reveal that FC proves to be a valuable approach promoting IM in the EFL Classroom for the affordances it provides. It offers a personalized, meaningful, and technology-based learning environment. It is a very rich student-centered environment that increases participation and fosters autonomous and cooperative learning. It satisfies students’ essential psychological needs of competence, autonomy, and relatedness and develops skills necessary for twenty-first century learning. Therefore, it fosters grammar attainment.

Based on these conclusions, several important pedagogical implications are drawn. First, IM is central to FL, as FC is a student-centered approach. It is the internal drive and interest in learning that thus influences students' engagement, effort, and perseverance in language learning tasks. Additionally, the success of FC largely relies on teachers' guidance, support for interaction, and choice of activities and materials. These are key elements in generating autonomy and establishing a supportive environment to promote IM, deep learning, and vitality in the classroom. Therefore, it is highly recommended that teacher training is crucial for successful implementation. Careful planning and decision-making on the material included in FC is also vital to ensuring its effectiveness. Additionally, continuous assessment of the whole process is necessary to ensure that it matches the needs of the students, who are a central part of the approach.

Considering the limitations of the present study, it is recommended that future research should be carried out to investigate long-term grammar proficiency and retention when FC is implemented. Moreover, the present study is limited to female participants. Therefore, more research is needed involving male EFL learners as participants under investigation. Also, since this research focuses on grammar, the effect of FC on other language skills like speaking and reading should be explored. Furthermore, more research is required to explore the relationship between extrinsic motivation and the implementation of FC. Further research could also investigate the factors that undermine motivation in academic contexts. The author argues that future experimental studies should view motivation as a multifaceted concept that includes both positive and negative dimensions.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the participants of the study who voluntarily and willingly participate in this study.

References

[1] Afzali, Z., & Izadpanah, S. (2021). The effect of the flipped classroom model on Iranian English foreign language learners: Engagement and motivation in English language grammar. *Cogent Education*, *8*(1), 1-37.

[2] Aldaghri, A. A. (2023). Flipped Instruction in Teaching Grammar: Is it Worth Trying? *IMSIU Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, *1445*(69).

[3] Alharbi, S. & Alshumaimeri, Y. (2016). The Flipped Classroom Impact in Grammar Class on EFL Saudi Secondary School Students' Performances and Attitudes. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(10), 60-80.

[4] Al-Naabi, I. S. (2020). Is It Worth Flipping? The Impact of Flipped Classroom on EFL Students' Grammar. *English Language Teaching*, *13*(6), 64-75.

[5] Al-Osaimi, D. N., & Fawaz, M. (2022). Nursing students' perceptions on motivation strategies to enhance academic achievement through blended learning: A qualitative study. *Heliyon*, *8*(7), 1-7.

[6] Alotebi, H. (2016). Enhancing the motivation of foreign language learners through blended learning. *International journal of advanced research in education & technology*, *3*(2), 51-55.

[7] Bezzazi, R. (2019). Learning English grammar through FL. *The Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *6*(2), 170-184.

[8] Busse, V., & Walter, C. (2013). Foreign language learning motivation in higher education: A longitudinal study of motivational changes and their causes. *The modern language journal*, *97*(2), 435-456.

[9] Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., (1985). Conceptualizations of intrinsic motivation and self-determination. Perspectives in Social Psychology. Springer, 11-40.

[10] Ebata, M. (2008). Motivation Factors in Language Learning, *The Internet TESL Journal*. *XIV*(4).

[11] Ibrahim, A. A., Ahmed Ali, A., Al-mehsin, S. A., & Alipour, P. (2022). Psychological Factors Affecting Language-Learning Process in Saudi Arabia: The Effect of Technology-Based Education on High School Students' Motivation, Anxiety, and Attitude through FL. *Education Research International*, *2022*(2022), 1-14.

[12] Ivanytska, N., Dovhan, l., Tymoshchuk, N., Osaulchyk, O.,& Havryliuk, N. (2021). Assessment of Flipped Learning as an Innovative Method of Teaching English: A Case Study. *Arab World English Journal*, *12*(4) 476-486.

[13] Khazaie, Z. M., & Mesbah, Z. (2014). The relationship between extrinsic vs. intrinsic motivation and strategic use of language of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *4*(1), 99-109.

[14] Maherzi, S. (2011). Perceptions of classroom climate and motivation to study English in Saudi Arabia: Developing a questionnaire to measure perceptions and motivation. *Electronic Journal of Research in Education Psychology*, *9*(24), 765-798.

[15] Mai, X. P., & Liu, L. H. (2021). Obstacles and Improvement Strategies in Implementing Flipped Classroom in Colleges: From the Perspective of Self-Determination Theory. *Advances in Applied Sociology*, *11*, 513-521.

[16] Mandasari, B., & Wahyudin, A. Y. (2021). Flipped classroom learning model: implementation and its impact on EFL learners' satisfaction on grammar class. *Ethical Lingua: Journal of Language Teaching and Literature*, *8*(1), 150-158.

[17] Noels, K. A., Pelletier, L. G., Clément, R., & Vallerand, R. J. (2000). Why are you learning a second language? Motivational orientations and self-determination theory. *Language learning*, *50*(1), 57-85.

[18] Oraif, I. M. K. (2018). *An investigation into the impact of the flipped classroom on intrinsic motivation (IM) and learning outcomes on an EFL writing course at a university in Saudi Arabia based on self-determination theory (SDT)* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Leicester).

[19] Oxford, R., & Shearin, J. (1994). Language Learning Motivation: Expanding the Theoretical Framework. *Modern Language Journal*, *78*, 12-28.

[20] Pae, T. I. (2008). Second language orientation and self-determination theory: A structural analysis of the factors affecting second language achievement. *Journal of language and social psychology*, *27*(1), 5-27.

[21] Pudin, C. S. J. (2017). Exploring a Flipped Learning approach in teaching grammar for ESL students. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, *2*(1), 51-64.

[22] Shabani, S., & Alipoor, I. (2017). The relationship between cultural identity, intrinsic motivation and pronunciation knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. *International Journal of Education and Literacy Studies*, *5*(2), 61-66.
[23] Sucaromana, U. (2013). The effects of blended learning on the intrinsic motivation of Thai EFL students. *English Language Teaching, 6*(5), 141-147.
[24] Vaezi, R., Afghari, A., & Lotfi, A. (2019). Flipped teaching: Iranian students' and teachers' perceptions. *Applied Research on English Language*, *8*(1), 139-164.
[25] Vallerand, R. J., Fortier, M. S., & Guay, F. (1997). Self-determination and persistence in a real-life setting: Toward a motivational model of high school dropout. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *72*, 1161-76.
[26] Vuong, N. H. A., Keong, T. C., & Wah, L. K. (2019). The affordances of the flipped classroom approach in English grammar instruction. *International Journal of Education*, *4*(33), 95-106.
[27] Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. (1997). *Psychology for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[28] Yousofi, N., & Naderifarjad, Z. (2015). The Relationship between Motivation and Pronunciation: A case of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *2*(4), 249-262.
[29] Zhou, H. (2012). Enhancing non-English majors' EFL motivation through cooperative learning. *Procedia environmental sciences*, *12*, 1317-1323.

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

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 873-883, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.20

Jordanian Tour Guides' Communication Competency

Nour Mohammad Harara
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Bashar Mohammad Al Najdawi
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Mahmoud Ali Rababah
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

Ahmad Abu Haniyi
Al-Balqa Applied University, Jordan

***Abstract*—Tour Guides are the country's unofficial faces to visitors, and their ability to convey information effectively may make or break a trip. This study examines tour guides' communication skills and overall performance. The data were collected from 225 expert tour guides in the Jordanian cities: Aqaba, Wadi Rum, and Petra. Factor analysis is performed on 32 communication competence measures to discover the underlying performance characteristics. The study used importance–performance analysis to determine the difference between how tour guides rate their performance and how important they think certain things are. The study revealed that tour guides need improvement in verbal skills such as grammar, manner of speech, and choice of words, as well as non-verbal behaviours such as approachability and the ability to remain friendly while maintaining a specific personal space. The study revealed that the importance–performance analysis mode, a valuable management tool, may determine where marketing resources might be invested to develop and increase the quality of tour guide operations. While most professional tour guides acknowledge the significance of the abovementioned things, they often fail to use them when dealing with and communicating with visitors. This suggests that administrative attention be focused on enhancing tour guides' verbal communication skills with visitors.**

***Index Terms*—importance-performance analysis, Jordan, communication competency, tour guides**

I. Introduction

Tour guides play an essential role as cultural representatives of their host countries (Dawood et al., 2016). In this capacity, they create unforgettable experiences for tourists because of their direct interaction with them. The performance of tour guides is a factor that plays a role in efficient tourism destination marketing, the building of an image, and related word-of-mouth. In addition to many other qualifications, strong communication skills are essential for the success of professional tour guides (Zeljko et al., 2022; Zhang & Chow, 2004). Due to their daily face-to-face encounters with visitors from diverse cultural, ethnic, social, and religious backgrounds, tour guides' language skills must be continuously honed. The diminution of physical distances brought about by advances in information technologies and transportation has increased the frequency of face-to-face engagement (Chen, 2005). People from different cultures can only communicate effectively in the modern world if they keep their communication skills polished and refined. Higher levels of visitors' satisfaction and location loyalty, as well as more favourable word-of-mouth, may be attributable to tour guides' practical communication skills.

Baum et al. (2007) pointed out the contribution of tour guides to marketing, image, and branding. In response, communication competence (CC) abilities may improve tour guides' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and motivation (Songshan et al., 2010). The effectiveness of tour guides is crucial to the prosperity of the tourist sector worldwide (Karatepe et al., 2007). However, relatively few studies have examined the correlation between communication skills and tour guide effectiveness, and there have been requests for more studies in this area (Dawood et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2010; Peng & Chen, 2021; Zeljko et al., 2022).

The current study hypothesises that self-evaluation might provide data that can contribute to a better understanding of tour guides' behaviours and performances. Martin et al. (1994) claim that many scholars in the field of communication who share similar cultural patterns have similar CC behaviour profiles. Nevertheless, these scholars also contend that people who engage in other cultural activities may evaluate these opportunities differently, and numerous further studies support this idea (Chi & Qu, 2008; Leclerc & Martin, 2004; Weiler & Yu, 2007). These recent studies indicate significant differences in communication styles across African-American, European-American, Hispanic-American, French, German, and British populations (Leclerc & Martin, 2004). Moreover, limited amounts of this study investigate CC in particular circumstances (Peng & Chen, 2021; Zeljko et al., 2022). Due to the unique nature of host–tourist contact and interaction, the tourism industry provides an excellent environment for intercultural communication research. Chen and Starosta (1996) and Leclerc and Martin (2004) highlighted the significance of expanding intercultural communication research in tourism-related contexts. They contend that when people go to different locales, their tourism activities provide an opportunity to improve international understanding and communication. Tour guides are vital participants in intercultural encounters within the tourist industry. The present study, therefore, looks at how transferable some aspects of guide-tourist exchanges are in Jordan (Al Najdawi et al., 2017; Mohammad et al., 2014).

II. Literature Review

A. Communication Competency

Since the 1960s, international CC has been one of the primary study subjects in several academic disciplines. CC is defined as a group's innate or learned skill that facilitates comprehension via verbal or nonverbal encounters (Ricard, 1993). Individuals' degrees of competence are defined by the equilibrium between their intrapersonal system's complexity and its adaptation to the interpersonal environment (Harris, 1979). Redmond (2000), on the other hand, redefined CC in connection to cultural characteristics, including cultural variability, cultural empathy, cultural ambiguity, and cultural distance. Beamer (1992) described CC as "a person's capacity to encode and decode concepts that match those in the other communicator's repository". Tour guides frequently engage in conversations with visitors from different cultures, and thus they must grasp cultural differences to interact with foreign visitors. Guides' strategies must include their perspectives on the optimal method to connect with visitors in a cross-cultural context.

Cross-cultural communication in business is defined by Sanchez et al. (2010) as "the ideal approach for a seller (buyer) from one culture to process a message from a buyer (seller) from another culture." Existing business and economics literature acknowledges the significance of such investigations. However, numerous studies have also highlighted that communication proficiency is essential for tour guides (Peng & Chen, 2021; Zeljko et al., 2022). Cohen (1985) recognised the significance of relationships between visitors and tour guides and that tour guides' communication skills influence the success or failure of tourists' overall experiences. Cohen (1985) acknowledged that interactions between tourists and tour guides are essential and that tour guides' CC affect how visitors feel.

Leclerc and Martin (2004) examined how French, German, and American visitors rate the significance of tour guides' communication skills. The authors sought to generalise the findings of study by Martin et al. (1994) that examined the impact of situational and cultural circumstances on non-Hispanic and Hispanic communication competence. The Leclerc and Martin’s (2004) study, nevertheless, proposed more investigation with diverse representative populations and cultures to improve the generalizability of their results.

Zhang and Chow (2004) employed the importance-performance analysis (IPA) paradigm to evaluate the performance of Hong Kong's tour guides from the perspective of mainland Chinese outbound tourists. The study assessed 20 qualities of tour guide services, with language proficiency being the sole qualification that falls within the communication. According to the findings, nearly one-fifth of all respondents felt that the tour guides needed to be more proficient in the use of the Mandarin language while communicating with them. Hence, it would be reasonable for the authors to suggest that the tour guides participate in training classes to improve their language skills.

Leclerc and Martin (2004) employed the CC measure developed by Martin et al. (1994) to explore worldwide variations in the recognised relevance of tour guides' communication competency. However, they made several adjustments to the original scale. In their research, they looked at visitors from France, Germany, and the United States who had been to the southwestern United States. They asked these travellers about their thoughts on the significance of four non-verbal components (approachability, poise, attentiveness, and touch) and three verbal components (language adaptability, interpersonal inclusion, and assertiveness) when it comes to the intercultural CC of tour guides. The majority of non-verbal and verbal competence behaviours were considered more significant by the American visitors than by the European tourists. Furthermore, the findings indicated that when it comes to analysing cultural differences, communication competencies, except for assertiveness, are of greater significance for American visitors than European tourists.

Martin et al.'s (1994) and Dawood et al.'s (2016) studies serve as the foundation and inspiration for the current study, which examines the CC of professional tour guides. Although each of these studies poses unique hypotheses and employs a distinct methodology, the current study employs a CC measure comparable to that of the two abovementioned types of research. This study is based on Martin et al.'s (1994) communication competence model. This framework has been employed in business literature, particularly in cross-cultural contexts, although tourism literature has yet to use it considerably (Leclerc & Martin, 2004; Sanchez et al., 2010). Even though this literature review offers solid evidence that CC is an essential component that leads to effective interaction, this subject is still understudied in the tourism industry. However, tourism heavily relies on contact between the host (tour guides, local inhabitants) and the tourist. As revealed, the tour guide's non-verbal and verbal CC performance needs to be better explored.

B. Tour Guides

Tour guides, as the primary point of contact between a destination and its visitors, serve as cultural ambassadors who significantly influence visitors' experiences. The World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (WFTGA) describes a tourist guide as an individual who directs tourists in the language of their choice and explains the cultural and natural heritage of a region and who typically holds an area-specific certification granted and/or recognised by the relevant authorities (WFTGA, 2003). Huang et al. (2010) describe this definition in detail in each tour guide's job description since it sets the stage for how the guide and the visitor will interact. Furthermore, Yu et al. (2002) refer to tour guides in various studies using various terms such as "tour leader," "local guide," and "tour coordinator". In addition, there are a variety of responsibilities that tour guides might perform. Despite these differences, experts are aware of the tour guide's function in creating a remarkable visitor experience.

Through their acquaintance with a destination's sights and culture and their CC, tour guides may transform ordinary trips into unforgettable experiences for visitors (Ap & Wong, 2001). Tour guides' communication skills may determine a trip's success or failure (Luoh & Tsaur, 2014). Cohen (1985) used terms such as "pathfinder" and "mentor" to define the contemporary tour guide. In addition to this, he outlined the four primary functions a tour guide should fulfil: instrumental, social, interactional, and communication responsibilities. The instrumental function is connected to the objective of finishing the trip as a social business. The social function of the guide is related to the dedication shown to the tour's constituents. The guide's interactional function is connected to the fact that he or she acts as a go-between for tour participants and other tour stakeholders, including residents, businesses, and landmarks. To perform a communication role, a guide must be able and eager to share knowledge about the trip with guests. The communication factor heavily influences the interaction between tourists and guides since the guide's primary function is to impart knowledge.

A guide, according to Pond (1993), can bear the burden of leadership; who is a knowledgeable guide who shares interesting facts and history with visitors; who is a representative who makes guests feel welcome and promotes the area in a manner that makes them want to return; who can make their visitors feel at home; and one who is skilled in all four of the jobs mentioned above and can switch between them as needed. Even though researchers were aware of the paucity of studies on tour guides at the time, studies have made minimal headway since then, with some notable exceptions. They include studies on tour guide training, certification, ecotourism, conservation, visitors' assessments of tour guides' performances, and advertising and brochure endorsements (Huang et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2008; Peng & Chen, 2021; Poudel et al., 2013; Syakier & Hanafiah, 2021). Nevertheless, a few researchers have examined the connection between communication skills and tour guide performance (Huang et al., 2010; Peng & Chen, 2021; Zeljko et al., 2022).

Overall, the studies that have already been done on tour guides show an urgent need to look at the verbal and nonverbal communication skills of tour guides to discover strategies that enhance them. Numerous existing studies on tour guides have investigated the opinions of visitors about their tour guides. As such, the present study hypothesises that self-evaluation might give further information on the effectiveness of tour guides in implementing communicative activities. Generally, Bem (1972) asserted that individuals could recognise and explain their attitudes, feelings, and other interior states by observing their own conduct. Through their personal experiences, professional tour guides have a greater awareness of the communication skills necessary to communicate successfully with a varied group of visitors from various sociocultural environments.

In contrast, travellers' ratings of tour guides' CC vary widely among cultures. For instance, Westerners and Easterners may assess verbal and nonverbal CC similarly. Visitors from Western cultures may consider it poor conduct to avoid shaking hands with their guides, while women from Middle Eastern cultures may feel it improper to shake hands with their guides. Even though Stewart et al. (2000) think it might be hard to self-assess one's skill level, they still conclude that self-evaluation instruments are an excellent way to judge how well staff members are doing their jobs.

III. Methodology

A. Study Tools

The study used a questionnaire developed by Dawood et al. (2016) that produced an excellent response rate in comparable studies. The study provides respondents with two sets of communication competency-related behaviours specified by Martin and Hammer (1989) and Martin et al. (1994). These two groups of behaviours encompass 32 actions, 16 of which are non-verbal (such as keeping direct eye contact, smiling, and nodding) and 16 of which are verbally communicated (e.g., talking about topics of mutual interest, sharing personal information).

Validity and reliability concerns with the verbal and non-verbal CC components were investigated by Martin et al. (1994) and subsequently by Leclerc and Martin (2004). The study uses a four-point Likert scale (one means disagree, and four means agree) to examine respondents' opinions of a tour guide's communication competency. In addition, respondents were asked to evaluate their performance in these areas using a four-point Likert-type scale (where one is extremely poor and four is very excellent). The study uses a four-point Likert scale for a self-reported questionnaire regarding self-behavior. This particular form of scale is a semi-forced scale that allows participants to select a definite response rather than remaining neutral. Garland (1991) convincingly revealed that removing the neutral point can reduce the social desirability bias caused by people wanting to impress scholars. The four-point Likert scale evaluates performance and minimises social desirability bias (e.g., excellent, good, bad, or poor). The study uses this four-point scale to evaluate communication competence rather than using agree/disagree statements. In addition, six questions in the questionnaire inquire about the respondents' social communication features.

B. Study Sample

The study gathered data from 225 professional tour guides in the Jordanian cities of Aqaba, Wadi Rum, and Petra. During an annual seminar series, the Jordanian Ministry of Tourism provided, the guides were asked to answer the questionnaire. The tour guides primarily serve travellers from Europe. The study concentrates on such a specific set of guides since the questionnaire's communication components were constructed using Western participants, and the measurement scale is thus only valid for Western respondents. The questionnaire was filled out by almost 75% of the attendees. As a result, this sample represents 52% of all professionally licensed tour guides registered with the administrative area of the Aqaba, Wadi Rum, and Petra Tour Guides' Association.

IV. Results

Martilla and James (1977) created the IPA method, which has been widely used in different disciplines due to its simplicity and efficacy in showing the position of assorted attributes in a visually appealing format, as shown in Figure 1.

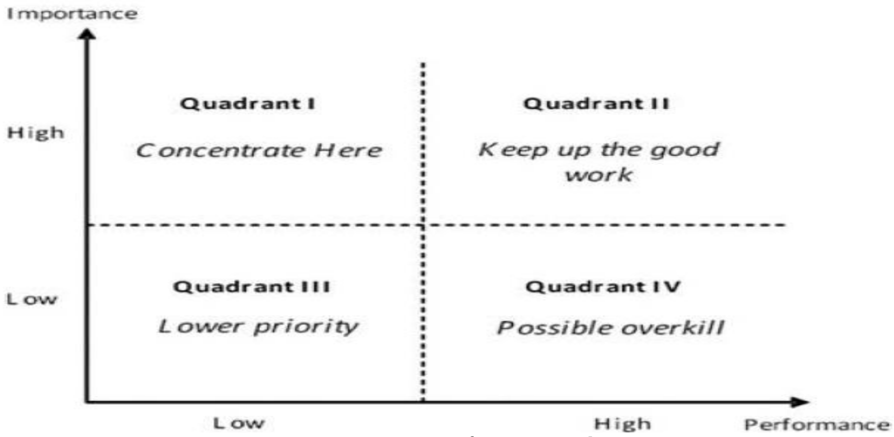


Figure 1. Importance–Performance Analysis

The upper left quadrant of this model describes high levels of significance, but its performance is lower than the mean. This quadrant illustrates the degree of CC that is thought to be present. It is imperative that the performance here be elevated to reflect its level of significance. When both variables are much higher than the mean, the data in the upper right quadrant represents high significance and high performance. This quadrant demonstrates effective management with high levels of performance commensurate with the significance put on components of excellent communication competency. The elements in the bottom left quadrant are rated lower than average in terms of both their relevance and their performance. This section is considered a low priority for further examination. The qualities in the lower right quadrant have higher performance than significance. This implies that the focus is placed on superfluous competence, resulting in a possible waste of resources. Numerous investigations have examined the reliability and validity of the IPA method (Dawood et al., 2016; Liu, 2010; Peng & Chen, 2021). Abalo et al. (2007) and Dawood et al. (2016) suggested that ordinal preferences are superior to metric measurements for the vital dimension. They provided a method to convert the ordinal measure into a new metric scale compatible with the IPA grid. The incorrect positioning of grid lines is one of the most significant challenges scholars experience while using IPA. Scholars use the grand, actual, or median mean (O'Leary & Adams, 1982; Ziegler et al., 2012; Zeljko et al., 2022).

Following Dawood et al. (2007), the present study employs a partition that merges the quadrants by extending the top left quadrant of the original Martilla and James' (1977) partition. The new area encompasses the whole space above the diagonal, where importance and performance are equal, as illustrated in Figure 2. According to this MIPA framework, management improvement efforts are warranted for each item whose significance value is higher than its corresponding performance grade. On the other hand, any evaluator-perceived significant item with poor performance suggests a need for remedial action. Priority is placed on enhancing evaluation criteria positioned above the dividing line (Ziegler et al., 2012). The original model's interpretation of the parts below the diagonal has stayed the same.

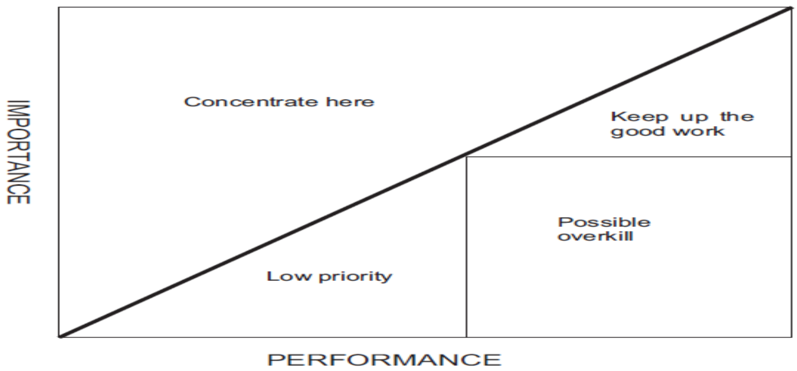


Figure 2. The Partitioning of the IPA Grid

A. Demographic Characteristics

SPSS 20 was used for data analysis. 88% of the 225 responses were male, while only 12% were female. The age group from 26 to 35 years accounted for 45.3% of the responses, followed by the group from 36 to 45 years with 54.7%. The highest number of survey respondents, 86.2%, indicated an average income range between JOD 701 and 1599, while the lowest portion of participants, 13.8%, reported an average income range of JOD 1600 or more. In addition, the biggest category of respondents held a bachelor's degree (84 per cent), followed by those with a high school diploma (12.1%), a master's degree (3.4%), and a doctorate (0.5%). Around 33% of respondents responded that they had between 6 and 12 years of experience as tour guides, 28.12% had 13 to 19 years of experience, 22.1% had 20 years of experience, and 16.78% had experience between 1 and 5 years.

B. Factor Analysis

The component analysis structure matrix and Cronbach's alpha for CC dimensions are shown in Table 1. This study's Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.88 indicates an acceptable sample and data fit for factor analysis. In order to extract the factors, their eigenvalues must be greater than one, and the factor loading of the variables must be greater than 0.30, as Hair et al. (2010) indicated. Following classification into six factors, 23 components are kept, identified, and ordered based on their variable mean scores. These include language ability, touch and assertiveness, interpersonal and cultural inclusion, attentiveness and poise, approachability, and friendliness. The six factors account for 68.54 per cent of the total. The Cronbach's alpha values of the collected factors range from 0.85 to 0.94, indicating that their internal consistency ranges from good to excellent. They are significantly more significant than the lowest value of 0.60, considered an acceptable reliability indicator in studies comparable to this one.

TABLE 1
FACTOR ANALYSIS OF TOUR GUIDE PERFORMANCE ITEMS

Factors and Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's α	Variance Explained	Eigen-values
Assertiveness and touch		0.941	14.202	1.64
Touch will be utilised.	0.674			
A modest forward tilt is required to call attention.	0.628			
One should ask visitors questions about themselves.	0.556			
Agreement should be indicated by nodding the head.	0.625			
Show close interest.	0.691			
Interpersonal/cultural inclusion		0.882	9.43	1.85
One must always exhibit agreement with visitors.	0.778			
One must constantly converse with visitors.	0.749			
Nice compliments should be given to visitors.	0.744			
The focus of the discussion will be on the visitors' home country.	0.698			
Visitors should be introduced to other visitors participating in the tour.	0.596			
Poise and attentiveness		0.914	11.670	2.42
A tour guide must adopt a distinct posture.	0.741			
Maintain direct eye contact while speaking.	0.766			
Pay close attention to visitors.	0.775			
Mimics will be used.	0.756			
Language ability		0.921	13.025	2.78
Words should be chosen carefully.	0.711			
Must communicate in a clear manner.	0.712			
Correct use of the foreign language's grammar is required while speaking it.	.587			
Avoid using slang.	0.568			
Friendliness		0.881	13.415	1.98
Exhibit always a happy face.	0.505			
Must be accessible and friendly with tourists.	0.638			
Approachability		0.857	8.52	1.82
must look nice	0.811			
Approach visitors with friendliness.	0.786			
A certain distance should be maintained from the visitor.	0.788			
KMO	0.87			
Barlett's test of significance	0.003			

C. Importance–Performance Analysis

The findings of the IPA model are provided in Table 2. This study's results have been noted on a four-section grid. According to the original IPA model proposed by Martilla and James (1977), the junction point of the importance (Y) and performance (X) axes for this grid is the scale means. The following is a rundown of the outcomes of placing the items:

- *Keep up the excellent work:* This part has five dimensions, indicating that these factors are significant and that guides perform admirably on each variable, namely that good aspects of Jordan will be highlighted during the trip, correct use of the foreign language's grammar is required while speaking it, opinions should be expressed plainly, mimics will be used, and visitors shall be addressed using a moderate volume.
- *Concentrate here*: This category contains twelve elements: Effective (attractive) words should be employed during the tour, personal things about oneself shall be shared with visitors, tour guides must look nice, guides approach visitors with friendliness, a certain distance should be maintained from the visitor, words should be chosen carefully, guides must communicate straightforwardly, guides always exhibit a happy face, guides approach tourists in a friendly manner, guides maintain direct eye contact while speaking, guides pay close attention to visitors, and a modest forward tilt is required to call attention. Participants rated these items as high in importance but lower in performance.
- *Low priority*: In this quadrant, nine items were identified as being of lesser importance and performance, and they belong in this category: one must always exhibit agreement with visitors; one must constantly converse with visitors; one should ask visitors questions about themselves; the focus of the discussion should be on the visitors' home country; nice compliments should be given to visitors; visitors should be introduced to other visitors participating in the tour; visitors should be introduced to residents; guides should laugh together with visitors; guides should show close interest; and agreement should be indicated by nodding the head.
- *Possible overkill*: This quadrant contains only four items: Jordan shall be discussed during the trip; guides should refrain from slang; touch will be utilised; and handshaking with visitors will be encouraged. The elements are ranked highly for performance but less so for importance, as illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
IMPORTANCE – PERFORMANCE MEAN VALUES AND STANDARD DEVIATION

Factors and Items	**Importance**		**Performance**	
	Mean	**Std. dev.**	**Mean**	**Std. dev.**
Assertiveness	2.83	0.75	2.98	0.78
1. One must always exhibit agreement with visitors.	2.22	0.81	2.35	0.84
2. One must constantly converse with visitors.	2.38	0.92	2.49	0.87
3. Effective (attractive) words should be employed.	3.65	0.69	3.60	0.70
Cultural topics	3.09	0.79	3.17	0.83
4. Jordan shall be discussed during the trip.	3.16	0.76	3.27	0.89
5. Good aspects of Jordan will be highlighted during the trip.	3.61	0.74	3.69	0.77
6. One should ask visitors questions about themselves.	2.74	0.97	2.79	0.95
7. The focus of the discussion will be on the visitors' home country.	2.35	0.87	2.45	0.85
Interpersonal inclusion	2.99	0.79	3.01	0.85
8. Nice compliments should be given to visitors.	2.44	0.88	2.51	0.87
9. Visitors should be introduced to other visitors participating in the tour.	2.12	0.78	2.39	0.97
10. Visitors should be introduced to local residents.	3.55	1.02	3.56	0.84
11. During the tour, personal things about oneself shall be shared with the visitor.	3.22	0.74	3.19	0.95
Poise	3.81	0.65	3.59	0.71
12. Must look nice	3.85	0.88	3.79	0.70
13. Approach visitors with friendliness.	3.65	0.77	3.67	0.99
14. A certain distance should be maintained from the visitor.	3.92	0.89	3.91	0.95
Language ability	3.77	0.65	3.73	0.62
15. Words should be chosen carefully.	3.88	0.63	3.85	0.66
16. Must communicate in a clear manner	3.75	0.77	3.77	0.78
17. Correct use of the foreign language's grammar is required while speaking it.	3.65	0.62	3.49	0.74
18. Avoid using slang.	2.65	0.89	2.71	1.05
19. Opinions should be expressed clearly.	3.86	0.66	3.88	0.55
Nonverbal factors Approachability	3.39	0.80	3.45	0.81
20. Exhibit always a happy face.	3.74	0.55	3.75	0.61
21. Must be accessible and friendly with visitors.	3.44	0.95	3.56	0.98
22. Laugh together with the visitor.	2.88	0.67	2.93	0.77
23. Approach tourists in a friendly manner.	3.69	0.74	3.68	0.99
Attentiveness	3.33	0.73	3.35	0.82
24. Show close interest.	2.89	0.68	2.95	0.68
25. Mimics will be used.	3.55	0.90	3.54	0.91
26. Maintain direct eye contact while speaking.	3.73	0.65	3.71	0.66
27. Pay close attention to visitors	3.91	0.82	3.89	0.77

28. Agreement should be indicated by nodding the head.	2.19 0.73	2.17 0.79
29. A modest forward tilt is required to call attention.	3.12 1.09	3.14 0.80
Touch	2.85 0.59	2.86 0.60
30. Touch will be utilised.	2.12 0.57	2.11 0.70
31. Handshaking with visitors	2.09 0.63	2.10 0.58
32. Visitors shall be addressed using moderate volume.	3.25 0.61	3.28 0.55

V. Discussion

Scholars in tourism recognise that tour guides may break a visitor's experience; however, an evident lack of study on the tour guiding profession still needs to be made. The present study is the first to investigate professional tour guides' communication skills from their point of view in the Arab World, contributing to the growing body of literature on tourism theory. The study's primary objective is to determine the present state of the performance of professional tour guides in terms of their verbal and nonverbal communication competencies using the IPA. The study highlighted six factors: assertiveness and touch, interpersonal and cultural inclusiveness, poise and attention, linguistic proficiency, friendliness, and approachability. Most communication competencies are ranked as having a lower level of importance by European tourists, whereas, in general, visitors regard the majority of CC categories as being significant to them.

According to Dawood et al. (2016), Turkish tour guides only ranked 15 CC behaviours as more essential than how they achieved them. The present study demonstrated that Jordanian tour guides consider just 12 CC characteristics to be more significant than their performance on those behaviours, in contrast to Zhang and Chow's (2004) and Luoh and Tsaur's (2014) results. The study contradicts Dawood et al.'s (2004) findings that revealed the mean relevance of linguistic ability surpasses the mean performance. This causes most of these variable elements to fall into the IPA's "concentrate here" quadrant. According to Dawood et al.'s (2016) analysis of visitors' assessments of Turkish tour guides' language skills and this study, the findings reveal that visitors to Turkey were more pleased with their tour guides' performance with language ability behaviours than visitors to Jordan. Particularly, the parts of verbal CC that need further work. Additionally, the elements are part of the non-verbal category and require administration focus. The previously described verbal and nonverbal CC criteria belong in the "concentrate here" category. While most professional tour guides acknowledge the significance of the things mentioned above, they often need to use them better when dealing with and communicating with visitors. This suggests that the administration should enhance the tour guides' verbal communication skills. Numerous studies, namely Ni et al. (2018) and Dawood et al. (2016), stressed the importance of training and learning courses in maintaining a business's competitive edge. Five things received a favourable review, and the advice for them is to keep up the good work. In addition to emphasising the significance of the characteristics above, tour guides are proficient in all of them. The results indicate that Jordanian tour guides excel in the qualities mentioned above. Tour guides must continue to employ these communication abilities effectively.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Practical Implications

The study offers a platform for tour organisations and operators to hire professional tour guides and much better guidance for enhancing the performance of professional tour guides via seminars that develop and improve their communications competency. Tourism businesses must recognise the significance of effective communication. If management pays close attention to the concerns mentioned above, it will significantly influence the quality of the visitors' experiences. In addition, people responsible for the training and development of tour guides may benefit from the procedures and instructions provided in this study for using the IPA approach to assess the performance of tour guides before and after training sessions. Managers may use the IPA grid to evaluate the quality of tour guides by focusing on regions where development is needed.

Furthermore, IPA is a simple method that might offer beneficial outcomes for managers. The approach is a primary diagnostic tool that can offer knowledge of the performance, communication competency, and other attributes of tour guides, including service quality. The findings may also be used to locate answers to the problems that have been uncovered and to direct new study funding in a more cost-effective manner since topics that need more attention can be evaluated in more depth.

B. Theoretical Implications

The study is the first effort to investigate the behavioural CC of tour guides from their points of view using IPA as an assessment instrument in the Arab World. According to the findings of this study, doing a self-evaluation can provide results that can improve overall comprehension of tour guides' own performances and behaviours. Tour guides are subject matter specialists who continuously converse with guests and other tour guides. This study illustrates the demand for more studies measuring communication skills in various cultures. The necessity is established through the study of Jordanian tour guides. In addition to this, it offers a stage upon which CC constructs may be compared across different cultures. This study improves the validity and dependability of the instrument employed in this study. It adds to the field by giving an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of this aesthetically and statistically straightforward instrument. The study demonstrates how the modified IPA grid provided by Dawood et al. (2016) may be utilised quickly and effectively to assess tour guides' communication competency. With this updated approach, management improvement efforts are warranted for every item with a higher relevance rating than its corresponding performance ranking. It is necessary to take remedial action if the performance of any aspect deemed essential by the responder falls short of its significance.

C. Limitations and Future Study

This study is primarily based on an examination of the performance of Jordanian tour guides; consequently, findings may not readily apply to tour guides operating in different regions of Jordan, particularly those practising tour guiding in the south of Jordan, where economic and tourist sector growth has lagged (Khasawneh et al., 2022). Nevertheless, scholars argue that the impact of this restriction is modest since Jordan has implemented a statewide certification system for tour guides, and any qualified tour guide is permitted to lead tour groups anywhere in the country. The absence of geographical constraints on the tour guide profession improves the homogeneity of the country's tour guide population. In addition, the analysis of the findings could be more extensive since the data were taken from a convenience sample. A future study could enhance the generalizability of the results by employing more representative samples from various cities. This approach has at least one restriction, although the present work employs a modified IPA method and enhances the conventional IP method by applying gap analysis. The findings may effectively describe the group while failing to characterise any person or subgroup adequately. Before administering the IPA, tour guides must be split into relevant groupings. Ni et al. (2018) suggest that cluster analysis may be used to separate categories based on direct significance metrics. Then, an IPA is conducted on each segment, and the segment-by-segment validity of the model can be assessed.

This study used a four-point Likert measure to assess tour guides' communication competency; this measurement has no neutral point and therefore does not permit respondents to provide a neutral response. Future studies should focus on enhancing the external validity of this study by employing more representative samples from other cultures using five-, seven-, or even ten-point Likert scales to increase the generalizability of the results. Scholars could expand the application of the IPA method by incorporating the opinions of visitors.

REFERENCES

[1] Abalo, J., Varela, J., & Manzano, V. (2007). Importance values for importance–performance analysis: a formula for spreading out values derived from preference rankings. *Journal of Business Research*, *60*(2), 115-121. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2006.10.009. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.

[2] Alkhaldi, A. A., Rababah, M. A., Al-Saidat, E. M., Rakhieh, B. M, & Rababah. K. A. (2023). A lexical study of coffee shop signs in Jordan. *International Journal of English Language and Literature Studies*, *12*(1), 33-44. DOI: 10.55493/5019.v12i1.4703. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[3] Al Najdawi, B. M., Khaleefah, Q. Q., Shatnawi, H. S., & Al Momani, E. M. (2017). Measuring local tourists' perceptions in Petra city as one of seven wonders of world. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, *8*(18), 427- 441. https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=541471. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[4] Ap, J., & Wong, K. (2001). Case study on tour guiding: professionalism, issues and problems. *Tourism Management, 22*(5), 551-563. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[5] Baum, T., Hearns, N., Devine, F., & Moscardo, G. (2007). Place, people and interpretation: Issues of migrant labor and tourism imagery in Ireland. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *32*(3), 39-48. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[6] Beamer, L. (1992). Learning intercultural communication competence. *Journal of Business Communication*, *29*(3), 285-303. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.

[7] Bem, D. J. (1972). Self-perception theory. In Berkowitz, L. (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 1-63. New York, NY: Academic Press. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[8] Chen, G. M. (2005). A model of global communication competence. *China Media Research*, *1*(1), 3-11. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[9] Chen, G., & Starosta, W. (1996). Intercultural communication competence: a synthesis. *Communication Yearbook*, *19*(1), 353-384. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[10] Chi, C., & Qu, H. (2008). Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management*, *29*, 624-636. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.

[11] Garland, R. (1991). The mid-point on a rating scale: Is it desirable? *Marketing Bulletin*, *2*(1), 66-70.

[12] Danaa, H. M., Al-mzary, M. M., Halasa, W. N., Obeidat, L. M., Al-Alawneh, M. K., Rababah, M. A. (2022). University students’ ambition levels and vocational tendencies associated with common culture. *The Education and Science Journal*, *24*(6), 153–176. DOI: 10.17853/1994-5639-2022-6-153-176

[13] Dawood, S. A., Ercan, S. T., & Volkan, A. (2016). Evaluating the communication competency of tour guides using a modified importance-performance analysis (MIPA). I*nternational Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *28*(1), 195-218. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2014-0064. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[14] Essa, A. H. B., Al-Tawalbeh, A. M., Al-Gayam, I. M., Bani-Khair, B. M., & Rababah, M. A. (2023). The Dream Poem: Qays Ibn Al-Khateem's Poem" Anna Sarabti". *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(2), 479-486. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1302.24 Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[15] Hair, J. F., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis*. Prentice Hall. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[16] Harara, N. M. (2022). The comprehension of semantic interpretation of metaphor in the expository writing of EFL learners at Albalqa Applied University, Jordan. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *18*(S2), 1262-1269. https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.841608377761034
[17] Harara, N. M. (2022). Teaching English Grammar with Special Reference to the Use of Prepositions at Al-Balqa Applied University. *World Journal of English Language*, *12*(2), 107-117.
[18] Harara, N. M., Al Najdawi, B. M., & Kassawnh, M. S. (2022). The misunderstandings and difficulties of translation of tourist e-text and signs in the attractive tourists' locations. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*, *14*(3).
[19] Harris, L. (1979). Communicative competence: An argument for a systemic view. Paper presented at the *Annual Conference of the International Communication Association*, Philadelphia, PA, November 11. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.
[20] Huang, S., Hsu, C., & Chan, A. (2010). Tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction: A study of the package tours in Shanghai. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *34*(1), 3-33. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[21] Karatepe, O., Arasli, H., & Khan, A. (2007). The impact of self-efficacy on job outcomes of hotel employees: Evidence from Northern Cyprus. *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration*, *8*(1), 23-46. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[22] Khasawneh, M., Al Najdawi, B. M., Shatnawi, H. S., & Ababneh, S. F. (2022). Corporate Social Responsibility, Knowledge of COVID-19, and Risk Perception in International Tourism Enterprises. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, *13*(6), 1574-1583. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.
[23] Leclerc, D., & Martin, J. (2004). Tour guide communication competence: French, German, and American tourists' perceptions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *28*(3), 181-200.
[24] Lin, C., Wang, K., & Chen, Y. W. (2008). Female tour leaders as advertising endorsers. *The Service Industries Journal*, *28*(9), 1265-1275. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[25] Luoh, H. F., & Tsaur, H. S. (2014). The effects of age stereotypes on tour leader roles. *Journal of Travel Research*, *53*(1), 111-123. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[26] Malkawi, N. A. M., Attiyat, N. M. A., Ismael, F. M. H., Ismael, A. M. H., & Rababah, M. A. I. (2023). English Teachers' Use of Multiple Modalities. *Arab World English Journal*, *14*(1), 05-119. Retrieved on 20 June 2023 DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol14no1.7. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.
[27] Malkawi, N., Rababah, M. A., Al Dalaeen, I., Ta'amneh, I. M., El Omari, A., Alkhaldi, A. A., & Rabab'ah, K. (2023). Impediments of using e-learning platforms for teaching English: A case study in Jordan. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET)*, *18*(05), pp. 95–113. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v18i05.36727. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[28] Martilla, J. A., & James, J. C. (1977). Importance-performance analysis. *Journal of Marketing*, *41*(1), 77-79. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[29] Martin, J., Hammer, M., & Bradford, L. (1994). The influence of cultural and situational contexts on Hispanic and non-Hispanic communication competence behaviors. *Communication Quarterly*, *42*(1), 160-179. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[30] Melhim M. A, Al Dalaeen I, Alqiam H. A. A, Zainelabdin F. A, Al-khatib LI, Rabab'a Y. A., Rababah M. A. (2023). Social Studies University Students' Perspectives of e-Learning Classes: A Case Study. *JHETP*, *23*(7), 117-133. Available from: https://articlegateway.com/index.php/JHETP/article/view/6021
[31] Mohammad, A. R. A. F., Al Najdawi, B. M., ElZoghbi, M., & Abdelhadi, E. A. (2014). A study on some factors affecting employee turnover in the hospitality industry: Comparative study for Jordanian tourist destinations. *Journal of Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality*, *11*(1), 93-102. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[32] Ni, R., Made, S., & Anak, A. (2018). English for Tour Guide: A Need Analysis of a Contextual-Based Language Teaching. *SHS Web of Conferences*, *42*, 00012. https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/20184200012. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.
[33] O'Leary, J., & Adams, M. (1982). *Community views concerning urban forest recreation resources, facilities and services*. North Central Forest Experiment Station.
[34] Peng, X., & Chen, B. (2023). The undervalued power of museum-guided tours: a case study of Xuhui Art Museum in China. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, *38*(2), 175-194. https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2021.1931996. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[35] Pond, K. (1993). *The professional guide: Dynamics of tour guiding*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.
[36] Poudel, S., Nyaupane, G., & Timothy, D. (2013). Assessing visitors' preference of various roles of tour guides in the Himalayas. *Tourism Analysis*, *18*(1), 45-59. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[37] Rababah, M., Al Zoubi, S., Al Masri, M., & Al-Abdulrazaq, M. (2021). Politeness strategies in hotel service encounters in Jordan: Giving directives. *The Arab Journal for Arts*, *18*(1), 319-340. https://aauja.yu.edu.jo/images/docs/v18n1/v18n1r12.pdf. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[38] Rababah, M., Harun, M., & Shapii, A. (2019). Making sense of the hotel trainees' internal request modification in Jordanian host-guest interaction. *European Journal of Applied Linguistics Studies*, *2*(1). https://oapub.org/lit/index.php/EJALS/article/view/128. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.
[39] Rababah, M., Harun, M., & Shapii, A. (2019). Imperatives in hotel service encounters: The case of Jordanian learners of English. European *Journal of Applied Linguistics Studies*, *2*(1). https://oapub.org/lit/index.php/EJALS/article/view/129. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.
[40] Redmond, M. (2000). Cultural distance as a mediating factor between stress and intercultural communication competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *24*(1), 151-159. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.
[41] Ricard, V. (1993). *Developing intercultural communication skills*. KriegerPublishing Company. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[42] Sakarneh M.A., Ziadat A.H., Almakaleh A.A., Rababah M.A., Alhassan A.H., Al-Muhairat L.A., Al-Rababah H.A. (2023). Socio-Pedagogical Competencies Needed by Educators of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Parent's Perspective. *Education and Science*, *25*(5):176-194. https://doi.org/10.17853/1994-5639-2023-5-176-194. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[43] Sanchez, A., Pico, A., & Comer, B. (2010). Salespeople's communication competence: A study of the Mexican market. *Journal of Business and Economic Studies*, *16*(1), 1-18. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[44] Songshan, H., Cathy, H., & Andrew, G. (2010). Tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction: A study of the package tours in Shanghai. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *16*(3), 3-33. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235640219. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.

[45] Syakier, W., & Hanafiah, M. (2021). Tour Guide Performances, Tourist Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions: A Study on Tours in Kuala Lumpur City Centre. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, *23*, 597-614. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[46] Weiler, B., & Yu, X. (2007). Dimensions of cultural mediation in guiding Chinese tour groups: Implications for interpretation. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *32*, 13-22. Retrieved on 20 June 2023.

[47] Wolor, C. W., Ardiansyah, A., Rofaida, R., Nurkhin, A., & Rababah, M. A. (2022). Impact of Toxic Leadership on Employee Performance. *Health Psychology Research*, *10*(4). https://doi.org/10.52965/001c.57551. Retrieved on 5 May 2023.

[48] Yu, X., Weiler, B., & Ham, S. (2001). Intercultural communication and mediation: A framework for analyzing the intercultural competence of Chinese tour guides. J*ournal of Vacation Marketing*, *8*(1), 75-87. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[49] Zeljko, D., Sanja, S., Bratic, B., & Marija, G. (2022). Museum Tour Guide Performance: A Visitor Perspective. *Sustainability*, *14*(6), 10269. https://doi.org/10.3390/su141610269

[50] Zhang, H., & Chow, I. (2004). Application of importance-performance model in tour guides' performance: Evidence from mainland Chinese outbound visitors in Hong Kong. *Tourism Management*, *25*(1), 81-91. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

[51] Ziegler, J., Dearden, P., & Rollins, R. (2012). But are tourists satisfied? Importance-performance analysis of the whale shark tourism industry on Isla Holbox, Mexico. *Tourism Management*, *33*(3), 692-701. Retrieved on 10 June 2023.

Nour Mohammad Harara is an assistant professor in the basic sciences department at Al-Balqa' Applied University, Aqaba University College. Her main research interests are English language, translation, and linguistics. n.harara@bau.edu.jo

Bashar M. Al Najdawi is an Assistant Professor in the hotels and tourism science department at Al-Balqa' Applied University, Aqaba University College. His main research interests are hotel management, tourism Management, food and beverage management, and human resources management. najdawi@bau.edu.jo

Mahmoud Ali Rababah has a PhD in Applied Linguistics from UUM Malaysia. He is a senior lecturer at Al-Balqa' Applied University, Irbid University College, Department of English Language and Literature. His areas of interest are socio-pragmatics, sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and translation.

Ahmad Abu Haniyi has an MSc in tourism and hospitality management from GAU (Girne American University). He is a lecturer at Al-Balqa Applied University, Aqaba College, Department of Hotel and tourism sciences. His areas of interest are hotel management, mass tourism, and destination marketing. abo_haniyeh@bau.edu.jo

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 884-892, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.21

The Effect of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) on Rural Area Students' English Writing

Sriati Usman
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Tadulako, Indonesia

Burhanuddin Arafah
English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, Indonesia

Mochtar Marhum
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Tadulako, Indonesia

Syahrul Munir
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Tadulako, Indonesia

Budi
Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Tadulako, Indonesia

Nurgan Tadeko
Department of Education, Postgraduate School, Yogyakarta State University, Indonesia

***Abstract*—This research was conducted to examine the impact of the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) and Direct Learning (DL) model on the learning outcomes of students in rural areas concerning English descriptive text composition. The models introduced a meaningful learning experience within conventional classroom settings, enabling students to connect prior knowledge with new information in creating innovative ideas. TPACK model played an essential role in the educational system, facilitating teachers in integrating technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge throughout the instructional process. Therefore, students became more engaged, active, and enthusiastic participants in their learning. An authentic experimental and control group design was carried out in two parallel classes at a senior high school. Meanwhile, ANOVA Factorial (2-way ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The results showed that the learning outcomes of TPACK were significantly different from those of the DL group. Therefore, TPACK substantially affected the learning outcomes of students in writing English descriptive text. This research reported the valuable contribution of the model in equipping future teachers with the knowledge necessary to integrate content, learning theories, teaching models, methods, and technology into their instructional practices.**

***Index Terms*—Effect, TPACK, writing, descriptive text**

I. Introduction

In the contemporary era of Society 5.0, individuals are expected to seamlessly integrate virtual and physical spaces to complete their work following established standards efficiently. Furthermore, this digital age is characterized by the availability of diverse information sources (Hasjim et al., 2020; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). The pervasive influence of this new era is specifically essential, with the younger generation significantly contributing to its advancement (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a; Arafah et al., 2023). The transformation from a traditional to a modern system has been gradual (Takwa et al., 2022), largely dependent on technological mastery. Over time, scientific progress has fostered a substantial nexus between individuals and technology (Arafah et al., 2021; Siwi et al., 2022). This advancement has shaped human behaviour, compelling people to use science and technology to meet their needs (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Suhadi et al., 2022; Manugeren et al., 2023). It is essential to state that amidst rapid modernization, preserving local identity and heritage should be addressed (Arifin et al., 2022).

In the context of contemporary society, teachers are tasked with the responsibility of not only mastering various pedagogical theories, methodologies, and methods but also possessing proficiency in the use of technological and teaching aids integrated with pedagogical methods and high-order thinking skills (Harmer, 2007). The consistency with teaching and learning paradigms extends to incorporating online platforms (Anggrawan et al., 2019). Integrating Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge is the TPACK framework or model (Ammade et al., 2020;

Manong et al., 2021). In essence, 21st-century teachers striving to meet the demands of Society 5.0 are expected to excel in professional, pedagogical, social, and personal competence and acquire proficiency in learning technology (Uno, 2014). The challenges teachers face include structuring subject matter context and formulating effective lesson plans (Sunardi et al., 2018). This needs rapid adaptation to fit the competencies (Arafah et al., 2023). Therefore, professional teachers must integrate the four competencies with technology in the classroom setting, a framework commonly known as the TPACK model.

The framework or model has been developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006) with characteristics built from Technological Knowledge (TK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), and Content Knowledge (CK). By analyzing this framework, professional teachers can transmit knowledge in depth through understanding. This combination can be described as Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK). Framework-based learning, or the TPACK model, has been implemented in the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program. This is in line with the characteristics of 21st-century learning familiar with technology (Smaldino et al., 2008). Therefore, as learning designers, teachers are required to possess a profound mastery of the science supporting their instructional ability (Uno, 2014). These skills and knowledge are critical to integrating technology while conducting the learning process. These behavioural patterns can become ingrained rather than complaining against a novel and less favourable learning method (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019; Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). In addition, teachers must be able to adopt technology in selecting and using teaching methods (Manong et al., 2021; Mishra & Koehler, 2006). High motivation and effort will always result in a positive impact and success (Arafah et al., 2020; Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). Technology enhances skills by reading and understanding learning materials provided by digital media (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). As a result, students' ability to read materials somehow affects their responses in doing tests or exercises (Mardiana et al., 2023). The skills of teachers and students can only be improved through severe practices and discipline (Kuswanty et al., 2023; Kaharuddin et al., 2023).

Research related to the TPACK framework or model has been carried out in this context. However, the results are limited to analyzing and exploring the implementation of the model in learning (Bugeño, 2013). In a research conducted by Sari and Sumardi (2020) to examine meta-cognitive awareness in designing TPACK learning, the aspects of the stages were stated during reflection. Meanwhile, Koh et al. (2010) measured the development of teacher knowledge related to Technological, Pedagogical, and Content. Septiyanti et al. (2020) analyzed students' perceptions and teachers' roles at the University of Lampung in obtaining the model learning.

Research on TPACK and DL Models has not been conducted. Therefore, this research was carried out to overcome this gap by examining the Effect of TPACK and DL Models on learning Outcomes of SMA Negeri 14 SIGI Students in Writing English Descriptive Text. In particular, it examines the effect of differences between TPACK and Conventional Learning models on learning outcomes of descriptive text writing skills in English.

II. Literature Review

TPACK is a practical framework or model for delivering lessons with technological integration (Santos & Castro, 2021), and it is an ideal application for all aspects of the learning process. Furthermore, Mishra and Koehler (2006) and Schmidt et al. (2009), inspired by the PCK theory developed by Shulman (1986), were able to address the need by designing research instruments for TPACK assessment in pre-service teachers and identifying that the framework builds on the following seven elements. (1) PK: PK is a learning method and process, including classroom management knowledge, assessment, development of learning device plans, and student learning. (2) TK: TK ranges from low to high technologies such as pencils and paper to desktops, computers, internet connections, laptops, monitors for projection/television, printers, scanners, scanners, speakers, tablets, and smartphones. (3) CK: CK is related to teaching materials that will be learned and taught. Professional teachers must know the material's content and how knowledge characterizes the different areas. (4) PCK: PCK refers to content knowledge related to the learning process. This model differs from various content areas, combining content and pedagogy to develop better learning practices. (5) Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK): TPK refers to knowledge of how various technologies can be used in learning. (6) Technological content knowledge uses technology to create new representations of specific content. According to this framework, using different technologies, teachers can change how students practice and understand concepts in specific content areas. (7) TPACK: TPACK refers to the knowledge teachers require to combine technology with learning and content areas.

Teachers intuitively understand complex interactions between the three essential components of knowledge (CK, PK, and TK) by teaching content using appropriate methods and technologies. The framework aligns with Ammade et al. (2020) that TPACK is a combined model that explores the understanding of using ICT as a learning tool. Learning materials should be observed based on context to deliver the messages from the sender to the receiver (Arafah et al., 2020; Baa et al., 2023; Asri et al., 2023). Teachers are expected to pay attention to the context of values regarding the subject taught using technology (Takwa et al., 2022; Yudith et al., 2023). Several cultural aspects are very close to the life of society performed by symbols or signs included in the material lesson (Hasyim et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the language must be clear and easy to understand by avoiding the excessive use of figurative and connotations (Mutmainnah et al., 2022; Afiah et al., 2022). This shows a deep understanding of the concept of using technology. Teachers should be able to communicate effectively, using clear and comprehensible language to positively influence students' perceptions (Yulianti et al., 2022; Hasjim et al., 2020; Arafah et al., 2023). It is an attempt to avoid multiple interpretations of using difficult dictions and utterances (Asriyanti et al., 2022). In this context, committing a mistake while using technology, such as generating an error during program execution, can affect the learning process (Iksora et al., 2022). The results related to TPACK show that the framework or model has been calculated as a practical learning model.

III. Methods

This authentic experimental research was conducted to test the hypothesis of causal relationships between variables (Degeng, 2000). A factorial design was used, a variation to analyze the independent variable and the simultaneous effect of the treatment variable on outcomes (Creswell, 2009). This design is a research structure where the size of the analysis of variance is equal to the number of independent and dependent variables (Tuckman, 1999).

In particular, this research was a factorial version of the non-equivalent control group design (Cohen et al., 2011; Degeng, 2000; Setyosari, 2012; Tuckman, 1999) carried out at SMAN 14 Sigi, Poleroa Makuhi Village, Kulawi District, Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, about 100 km from Palu City. The variability researched was an independent variable, consisting of the TPACK model intended for the experimental group and the DL model used in the control.

The population and the research sample comprise grade 11 students in SMAN 14 SIGI academic year 2021/2022. A random sampling method was used because the diverse population consisted of grade 11 social research and sciences. Meanwhile, before selecting samples, the principal and teachers were consulted regarding randomized classes. The number of samples in the control (class B) and the experimental group (class A) were 36 each. Students in groups A and B were given TPACK and DL learning models, respectively.

Table 1
Number of Research Samples

		Learning Methods		
Class	*Sum*	*TRACK*	*DL Model*	*Total*
Class A	36	36	-	36
Class B	36	-	36	36
Total	72	36	36	72

The procedure is as follows: 1) Research orientation related to determining the population and sample, 2) Sampling determination, 3) Pretest, 4) Treatment of the learning process, and 5) Post-test. The pretest was given to experimental (class A) and control class students (class B) on Monday, July 18, 2022, before the treatment. The aim is to determine the initial level of knowledge in writing descriptive text. The pretest also serves as a clue in writing descriptive text in English.

After the initial pretest, treatment was carried out to prove whether the application of the model can make it easier to obtain ideas, fun, and motivation to write descriptive text in English. The treatment was administered six times, each session scheduled for 90 minutes. These sessions were conducted on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 09:30 to 11:00, specifically on July 20-21, July 27-28, and August 3-4, 2022. The post-test was given after implementing TPACK and DL model learning treatments. The aim is to determine learning outcomes after implementing the treatment. The post-test or final test was carried out simultaneously between the experimental and control classes to avoid reducing the accuracy of the data. This was conducted on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at the expiration of the research permit.

The instruments used were pretest and post-test before and after treatment given to the experimental and control classes. Writing test results in English descriptive text were measured using an assessment tool adapted from Brown (2007). The data collected were statistically analyzed using ANOVA statistical analysis (analysis of variance) in two 2 x 2 factorial pathways. Testing the null hypothesis (Ho) was carried out at a significance level of 5% or $\alpha = 0.05$, and the statistical analyses used SPSS software version 25 for Windows. ANOVA was used to test the difference in mean values between two or more groups based on the variables measured on an interval or ratio scale.

To determine the presence of variances in learning outcomes within each group, this research relies on the following criteria:

Each group has a significant difference in learning outcomes when the value of the Anova Sig.< Than test result is 0.05.

There is no difference in learning outcomes in each group when the value of the Anova Sig. test result > 0.05.

The requirement considered in factorial ANOVA is the assumption of homogeneity, where the variety between the groups tested must be the same (homogeneous). This testing should be conducted using Levene's Test of Equality for Error Variances. Variety can be expressed the same when the value is significant (Sig >0.05), while the normality assumption means that the results are expected to spread usually. The assumption is tested using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov Analysis, and the result is normally distributed when the Z calculates the value at Sig. > 0.05. The factorial results can be used and interpreted when the assumptions are met. For further interpretation, the prerequisites supporting the factorial ANOVA should be considered, and Table 2 presents the results of factorial ANOVA.

TABLE 2
CONTROL CLASS FACTORIAL ANOVA PREREQUISITE NORMALITY TESTING

Prerequisite	Value	Test Value	Sig.	Information
Normality	*Pretest*	.174	.007	Fulfilled
	Post-test	.169	.011	Fulfilled

Table 2 shows that the normality test value for the pretest value is .174 with a significance level of 007. The conclusion of the normality test of the pretest value can be seen based on the Kolmogorov value Z = .174 less than the Z of table .007. Therefore, there is no difference between the theoretical and the empirical distributions. Second Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) is a p-value resulting from a null hypothesis test, with no difference between the test data distribution. Since the value of p = .174 is more significant than 0.05, the conclusion is that the null hypothesis fails to be rejected. This means that the test data distribution follows a normal distribution, and the normality prerequisites for the pretest value are met.

The result of the post-test normality test is .169, with a significance level of .011. The conclusion of the post-test normality test can be obtained based on the Kolmogorov-Sminirv value Z = .169 less than the Z table .011. It means there is no difference between the theoretical and the empirical distribution. Second Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) is a P value resulting from a null hypothesis test where there is no difference between the distribution of tested and normal data. Since p .169 is more significant than 0.05, the conclusion is that the null hypothesis fails to be rejected. Therefore, the test data distribution follows a normal distribution, where the prerequisites for normality of post-test values are met. Table 4.8 presents the prerequisite test of homogeneity of pretest and post-test values in the control class, as seen in Table 3.

TABLE 3
FACTORIAL ANOVA PREREQUISITE HOMOGENEITY TESTING ON CONTROL CLASSES

Prerequisite	Value	Test Value	Sig.	Information
Homogeneity	*Pretest*	.458	.806	Fulfilled
	Post-test	.435	.823	Fulfilled

Table 3 shows that the prerequisite homogeneity of pretest values in the control class has a significance value of .806. Since the significance value is more significant than > 0.05, the data groups have the same variance or homogeneity. The *Levene Statistic* figure .458 shows an inverse relationship between the test value and homogeneity. It means that the prerequisites of homogeneity of variety are met.

The prerequisite test of homogeneity of the variety of post-test values can be seen in Table 4.8, with significance values of .823 > 0.05. The data groups have the same variety or homogeneity. The *Levene Statistic* number .435 shows that the prerequisite of homogeneity of variety is met. Further testing of the normality in the experimental class is described in Table 4.

TABLE 4
EXPERIMENTAL CLASS ANOVA PREREQUISITE NORMALITY TESTING

Prerequisite	*Value*	*Test Value*	*Sig.*	*Information*
Normality	Pretest	.174	.007	Fulfilled
	Post-test	.128	.145	Fulfilled

Table 4 shows that these prerequisite tests also use the Kolmogorov-Sminorv Test. Based on the pretest value in the experimental class, the Kolmogorov-Sminorv value Z = .174 is less than the Z value of Table 940. Therefore, there is no difference between the theoretical and the empirical distribution, and the tested data is normally distributed. Based on primary data, Asymp. Sig. (2tailed) which is the p-value resulting from the null hypothesis test; there is no difference between the tested and normal data distribution. Since the value of p = .128 > 0.05, the null hypothesis fails to be rejected. Furthermore, the distribution of the tested and normal data is related, and the prerequisites of normality in the pretest scores of the experimental class are met.

The normality test on the post-test value of the experimental class shows that the value of Kolmogorov-Sminorv Z = .128 is less than Z table .145. Therefore, there is no difference between the theoretical and empirical distribution since the tested data is normally distributed. According to the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value, representing the null hypothesis test, there is no statistically significant difference between the distribution of the tested data and average data. Since the value of p=.128 is more significant than 0.05, the null hypothesis fails to be rejected, and the tested data follows a normal distribution.

Table 5 presents the results of the homogeneity test of the post-test and pretest values in the experimental class as a prerequisite for ANOVA. The pretest and post-test values have significance scores of .806 > 0.05 and .760 > 0.05, where both data groups have the same variety (variance) or are homogeneous. This prerequisite testing of homogeneity uses Levene's test of equality for error variances. To determine the homogeneity of the tested data when the value of $\alpha >$ 0.05, the group has the same variety. Conversely, when the value of $\alpha < 0.05$, the tested data groups have unequal variations. Based on the control and experimental classes, the prerequisites of ANOVA are met and can be used to interpret research data.

TABLE 5
TESTING OF PREREQUISITE HOMOGENEITY OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS FACTORIAL ANOVA

Prerequisite	*Value*	*Test Value*	*Sig.*	*Information*
Homogeneity	Pretest	.458	.806	Fulfilled
	Post-test	.520	.760	Fulfilled

The models used in learning descriptive text writing skills in English are TPACK and DL models. The application of the TPACK model uses video media accessed through the YouTube page and can be used directly or online when there is an internet network. The video can be uploaded through software located in the libraries menu of a laptop. The video serves as a valuable teaching resource integrated into the classroom setting. This can be presented using PowerPoint, operated through a notebook (laptop) and projected onto a screen using an LCD. This multimedia method effectively captivates and motivates students, particularly in English language instruction, explicitly enhancing their proficiency in writing descriptive text.

Videos used as teaching materials are selected according to descriptive text materials and learning objectives. Using videos, students are expected to have digital literacy skills that provide information and knowledge. Furthermore, students obtain ideas about writing descriptive text in English focused on social functions, linguistic characteristics, and text structures, such as identification and description related to people, objects, places, and animals.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research aims to test the significant differences in learning outcomes as an influence of the application of TPACK and DL Models on learning outcomes of writing descriptive text in English. The analysis tool used is ANOVA with a factorial design of two strategy categories. There is a different value when the F-value is calculated with the α value < 0.05. However, the difference is insignificant when the F-calculate value is calculated with $\alpha > 0.05$.

Pretest and post-test value variables control class and experiment class

This section presents the difference in the value of pretest-posttest learning outcomes in the two groups taught with *TPACK and DL* models. There is a difference in learning outcomes between the groups when Sig. (0.000) value $\alpha <$ 0.05. Conversely, when Sig. (0.000) with a value of $\alpha > 0.05$, there is no difference in *pretest* and *post-test* values.

TABLE 6
TESTING THE DIFFERENCE IN PRETEST-POSTTEST VALUES OF DL AND TPACK GROUPS THROUGH MULTIPLE COMPARISON

Value	*N*	*Lowest*	*Highest*	*Mean Difference*	*Sig.*
DL	36	35	60	10.00000	.000
TRACK	36	45	70	28.888889	.000
Total	72	80	136	38.888889	.000

The data in Table 6 shows that the mean difference value of the pretest-posttest results of the group treated with the DL Model has the lowest and highest values of 35 and 60 with a mean difference of -10.00000 and a value of Sig. 000 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant difference in learning outcomes of the control class after treatment compared to before. The mean difference value of learning outcomes pretest value - post-test group treated with TPACK model has the lowest and highest values of 45 and 70 with a mean difference of 28.888889 and a Sig value of .000 0.05. This means there is a significant difference in experimental class learning outcomes after being subjected to TPACK model treatment.

Post-test values or learning outcomes are measured using instruments consisting of writing tests of English Descriptive Text. To determine the score of students, a scoring rubric of descriptive text adapted from Brown (2007) with a total score of 100 was used, as seen in Table 7.

TABLE 7
DIFFERENCES IN POST-TEST VALUES-POSTTEST DLM AND TPACK GROUPS THROUGH MULTIPLE COMPARISON

Value	*N*	*Lowest*	*Highest*	*Mean Difference*	*Sig.*
DL	36	60	85	-18.88889	.000
TRACK	36	80	90	18.88889	.000
Total	72	120	176	18.888.907.88889	.000

The data in Table 7 shows that the mean difference post-test value of the DL Model group has the lowest and highest values of 60 and 85 with a mean difference value of -18.88889, while TPACK has 80 and 90 with a mean difference value of 18.88889. Based on statistical tests through multi-comparison, a Sig value of 0.000 < 0.05 was obtained. Therefore, there is a significant difference in learning outcomes (post-test) of the group given TPACK treatment compared to DL treatment.

Based on the results of the Anova 2x2 test using the SPSS 25 program on the variables and learning outcomes, the learning model shows a significant difference between TPACK and DL models with an F value of 16,567 at a significance level of .000. Based on the tests of the between-subject effect, the significance level of the learning model is. 000 < 0.05. Therefore, there are significant differences between ML and TPACK learning factors. This is because the learning model is more influential on learning outcomes of writing Descriptive Text than the DL model.

Discussion

Differences in the effect of learning models on learning outcomes

The 1st hypothesis is the influence of learning models on outcomes, which are explained below.

HO: Learning outcomes of writing descriptive text in English are similar for students taught with TPACK and DL models.

HI: There is a significant difference in learning outcomes of writing descriptive text in English between the group taught with TPACK and the DL learning model.

The analysis shows an F-calculate value of 16,567 with a value of α = .000. In the F-calculate statistical value of 16,567 with a learning model of .000 smaller than alpha 0.05 (.000 < 0.05), there are significant differences in outcomes between the group taught with TPACK and DL model. By using the TPACK learning method, outcomes of writing Descriptive Text in English are improved when compared to the DL model.

The first null hypothesis, where there is no significant difference in learning outcomes between the models, is rejected. Meanwhile, the 1st (one) alternative hypothesis that states there is a significant difference is acceptable.

Concerning the description results in general and the hypothesis testing, a summary can be presented as follows. There was a difference in learning outcomes between the students who received TPACK and DL model treatment, with an F- calculate and alpha values of 16,567 and 000< 0.05. The learning process with the TPACK model significantly has a better influence on the acquisition of outcomes. Based on the data collected, this research showed significant differences between classes using the TPACK model compared to those using DL with an F-count value and significant rates of 16,567 and .000< 0.05. Based on these results, the TPACK learning model can be implemented in the instructional process of writing descriptive text.

The results align with previous research, including Putri (2019) and Bugueño et al. (2013), where students in the TPACK group obtained higher learning outcomes or *post-test* scores than DL. The group showed less significant positive attitudes towards science but was more committed than DL. In addition, teachers who incorporate technology into their teaching tend to favour a higher frequency of classroom activities. This method can transform traditional learning into engaging, dynamic, and meaningful experiences, improving effective communication and preventing boredom in student interactions. According to Rahayu et al. (2023), technological-enhanced learning engenders a sense of fun and increased motivation, encouraging active participation in every learning process.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there were significant differences between students who learned with TPACK and DL models based on the influence on learning outcomes of writing English descriptive text. The results showed that students who diligently observed the videos cooperated and actively discussed in groups to write Descriptive Text in English. Furthermore, learning using the TPACK model showed significant results compared to DL. English teachers or Lecturers should use this model to prevent boredom, attract interest, increase activeness, obtain ideas, motivate students, and improve learning outcomes. In this context, students of other subject areas were expected to use the TPACK model in the learning process. In its application, teachers or lecturers acted as motivators, facilitators, controllers, and guides. In addition, research should be conducted to examine the TPACK model compared to CTL, PBL, and PJBL. This included the development of writing, listening, reading, and speaking skills across various academic disciplines and majors. The comprehensive exploration extended beyond English instruction and held significant value for the broader domain of instructional science.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was funded by the Rector and Dean of Teacher Training and Education Faculty (FKIP) of Tadulako University, Palu, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Therefore, the authors are grateful to the Dean of FKIP and the Rector of Tadulako University, who were very helpful and willing to provide substantial funding for completing this research.

REFERENCES

[1] Afiah, N., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). Burmese Women Portrait under the British Imperialism in Orwell's *Burmese Days. Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 13*(1), 213-219.

[2] Ammade, S., Mahmud, M., Jabu, B., & Tahmir, S. (2020). TPACK model-based instruction teaching writing: An analysis on TPACK literacy. *International Journal of Language Education, 4*(1), 129-140.

[3] Anggrawan, A., Yassi, A.H., Satria, C., Arafah, B., & Makka, H.M. (2019). Comparison of Online Learning versus Face-to-Face Learning in English Grammar Learning. *5th International Conference on Computing Engineering and Design (ICCED),* pp. 1-4.

[4] Arafah, B., Abbas, H., & Hikmah, N. (2021). Saving the Environmental Lessons in Colin Thiele's *February Dragon. Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *12*(6), 935-941.

[5] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2019). Linguistic Functions of Emoji in Social Media Communication. *Opción, 35*(24), 558-574.

[6] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2023a). Digital Literacy: The Right Solution to Overcome the Various Problems of Meaning and Communication on Social Media. *Studies in Media and Communication, 11*(4), 19-30.

[7] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2023b). Digital Literacy on Current Issues in Social Media: Social Media as a Source of Information. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology, 101*(10), 3943-3951.
[8] Arafah, B., Hasyim, M., Khaerana, A.S.A., Soraya, A.I., Ramadhani, R., Ismail, A., & Takwa. (2023). The Digital Culture Literacy of Generation Z Netizens as Readers, Producers and Publishers of Text on Social Media. *International Journal of Intelligent Systems and Applications in Engineering, 11*(3), 112-123.
[9] Arafah, B., & Kaharuddin. (2019). The Representation of Complaints in English and Indonesian Discourses. *Opción, 35*(24), 501-517.
[10] Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Hasjim, M., Arafah, A.N.B., Takwa, & Karimuddin. (2023). Cultural Relations among Speakers of South Halmahera Languages. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(1), 168-174.
[11] Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Kaharuddin, A., Room, F., Takwa, & Purwarno, P. (2023). Evaluating the Suitability of Printed Materials in the Context of Online Learning. *XLinguae, 16*(2), 16-32.
[12] Arafah, B., Thayyib, M., Kaharuddin, & Sahib, H. (2020). An Anthropological Linguistic Study on Maccera' Bulung Ritual, *Opción, 36*(27), 1592-1606.
[13] Arafah, K., Arafah, A.N.B., & Arafah, B. (2020). Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy's Role in Achievement Motivation and Physics Learning Outcomes. *Opción, 36*(27), 1607-1623.
[14] Arifin, M. B., Arafah, B., & Kuncara, S.D. (2022). Dayak's Sociocultural Situation through Locality in Lumholtz's Through Central Borneo Travel Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 12*(12), 2695-2703.
[15] Arnawa, I. G. N. E. V. & Arafah, B. (2023). Students' Self-Regulated Strategies in Approaching Second Language Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(3), 690-696.
[16] Asri, D., Arafah, B., Sahib, H., & Abbas, H. (2023). Male Domination in Helen Garner's *Monkey Grip. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(7), 1651-1658.
[17] Asriyanti, S., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). The Representation of Women's Dependence on Men in *Little Women. Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 12*(4), 790-796.
[18] Baa, S., Wardani, S. B., Iskandar, Weda, S., & Arafah, B. (2023). Lexical Metaphors in Westlife's Selected Song Lyrics. *XLinguae, 16*(1), 132-154.
[19] Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. New York: Pearson Longman.
[20] Bugueño, W. M. R. (2013). *Using TPACK to promote effective language teaching in an ESL/EFL classroom*. [Doctoral thesis, University of Northern Iowa]. Semantic Scholar. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Using-TPACK-to-promote-effective-language-teaching-Bugue%C3%B1o/f49668233dc888c0946f8cc3b3745aa05387de98, Accessed on October 2, 2023.
[21] Cohen, L., Lawrence, M., & Marisson, K. (2011). *Research method in education (7th Ed.)*. London: Routledge.
[22] Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design (3rd Ed.)*. California: Sage Publications Inc.
[23] Degeng, I.N.S. (2000). *Metodologi Penelitian* [Research Methodology]. Malang: State University of Malang Postgraduate PSSJ Learning Technology.
[24] Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching (4th Ed.)*. New York: Pearson Education Limited.
[25] Hasjim, M., Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Verlin, S., & Genisa, R.A.A. (2020). Principles behind Semantic Relation between Common Abbreviations and their Expansions on Instagram. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology, 9*, 2270-2276.
[26] Hasyim, M. & Arafah, B. (2023a). Semiotic Multimodality Communication in the Age of New Media. *Studies in Media and Communication, 11*(1), 96-103.
[27] Hasyim M. & Arafah, B. (2023b). Social Media Text Meaning: Cultural Information Consumption. *Wseas Transactions on Information Science and Applications, 20*(2023), 220-227.
[28] Hasyim, M., Arafah, B., Kuswarini, P., Masdiana, Saleh, F., Lisani, M., & Sukmal, A.F. (2023). Humane Coffee: Meaning Symbolic Interaction of a Cup of Coffee. *Migration Letters, 20*(S5), 1095-1105.
[29] Iksora, Arafah, B., Syafruddin, S., Muchtar, J., & Lestari, P.A. (2022). Typos' Effects on Web-Based Programming Code Output: A Computational Linguistics Study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 12*(11), 2460-2469.
[30] Kaharuddin, Arafah, B., Nurpahmi, S., Sukmawaty, Rahman, I.F., & Juniardi, Y. (2023). Exploring How Reading Aloud and Vocabulary Enrichment Shape English Speaking Skills Among Indonesian Learners of English. *World Journal of English Language, 13*(8), 436-445.
[31] Koh, J. H. L, Chai, C. S., & Tsai, C. C. (2010). Examining the technological content knowledge of Singapore pre-service teachers with a large-scale survey. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 26*(6), 563-573.
[32] Kuswanty, W.H., Arafah, B., Budiman, A.N.A., Ali, T., Fatsah, H., & Room, F. (2023). Students' Perception of Explicit and Implicit Methods in Learning Tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(6), 1473-1482.
[33] Manong, A. B. M., Hamid, S. M., Insyirah, L., & Hidayat, N. (2021). The implementation of TPACK (Technological pedagogical and content knowledge)-based learning: The comparison of students' English learning outcomes using the blended learning model and discovery learning model. *Journal of Development Research, 5*(2), 149-155.
[34] Manugeren, M., Arafah, B., Purwarno, P., Siwi, P., Ekalestari, S., & Wulan, S. (2023). An Ecoliterature Approach to Environmental Conservation: Take Four Selected Literary Works as Examples. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 13*(5), 1318-1327.
[35] Mardiana, Arafah, B., Ahmad, D., Kaharuddin, Room, F., & Barus, E. (2023). Time Allocation Effect on Test Scores for Academic Writing of Indonesian English Learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 14*(6), 1628-1636.
[36] Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological pedagogical content knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record, 108*(6), 1017–1054.
[37] Mokoginta, K. & Arafah, B. (2022). Negotiation in Indonesian Culture: A Cultural Linguistic Analysis of Bahasa Indonesia Textbooks. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 12*(4), 691-701.
[38] Mutmainnah, Arafah, B., & Pattu, A. (2022). Racial Discrimination Experienced by Black People as Reflected in Langston Hughes's Poems. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 13*(2), 350-356.
[39] Putri, S. E. (2019). The Implementation of TPACK in Teaching Writing Recount Text in a Senior High School Level. *RETAIN, 7*(2), 156–163.

[40] Rahayu, E.M., Rahayu, E.Y., & Irawan, N. (2023). Tecnological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) in the instruction design of the participants in teacher profession education: A Narrative Inquiry Case Study. *Jurnal Teknologi Pendidikan*, *11*, 312-327.
[41] Santos, J. M., & Castro, R. D. (2021). Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) in action: Application of learning in the classroom by pre-service teachers (PST). *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, *3*(1), 100-110.
[42] Sari, Y. R. & Sumardi. (2020). Reflection as a way to grapple TPACK complexity for EFL teachers. *Budapest International Research and Critics in Linguistics and Education (BIRLE) Journal*, *3*(2), 894-903.
[43] Schmidt, D. A., Baran, E., Thompson, A. D., Mishra, P., Koehler, M. J., & Shin, T. S. (2009). Technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK). *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *42*(2), 123–149.
[44] Septiyanti, M., Inderawati, R. &; Vianty, M. (2020). Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) Perception of English Education Students. English Review: *Journal of English Education*, *8*(2), 165–174.
[45] Setyosari, P. (2012). *Educational research and development methods*. Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group.
[46] Shulman, L. S. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, *15*(2), 4–14.
[47] Siwi, P., Arafah, B., Wulan, S., Purwarno, P., Ekalestari, S., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Treatment of Nature: An Ecocriticism Approach in 'Komat Kamit' of Tejo and Kamba's Tuhan Maha Asik. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(7), 1278-1285.
[48] Smaldino, S. E., Lowther, D. L., & Russell, J. D. (2008). *Instructional technology and media for learning*. New Jersey: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.
[49] Suhadi, J., Arafah, B., Makatita, F.P., Abbas, H., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Science and Society: The Impact of Science Abuse on Social Life in Well's *The Invisible Man*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(6), 1214-1219.
[50] Sunardi, Akil, M., Arafah, B., & Salija, K. (2018). Looking at the Shared Conception of Teaching Literature in an Indonesian ELT Setting. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *9*(2), 316-327.
[51] Takwa, Arafah, B., Sopiandy, D., Taqfiah, S. J., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Humanistic Values in Metaphoric Expressions of Traditional Marriage in Tolaki Mekongga Kolaka. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(8), 1602-1608.
[52] Takwa, Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Putra, E., Masrur, & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). The Shift of Lexicon in Traditional Technology System in Tolaki Community at Konawe District of Southeast Sulawesi. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(5), 980-989.
[53] Tuckman, B. W. (1999). *Conducting educational research* (4th Ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace College Publicist.
[54] Uno, H. B. (2014). *Education Profession*. Jakarta: PT Bumi Aksara.
[55] Yudith, M., Arafah, B., Sunyoto, F.G., Fitriani, Rostan, R.B., & Nurdin, F.E. (2023). The Representation of Animalism Issue in Sewell's *Black Beauty*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(1), 108-116.
[56] Yulianti, S., Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Idris, A.M.S., Samsur, N., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Conversational Implicatures on Saturday Night Live Talk Show. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 189-197.

Sriati Usman is a lecturer at the English Education Study Program, Language and Arts Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Tadulako University. She graduated from the English Literature Department at the Faculty of Letter, Hasanuddin University in 1986 and completed her Master's degree in the English Language Study Program of Hasanuddin University in 2003. Then, she obtained her Doctor degree in Instructional Technology at the State University of Malang in 2014. Her teaching and research interests are in Writing in Professional Context and Educational Technology. She has several articles published in national and international journals and Proceeding Atlantis Press. She is an Associate Professor and The Head of the Language and Art Education Department at the Teacher Training and Education Faculty at Tadulako University.

Burhanuddin Arafah obtained his PhD in English literature at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2003. He earned his Master's degree in American literature at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1995 and his Bachelor's degree in English literature at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1988.

He is currently a full Professor in English literature at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS, Indonesia. He has published eight books in English and literature and more than 70 research articles ranked in international journals published in English. He also has received 26 Intellectual Property Right Certificates from the Indonesian government.

His areas of interest are English literature, language education, and cultural studies. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS from 2009-2017. He is actively involved at the National Accreditation Board-Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in his position as Assessor.

Mochtar Marhum is an Associate Professor at the Department of Languages and Arts, Faculty of Education, Tadulako University, Palu, INDONESIA, born in Tolitoli, Central Sulawesi. He received his first Degree in English Language Education from the English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Education, Tadulako University in 1991. In 1998, he completed his Master's degree in Language Planning and Educational Management. In 2006, he received his Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Sociolinguistics and Education (Language Policy) from Flinders University of South Australia. His teaching and research interests include Sociolinguistics, Writing Skills, Public Speaking, cross-cultural understanding, Curriculum Development and Literature.

Syahrul Munir is one of the English Lecturers at the Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tadulako University, Palu Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. He graduated with his first degree from the Faculty of Letters at Hasanuddin University in 1988. He obtained his Master's in linguistics at Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta, Indonesia 2004. He obtained his Doctor Program in language education at the State University of Jakarta in 2018.

Budi was born in Lero Donggala, Indonesia, January 4, 1973. He graduated from the English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Tadulako University, Palu-Central Sulawesi, with a Bachelor's degree in 1999. He obtained a Master's in English Education at Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang-East Java in 2009. His primary interest is Language Teaching, TEFL and Learning Assessment. Since 2002, he has been a lecturer in the English Education Faculty of Education, Universitas Tadulako.

Nurgan Tadeko is an educator and scientist. He completed his undergraduate studies at Universitas Tadulako in 2014 and later obtained a Master's degree from Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta in 2019. He is pursuing his doctoral studies at the same institution, a journey that began in 2021. Nurgan specializes in the development of integrated science instructional materials, as evidenced by his certifications, including Competent Web Developer from LKP DCI Tasikmalaya (BNSP) in 2022 and Certified International Qualitative Researcher (CIQaR) from Quantum HRM Internasional (KAN dan IAF) in the same year. He has also been recognized for his contributions to developing TPACK-based e-learning and website resources for science teachers, as the Ministry of Law and Human Rights acknowledged. His unwavering commitment to advancing education and improving science instruction drives positive change and innovation in his field.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 893-901, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.22

Challenges Vietnamese EFL Students Faced When Learning and Meeting the Requirements of B1 English Language Proficiency

Phat Huu Nguyen
School of Foreign Languages, Tra Vinh University, Tra Vinh City, Vietnam

***Abstract*—Learning and meeting the requirements of English language proficiency focused on the Western model of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) are required as essential learning outcomes of higher education programs for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. However, university students may face difficulties in the process of learning and meeting the requirements of their English language proficiency. To address this gap, this descriptive study was conducted to explore the challenges Vietnamese EFL students encountered in learning and meeting the requirements of their English language proficiency. Participants were sixty Vietnamese EFL students majoring in Odonto-stomatology (Oral maxillofacial surgery) from a university in the Mekong Delta. Two core research instruments were utilized in this study consisting of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Results revealed that the challenges university students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency were significant. It was challenging for university students to achieve level B1 English language proficiency within the CEFR of Vietnam in terms of test-related, candidate-related, and environment-related challenges. The findings of this study could assist students in being aware of their linguistic knowledge and necessary skills so that they have abilities to apply appropriate ways for learning and meeting the requirements of the standards of level B1 English language proficiency in the context of Vietnam.**

***Index Terms*—challenges, English language proficiency, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), Vietnamese EFL students**

I. Introduction

With its globally present nature, English plays a paramount role all over the world (Crystal, 2008; Tamimi Sa'd, 2018). As Vietnam integrates into the world in all aspects, the demand for using English has also increased (Huynh, 2020). Therefore, the educational system in Vietnam has applied The Foreign Language Proficiency Assessment Exam with the global scale to assist learners in achieving their personal aims including employee recruitment, higher positions, salary increase, entrance and graduation requirements for master's educational programs, and the admission of Vietnamese EFL students for university training programs (Truong, 2016). In the real context of the present study, Vietnamese EFL students have to complete four General English modules for their university curriculum. However, students can choose to take the test of the standards of level B1 English language proficiency instead of following the four General English modules in university.

Pham (2019) proved that reaching an English B1 level certificate is a huge challenge for Vietnamese EFL learners. Particularly, they faced difficulties in the competence of reaching knowledge connected with language skills and meeting the proficiency of English level B1 (Nguyen, 2003). Realizing the challenges Vietnamese EFL students encountered in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency, the study on "Challenges Vietnamese EFL students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency" was carried out to figure out the difficulties the students face when they learn and reach the proficiency of English level B1 and gain the students' perceptions of the challenges in their learning process. For these reasons above, this present study seeks the answer for the research question as follows:

What are Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of challenges in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency?

It is hoped that the research will contribute insights that can support Vietnamese EFL students to improve their English language proficiency based on the standards of the CEFR in Vietnam. Additionally, English language educators might gain a real perspective on applying and implementing the standards of CEFR in Vietnam. More specifically, they can learn about the considerable challenges that Vietnamese EFL students face in learning and meeting the requirements of English language proficiency at the B1 level. It is, therefore, necessary to examine this relatively under-researched issue to contribute to a better understanding of how students deal with the obstacles in the process of learning and meeting the standards of English language proficiency.

II. Literature Review

A. Description of the Western Model to Assess English Language Proficiency

The Western-based model to assess English language proficiency is known as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) which was designed in 2001 by the Council of Europe. It is created to evaluate the competence of the English language proficiency level of learners. According to the Council of Europe (2001), learners are evaluated on their English language proficiency level through four language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing with six reference levels: A-Basic Learner (including A1 Post Beginner: 'Breakthrough' and A2 Pre-intermediate: 'Way stage'); B-Independent Learner (including B1 Pre-1st Certificate: 'Threshold' and B2 1st Certificate: 'Vantage'); and C-Proficient Learner (including C1 Advanced: 'Effective Operational Proficiency' and C2 Proficiency: 'Mastery'; not native-speaker competence).

According to the Council of Europe (2001), the core purpose of the CEFR is to assist learners to demonstrate their levels of language proficiency in existing standards, tests, and examinations. Therefore, it is convenient for learners in comparison with other systems of qualification.

B. Description of the Common European Framework Reference for Languages in Vietnam (CEFR-V)

In 2008, the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) issued Decision 1400 associated with the instructions of Project 2020 for fundamental change in the foreign language education operation in the period from 2008 to 2020, which stipulates a national framework for Vietnam based on the Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFR) with detailed descriptions of reference levels from A1 (Basic Learners) to B1 (Independent Learners). The national framework named the Common European Framework Reference for Languages in Vietnam (CEFR-V) is adapted and implemented for curriculum development, course materials update, teaching plans, and assessment. According to the Official Dispatch No. 792/BGDĐT/NGCBQLGD dated on February 25th, 2014 (MOET, 2014), the purpose of the CEFR-V requires that students who leave schools will achieve a minimum level of English language proficiency. As for Vietnamese EFL students in university, the requirements of English language proficiency level after completing the university program is level 3 (B1) of CEFR-V. This level is approximately at the Threshold level of CEFR in the Western-based model in which language learners achieve the fundamental functions in a particular language. For students who major in English Studies, English Translation and Interpretation or English Teacher Education, it is C1, or Effective Operational Proficiency level. Masters students of all majors are required to achieve B1 of English language proficiency before entering their master's program. Additionally, Doctor of Philosophy candidates have to reach B2 of English language proficiency before starting to follow their Ph.D. track.

On the other hand, to meet the requirements of the MOET, it is reported that the government's targets for English language proficiency were ambitious (Hamid & Jahan, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2016; Pham, 2017). The survey of this study figured out that only one of five learners reached target levels. Besides that, Nguyen and Hamid (2020) indicated reasons for not achieving the English language proficiency related to teacher professional development 'lack of resources and out-dated teaching methods much focus on traditional grammar approach'. Therefore, the MOET has planned a number of policies to implement innovations in English language teaching and learning through 2025.

Focused on the descriptions of the model of CEFR-V, this research paper looks into difficulties of learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency of Vietnamese EFL students to help them reach level 3 of CEFR-V (B1). To attain this level, university students have to clearly understand the framework of the test. Besides that, learners also must have background knowledge related to various topics to support their developing language skills for the test. Finally, learners should utilize strategies to help them attain their target scores in the examination.

C. Challenges in Learning and Meeting the Requirements of English Language Proficiency

Relevant studies shed light on obstacles which learners faced in learning to reach the English language proficiency. According to Tomlinson (2014), a teacher might have difficulty in teaching English to help students achieve their target English language proficiency. This relates to candidates' factors. Particularly, candidates with different levels in a classroom will be a challenge for the teachers since they are multileveled. Moreover, Truong and Dang (2017) articulated that the biggest challenge for learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency was an environment for using and practising English in the Vietnamese EFL context. Additionally, Le (1999) stated that students lack motivation to learn English due to lack of a real context for using English to communicate. Importantly, Mai (2014) figured out that students lack real-life scenarios to practise English speaking outside the classroom. This viewpoint is similar with the results of Pham's (2019) study.

In conclusion, it is well evidenced that there are three striking factors which affect learners having difficulty in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency: the test, candidate, and environment.

D. Previous Studies on Attaining English Language Proficiency of Learners

A few researchers have conducted studies related to attaining English language proficiency of learners. Kanokrat (2015) investigated English Learning Strategies that first-year English majors utilized in the process of learning English to achieve their targets of English language proficiency in Thailand. The core purpose of the study was to figure out English language learning strategies popularly used by these students. In this study, six direct and indirect language learning strategies were listed. The findings of the study showed that there was a difference between the students' application of English language strategies and their levels of English language proficiency. In particular, English language strategies used depended on the level of English language proficiency of students. Therefore, it is concluded that the main factor affecting students' English language proficiency was learners. Additionally, Wee (2003) provided the understanding of implementing and promoting policy in language education based on CEFR. She reflected that the graduate students who failed to reach the level expectation of language proficiency competence focused on the Western-based model of CEFR: "the university could not compete in the market [of foreign language education in Vietnam]". Further, she gives emphasis to the difficulties rather than the opportunities generated by the CEFR on four main features including the lack of reliable and valid standards of the CEFR, the lack of the model of CEFR awareness and comprehending of language teachers, the policy of CEFR, and the commercial nature of the CEFR framework.

Back to the context of Vietnam, Duong and Trinh (2016) had a perspective of CEFR-V policy and practice in a higher education institution in the Mekong Delta. This study provides a general viewpoint of the national project on foreign language improvement. In specific, a national framework of CEFR with six levels is formed to evaluate teachers and students' English language proficiency. From 2015, this project is conducted with aiming at enabling Vietnamese EFL students in non-English major classes to reach level 3 (B1) of this CEFR-V model. With a general picture of Vietnam, it is very challenging for many tertiary institutes to attain targets of English language proficiency because of the policies and practices of the CEFR-V model. The results of this study showed that there are two proposed pedagogical practices involving student orientation and enhanced activities. Furthermore, students claimed that instructional quality of CEFR-V is complicated. Vietnamese EFL students expressed their perspectives that they need more essential materials for preparing and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency including material selections, facilities and test formats. With test formats, students hope that they can expose practice tests explicitly with corresponding learning curriculum and test formats. Particularly, the purpose of implementing CEFR-V is to help students develop English speaking skills in a real context. It meant that English language proficiency has to be attached to communication context. To become involved with students' classroom performance, the practices of the CEFR-V model should be community-based and use enhanced activities to guide students in self-directed learning and co-operative and problem-based learning. Therefore, these might assist students in improving their lifelong learning strategies. In addition, the low level of English language proficiency of Vietnamese EFL students is also a challenging feature which affects learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency.

In Truong and Dang's (2017) study, EFL students' perspectives of achieving the standard-based proficiency level at a central university in Vietnam are presented. Data were collected through qualitative and quantitative methods using a questionnaire and an in-depth interview respectively. Participants of the study were 105 Vietnamese EFL students in a central university in Vietnam. Results revealed that most EFL students had a positive perception of reaching the B1 English language proficiency level as required in their training curriculum. The highlighted point of this study was specific activities for assisting students to be able to attain the standard-based English language proficiency based on the CEFR model in Vietnam. Additionally, Vietnamese EFL students faced challenges in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency involving the size of class, laziness of students, time limitation for students to learn, lack of facilities, abundant activities designed by the lecturers, using L1 in the classroom, lack of self-confidence and students' passiveness.

From the findings of these studies above, it is considered that English language proficiency of learners plays a crucial role in students' professional development. Considering the difficulties in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency for students also is an important point to assist them to have experience for achieving their target scores for the CEFR-V examination. In the real context of a public university in the Mekong Delta, the results of the present study might contribute to the literature and provide valuable insights for Vietnamese EFL students in non-English major classes in terms of achieving B1 English language proficiency level.

III. Methods

A. Participants and Context

Participants were 60 Vietnamese EFL students at pre-intermediate level (female =24; male =36) majoring in Odonto-stomatology (Oral maxillofacial surgery) at a public university in Vietnam. Their ages are from 19 to 22 years old. Their average number of years of learning English was 12 years. At the time of conducting this study, they have just finished the second term of the second-year of the university program at school. It means they completed four modules of General English at university and their language proficiency was reported to be appropriately B1 level on the CEFR in Vietnam.

B. Measurement Instruments

With an effort to investigate challenges Vietnamese EFL students faced when they learn and meet the requirements of B1 English language proficiency in their university curriculum, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were designed to measure students' perceptions of challenges they had in the process of learning and meeting English standards.

(a). Questionnaire

The items of the questionnaire were mainly adapted from Truong and Dang (2017). The time for conducting the survey questionnaire was from 20 to 22 April 2023. A total of 60 questionnaires were collected for the final analysis phase. The structure of the questionnaire included two central parts. The first part of the questionnaire addressed the demographic information of the participants involving gender, age, major, and years of learning English. The second part of the questionnaire presented three Clusters with 35 items that were developed to probe the real subject of the present study which aims to find out difficulties in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency of learners. The form of the questionnaire was a Likert scale with responses ranging from '1' (Strongly Disagree) to '5' (Strongly Agree). Before giving the questionnaire to the participants, the researcher had an orientation for completing this questionnaire survey. Each participant had a 15-20 minute time required to complete this questionnaire. Table 1 describes the reliability of the questionnaire.

TABLE 1
THE RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.86	35

(b). Interview

Interviews were a supporting tool for collecting the qualitative data. The questions of the interview mainly focused on main research objectives. However, some further questions for participants were proposed if necessary. The contribution of participants' ideas could provide more qualitative responses. Additionally, participants who participated in the interview could provide answers naturally and be more comfortable.

The interview participants involved in the present study were 7 second-year students who major in Odonto-stomatology (Oral maxillofacial surgery) including 3 males and 4 females in two different classes in the School of Odonto- stomatology in university.

1. Design of the Interview

With the primary aim of confirming the results from the questionnaire and getting further information in relation to the challenges university students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency, interviews were done after the implementation of the questionnaire. The interview consisted of five questions. Firstly, question 1 elicited information on the general challenges university students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Secondly, questions 2, 3, and 4 were designed to confirm and find out more university students' attitudes towards the challenges related to test, candidate, and environment factors that students faced in learning English. Lastly, question 5 was set to give implications of learning English to meet the requirements of B1 English language proficiency for university students.

2. Administering the Interview

The interview was done after the analysis of the questionnaire. Seven out of sixty Vietnamese EFL students were chosen for the interview. Each individual was interviewed in around 10 to 15 minutes. All the participants' responses were recorded and transcribed. After that, they were translated into English.

After finishing the interview with the 7 participants, the results of the interview revealed that all of the interviewees reported they met challenges when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Moreover, the findings of the interview confirmed that most of the university students had common challenges in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English proficiency related to test, candidate, and environment.

IV. RESULTS

A. Challenges EFL Students Faced When Learning and Meeting the Requirements of B1 English Language Proficiency

TABLE 2
THE MEAN SCORE OF CHALLENGES EFL STUDENTS FACED WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**
Mean	60	3.7	.42	.10

A One-Sample T-test was run to check whether there was a difference between the mean score of challenges university students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency (M=3.7) and a test of 4.0. The result showed that the difference was not statistically significant (t = -2.73; p = .016). It is concluded that Vietnamese EFL students have considerable difficulties in the process of learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency.

B. Test-Related Challenges EFL Students Faced When Learning and Meeting the Requirements of B1 English Language Proficiency

TABLE 3
OVERALL MEAN SCORE OF EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEST-RELATED CHALLENGES WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Test-related	60	1.13	5	3.36	.73
Valid (listwide)	60				

Table 3 shows the overall mean score of EFL students' perceptions of challenges related to test factors when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. The first Cluster of the questionnaire presented challenges related to testing that students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. The overall mean score of this Cluster was M = 3.36, SD = .73 which presented for 'neutral' level based on a five-scale questionnaire. It is concluded that Vietnamese EFL students did not face significant challenges related to testing when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency.

TABLE 4
EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHALLENGES RELATED TO TEST WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Items of Cluster 1 (Test-related)	N	Min	Max	M	SD
1. Being difficult to remember meaning of new words	60	1.00	5.00	3.46	1.30
2. Being difficult to pronounce and then remember the new words	60	1.00	5.00	3.80	1.32
3. Not guessing the meaning of new words in reading texts	60	1.00	5.00	3.33	1.11
4. Being difficult to combine words together	60	1.00	5.00	3.66	1.17
5. Not recognising the word's part of speech	60	1.00	5.00	3.40	1.45
6. Not understanding and using verb tenses and forms	60	1.00	5.00	3.46	1.18
7. Not recognising and using unfamiliar structures	60	1.00	5.00	3.53	1.18
8. Not understanding and identifying the types of sentences	60	1.00	5.00	3.13	1.40
9. Not guessing new words in the contexts	60	1.00	5.00	2.93	1.33
10. Not scanning the text for specific information	60	1.00	5.00	2.73	1.22
11. Not skimming the text for general information	60	1.00	5.00	2.93	1.22
12. Not predicting the content of the texts	60	1.00	5.00	2.93	1.22
13. Not summarizing the content of the texts	60	1.00	5.00	3.40	1.12
14. Having a lot of new vocabulary and phrases in the listening activity	60	2.00	5.00	4.13	.99
15. Finding difficulties to get general understanding of the spoken text from the first time	60	2.00	5.00	4.20	.86
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 4 represents the common obstacles EFL students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Overall, challenges related to testing from university students' perspectives were insignificant. Particularly, the most common challenges that university students had when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency involve language skills in the test. In listening skills of the test, the amount of vocabulary and phrases represented in the test might pose a challenge for them to comprehend during listening activities, with this question reaching the mean score of 4.13. Additionally, they also faced difficulty in getting general understanding of the spoken text from the first time in the listening skill with a mean score slightly high (M=4.20, SD =.86). Besides that, university students found it difficult to pronounce and remember new words and combine words together, with the mean score 3.80 and 3.66, respectively. In the design of the test, unfamiliar structures were also a challenge for candidates to understand with M = 3.53, SD = 1.18. However, it is obvious that scanning the text for specific information is not a big challenge for university students when they take B1 English language proficiency test (M = 2.83, SD = 1.12).

The results of the semi-structured interview concentrated on the Cluster 1 with the overall mean score in the questionnaire (M= 3.36). One student stated as follows:

"I practice and do many B1 examinations in listening skills on the Internet, but I cannot improve my listening ability because in listening tests, there are a lot of new words and phrases".

Another idea: *"I have a lot of challenges related to test in my learning English at university. For listening skills, it is hard for me to understand new words and unfamiliar structures. Moreover, it is very difficult for me to get general information in listening assignment from the first time; for reading skills: I cannot guess the meaning of new words in reading texts".*

According to other interviewees, they shared their own challenges in the following: *"I often face challenges related to listening and reading skills because in my viewpoints, these skills consist of new words and phrases. It is challenging for me to conquer the language proficiency".*

From mentioned challenges above, it seems that they nearly had similar perspectives on challenges related to testing. Among four skills of English language proficiency, listening and reading are considered as the most challenging skills for students to attain B1 English language proficiency.

C. Candidate-Related Challenges EFL Students Faced When Learning and Meeting the Requirements of B1 English Language Proficiency

TABLE 5
OVERALL MEAN SCORE OF EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CANDIDATE-RELATED CHALLENGES WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Candidate-related	60	2.28	5	4.03	.40
Valid (listwide)	60				

Table 5 above shows the overall mean score of Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of difficulties related to candidate in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. The overall mean score of Cluster 2 was M = 4.03, SD = .40 which was significantly high. This meant that university students faced significant challenges in this area when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Particularly, Table 6 shows Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of detailed challenges related to candidate that they encountered in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency.

TABLE 6
EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHALLENGES RELATED TO CANDIDATE WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Items of Cluster 2 (Candidate-related)	N	Min	Max	M	SD
16. Having limited time of practising at class	60	2.00	5.00	4.26	.88
17. Being hard to understand well when speakers speak too fast	60	1.00	5.00	4.26	1.03
18. Being hard to understand well when speakers speak with a variety of accents	60	1.00	5.00	4.20	1.14
19. Stopping listening when I have problems in understanding	60	3.00	5.00	3.86	.74
20. Not coming up with the words like how to express your thoughts	60	3.00	5.00	4.00	.53
21. Not knowing the appropriate use of words	60	3.00	5.00	4.13	.63
22. Getting trouble in sentence structures	60	1.00	5.00	3.26	1.27
23. Lacking of ideas to write	60	2.00	5.00	3.80	.94
24. Lacking of coherence, consolidation of knowledge when writing	60	2.00	5.00	4.13	.74
25. Lacking of using formal transitional and cohesive devices in your writing	60	2.00	5.00	3.53	.91
26. Lacking of self-confidence	60	3.00	5.00	4.26	.88
27. Feeling shy or afraid to speak or express your ideas	60	2.00	5.00	4.00	1.06
28. Often having mistakes on grammatical points with your speaking performance	60	4.00	5.00	4.53	.51
29. Lacking of vocabulary to speak	60	3.00	5.00	4.40	.73
Valid N (listwise)	60				

It is clear from the Table 6 above, the most challenge that students met when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency was with grammatical mistakes. Specifically, they have mistakes on grammatical points with their speaking performance (M = 4.53, SD = .51). Besides that, the second biggest challenge students faced was that when students speak on a detailed topic, they do not have enough vocabulary to express their ideas with M = 4.40, SD =.73. Additionally, students have difficulties in lacking self-confidence (M = 4.26, SD = .88). Looking at the details, there are two items which got the same mean score of 4.26. Students stated that they have time limitations for practising. Similarly, they perceived that they have difficulties comprehending when speakers speak too fast. However, it can be seen that having trouble with sentence structures is the smallest challenge related to candidate with M = 3.26, SD = 1.27.

The results from the interview explore more about higher education students' perceptions of challenges related to candidate in their attaining the standards of English language proficiency B1 level. An interviewee said *"To attain the standard-based English language proficiency B1 level, I faced many challenges related to myself such as lack of knowledge related to structures and lack of vocabulary. In learning English to meet the requirements of B1 English language proficiency at university, I recognize that my knowledge related to grammatical points is not enough, especially complex structures. Moreover, I lack vocabulary to write or express ideas in my writing performance"*. Likewise, another interviewee had a similar view, *"I think it is very challenging for me to present my ideas in writing skills because the amount of vocabulary I have. In addition, I face to interview or talk to foreigners; I do not have much vocabulary to communicate with them"*. Results from the interviews revealed that university students faced significant challenges in achieving the standards of English proficiency B1 level including lack of vocabulary to write or express ideas, lack of time for practice, lack of knowledge related to grammatical structures, and lack of self-confidence in speaking performance.

D. Environment-Related Challenges EFL Students Faced When Learning and Meeting the Requirements of B1 English Language Proficiency

TABLE 7
OVERALL MEAN SCORE OF EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CHALLENGES WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Environment-related	60	2.28	5	3.77	.27
Valid (listwide)	60				

Table 7 above presents the overall mean score of Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of difficulties related to environment in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. The overall mean score of Cluster 3 was M = 3.77, SD = .27 which was significantly high. This meant that university students' obstacles related to environment when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency were considerable. In particular, Table 8 presents Vietnamese EFL students' perceptions of detailed challenges related to environment that they had in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency.

TABLE 8
EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF CHALLENGES RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT WHEN LEARNING AND MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF B1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Items of Cluster 3 (Environment-related)	N	Min	Max	M	SD
30. Listening poor quality CDs and CD players	60	1.00	5.00	3.80	1.26
31. Not using dictionary effectively to improve writing skills	60	3.00	5.00	3.97	.718
32. Visual aids do not affect to learning vocabulary	60	2.00	5.00	3.50	.630
33. Not applying social sites in language classroom	60	2.00	5.00	3.83	.691
34. English videos do not improve speaking skills	60	1.00	5.00	3.76	1.17
35. Mock tests do not help to do the actual tests well	60	3.00	5.00	3.80	.714
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 8 illustrates specific challenges related to environment that Vietnamese EFL students encountered in the process of learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. From the Table above, it is clear that most participants claimed that they did not use dictionaries effectively to improve their writing skills (M = 3.97, SD = .718). The second challenge that they faced in the classroom is that they lack support from their teachers in applying social sites with the mean score of 3.83 and SD = .691. Moreover, the poor quality of CDs and CD players and the design of mock tests are also two obstacles of Vietnamese EFL students, with M = 3.8, SD = 1.26 and M = 3.8, SD =.714, respectively. Furthermore, English videos are perceived to not improve speaking skills of students in the process of learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency (M = 3.76, SD = 1.17). Finally, it is considered that these participants also have problems with learning vocabulary through visual aids (M = 3.5, SD = .630).

Additionally, these interviewees also expressed their ideas through the results from the interviews. Participants' perceptions of the challenges related to environment included the following:

"Some challenges related to facilities and environment such as lack of environment to practice English speaking, the quality of CDs, the format of mock tests and the outdoor noise sources". In some cases, the students revealed that: "Students at my university lack of environment to practice speaking with native speakers and foreigners to improve and develop their speaking ability".

In specific, the main feature in gaining the required standard level today relates to insufficient facilities that exert an influence on learning English language by Vietnamese EFL students. The quality of lessons in class is not effective if the class is not equipped adequately with facilities. For instance, headphones used for listening classes are not good enough; therefore, students cannot complete the listening section in the lesson.

In conclusion, the challenges university students faced when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency are very significant. It is challenging for university students in achieving the standards of English language proficiency B1 level within the CEFR of Vietnam including candidate-related, test-related, and environment-related challenges. On the other hand, the most crucial element is that learners should try their best to be able to attain the expected achievement because the aim is realistic and it affects their future substantially. Furthermore, from the existing challenges, students suggested detailed plans for developing their English language proficiency in the future.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated challenges when learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency among 60 Vietnamese EFL students. Particularly, it explored which challenges affect the process of learning and meeting the standards of B1 English language proficiency. Employing exploratory factor analysis, it is concluded that

Vietnamese EFL students encountered significant challenges in the learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Nevertheless, university students faced candidate-related challenges and environment-related challenges more than test-related challenges. Due to challenges that the students encountered in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency, they ought to have action plans for the process of attaining the requirements of B1 English language proficiency based on the CEFR in Vietnam. Moreover, university students themselves are the most determining factor to be able to reach the expected targets in learning and meeting the standards of English language proficiency B1 level within the CEFR-V.

VI. Implications

Focused on the findings of the study, some pedagogical implications were indicated. Firstly, most Vietnamese EFL students have problems related to candidate and environment in learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. In terms of candidate-related challenges, they often make mistakes in grammatical structures when they speak. Moreover, the biggest challenge in learning English speaking skills is that they lack vocabulary to speak. In regard to environment and facilities-related challenges, university students do not how to use dictionaries effectively to learn new words. Besides that, they do not have appropriate mock tests to practice with. Therefore, instructors might play a crucial role in guiding their students in the process of learning and meeting the requirements of B1 English language proficiency. Finally, the present study also reveals that students' lack of self-confidence and their passiveness contribute to not reaching the expected achievement. Therefore, it is essential to have an immediate language environment for students to practice and improve their process of learning and meeting the standards of English language proficiency of CEFR-V.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the Vietnamese EFL students for their support and participation. He also appreciates the anonymous reviewers and the handling editor of the Journal of Language Teaching and Research for their constructive comments on earlier versions of this manuscript. He is grateful to all who helped.

References

[1] Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.

[2] Crystal, D. (2008). Two thousand million? *English today*, *24*(1), 3-6. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000023

[3] Duong, D. T., & Trinh, Q. L. (2016). Lecturers and students' perceptions of EFL policy and practice at a higher education institute. *CTU Journal of Innovation and Sustainable Development*, *3*, 49-56. https://doi.org/10.22144/ctu.jen.2016.023

[4] Hamid, M. O., & Jahan, I. (2015). Language, identity, and social divides: Medium of instruction debates in Bangladeshi print media. *Comparative Education Review*, *59*(1), 75-101. https://doi.org/10.1086/679192

[5] Huynh, T. H. (2020). The Status of Using English at Work by Vietnamese Students after graduating from University. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *8*(11), 5318-5321. https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2020.081133

[6] Kanokrat, K. (2015). English Learning Strategy and Proficiency Level of the First-year Students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *197*, 1853-1858. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.07.246

[7] Le, V. C. (1999). *Language and Vietnamese pedagogical contexts.* Paper presented at the Fourth International Conference on Language and Development, "Partnership and Interaction", Hanoi, Vietnam.

[8] Mai, N. K. (2014). Towards a Holistic Approach to Developing the Language Proficiency of Vietnamese Primary Teachers of English. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, *11*(2), 341-357.

[9] Ministry of Education and Training. (2008). *De an day va hoc ngoai ngu trong he thong giao duc quoc dan giai doan 2008-2020* [Project guidelines for teaching and learning foreign languages in the national education system in the period from 2008 to 2020]. Hanoi, Vietnam.

[10] Ministry of Education and Training. (2014). *Thong tu ban hanh khung nang luc ngoai ngu 6 bac dung cho Viet Nam* [Circular No. 01/2014/TT-BDGĐT to issue a six-level framework for foreign language proficiency in Vietnam].

[11] Nguyen, V. H., Hamid, M., & Renshaw, P. D. (2016). Language education policy enactment and individual agency. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, *40*, 69-84. https://doi.org/10.1075/lplp.40.1.04van

[12] Nguyen, V. H., & Hamid, M. O. (2020). The CEFR as a national language policy in Vietnam: insights from a sociogenetic analysis. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2020.1715416

[13] Nguyen, X. V. (2003). English Language Teaching in Vietnam Today: Policy, Practice and Constraints. In *English Language Teaching in East Asia Today: Changing, Policies and Practices,* edited by Ho Wah Kam, and Ruth Y. L. Wong, 455-462. Eastern Universities Press.

[14] Pham, T. H. N. (2017). Applying the CEFR to renew a general English curriculum: Successes, remaining issues and lessons from Vietnam. In Fergus O'Dwyer et al. (eds.), *Critical, constructive assessment of CEFR-informed language teaching in Japan and beyond*, 97-117. Cambridge University Press.

[15] Pham, T. T. N. (2019). University Students' Perceptions of Standard-Based English Language Learning Outcome. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, *7*(6), 315-318. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijll.20190706.19

[16] Tamimi Sa'd, S. H. (2018). World English and World Englishes: perspectives from English language learners in Iran. *Journal of World Languages*, *5*(1), 23-45. https://doi.org/10.1080/21698252.2018.1500151

[17] Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated instruction in mixed-ability classrooms.* (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
[18] Truong, C. B. (2016). *The motivation of Vietnamese university students to learn English: A study using the expectancy-value model of academic motivation.* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. The University of Newcastle.
[19] Truong, V., & Dang, T. N. G. (2017). Helping learners attain the standard-based proficiency level: Perspectives of EFL teachers and students at Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry. *Journal of Science, University of Education, Hue University*, *4*(44), 13-24.
[20] Wee, L. (2003). Linguistic instrumentalism in Singapore. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *24*(3), 211-224. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630308666499

Phat Huu Nguyen completed his B.A. degree in English Studies in 2018 and his M.A. degree in TESOL in 2022 from Tra Vinh University, Vietnam. He is currently a lecturer of English at the School of Foreign Languages, Tra Vinh University, Vietnam. His research interests include the teaching of second-language writing and the role of technology in language learning.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 902-910, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.23

Exploring Engagement and Efficacy in Secondary English Education in China: A Problem-Based Social Constructivism Approach

Qian Wang
Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;
Faculty of Humanity, JingGangShan University, Jiangxi Province, China

Shigang Ge
Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Amira Najiha Yahya
Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Norfaezah Md. Khalid
Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Jing Li
AnShun No.2 High School, AnShun City, Guizhou Province, China

***Abstract*—The English learning environment, both online and offline, can be improved through the implementation of effective pedagogical approaches. In response to secondary education needs, it is critical to establish comparable curriculum paradigms that address the knowledge acquisition gap and psychometric variation. This study aims to promote student engagement and self-efficacy in English education by implementing a problem-based learning (PBL) approach integrated with social constructivism (SC). A t-test and a correlation test were used in a single-group quasi-experiment with 45 participants. The results of paired samples t-tests show a significant difference in engagement ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 2.95$, $p = .001$, $p < .05$) and self-efficacy ($M = 6.49$, $SD = 16.59$, $p = .01$). Admittedly, both cognitive engagement and social engagement enhance grammatical and textual competence efficacy dramatically, leading to a spectacular improvement. After controlling for the pre-test, a correlation between engagement and efficacy remains significant ($r (43) = -0.40$, $p = .01$). In conclusion, the combination of PBL with SC education has demonstrated remarkable effectiveness in facilitating English language learning, meeting the needs of secondary education teenagers, whether in a physical classroom or engaging through online platforms.**

***Index Terms*—problem-based learning, social constructivism, secondary students, engagement, self-efficacy**

I. Introduction

Online learning, remote classrooms, and virtual collaboration tools have become the new norm, enabling uninterrupted learning experiences while prioritizing the safety and well-being of students and educators (Yan et al., 2021; Zuo et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the integration of technology into education has also demonstrated its potential benefits. It has facilitated personalized learning experiences, expanded access to educational resources, and empowered educators to reach students in remote and underserved areas. To explore the combination of classroom and online learning, the traditional approach is no longer suitable, and the roles of instructors and students must evolve (Chien & Hwang, 2022). Adolescents are educated and inspired through the implementation of constructive, impartial investigation teaching techniques, with a focus on shifting from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction and from passive to active training.

The Chinese Ministry of Education has been focusing on secondary English education for several decades to enhance the instructional strategies of the English curriculum (Chinese Ministry of Education, 2001). English instruction that prioritizes quality should improve learners' language usability, cross-cultural awareness, communication skills, and their capacity for autonomous study. However, many pupils often lack exposure to English in a setting where it is a desired output. Researchers contend that question training is a useful strategy that can be applied to motivate teenagers and enable them to incorporate their current abilities and competencies in a relevant setting, which consequently encourages scientific learning acquisition elsewhere in the epidemic era (Granle Jr., 2022). This approach also helps cultivate participants' autonomous learning abilities (Batubara & Mahardhika, 2020).

In high school, new teaching methods are needed as part of China's epidemic response policy. The combination of online and offline teaching has led to low participation and reduced learning efficiency. Addressing this issue can help overcome the traditional problem of students losing confidence in their learning abilities. When classrooms are problem-centered and student-focused, learners become more willing to engage, answer questions during class, stay active, and are motivated to learn English (Lee, 2022). On the other hand, when the acquisition or construction of knowledge relies on the direct correction of numerous erroneous English sentences by trainers, students tend to deny their awareness in a strict learning environment (Kristianto & Gandajaya, 2022).

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) refers to Yew and Goh (2016). Participants are facilitated to engage in the class because it is student-centered, with close attention paid to their input on everything from comprehension to application. This strategy places emphasis on the implications of how to suggest and encourage individuals' practice and understanding through addressing problems in real circumstances, inspiring them to actively study, discover, and question. Social constructivism (SC) suggests that learning cannot be a separate process of receiving knowledge; all processes need to be interactive (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Participants are likely to become increasingly involved as they experience numerous mentors and dynamics, making engagement easier.

Therefore, the proposal is to intervene and introduce PBL integrated with SC to Chinese high schools as an effective strategy for preparing teenagers to face the post-epidemic era. Based on this context, the research questions for this project are as follows:

RQ1: Does respondents' engagement significantly differ before and after implementing PBL integrated with SC in English language acquisition?

RQ2: Does respondents' self-efficacy significantly differ before and after implementing PBL integrated with SC in English language acquisition?

RQ3: Is there a significant correlation between respondents' engagement and self-efficacy after implementing PBL integrated with SC in English language acquisition?

II. Literature Review

A. Problem-Based Learning Approach and Social Constructivism

Problem-based learning can capture pupils' attention and enhance their affinity for learning, whether in offline or online settings. Teenagers collaborate in groups by formulating situational questions, organizing task distribution, discussing problems, organizing materials, and gradually encouraging trainees to actively participate in this process to boost their sense of self-efficacy. While the PBL method has been widely employed in other sectors, it remains in the research stage in English teaching (Lonergan et al., 2022). Learners evaluate valuable information, establish, and refine the relevant information in their minds. This iterative process involves problem-oriented search evaluation until enough information is acquired to formulate a hypothesis or possible hypotheses for making diagnostic and management decisions. Ge et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of using student-centered rather than teacher-centered techniques in the realm of English teaching and argue that PBL is one such technique, placing greater emphasis on students in the classroom. This method equips learners with the tools they need to engage in further research and put theories and exercises into practice, including utilizing relevant knowledge and techniques to discover optimal solutions to given problems (Kristianto & Gandajaya, 2022).

Researchers recommend the combination of student-centered teaching practices and curricula (Chien & Hwang, 2022) for effectively implementing PBL. To enhance teenagers' grammatical structures and proficiency in the English language, English instructors must possess the ability to identify common traits, such as instructors incorporating high school senior exchanges into the learning process. This approach, as opposed to the traditional one-way flow of information from educator to learner, offers adaptability, allows for alterations, and includes hyperlinks, laying the foundation for connections with other data structures (Amineh & Asl, 2015). Teenagers actively engage in curriculum integration within a social constructivist setting, fostering communication and discovery with instructors and interaction with classmates.

According to constructivism, learning is a meaningful dialogue that occurs when the learner constructs a unique underlying structure of knowledge and a distinct perception of their own participation (Muna Aljohani, 2017). Teenagers' engagement and self-efficacy are influenced by this constructivist approach. Constructivism suggests that educators should tailor their teaching to specific studies, working towards well-defined objectives and research questions that are challenging yet achievable with scaffolding assistance. The PBL model creates a zone of proximal development, where pupils collaborate in a suitable learning environment, with instructors providing support akin to scaffolding (Margolis, 2020).

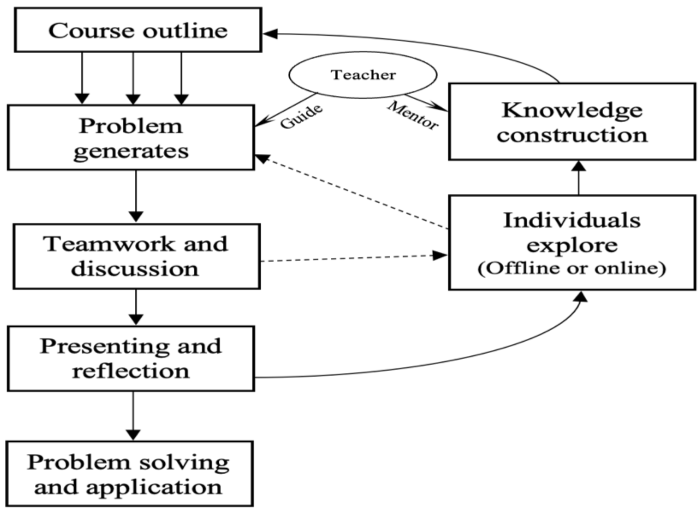


Figure 1. The Practice Framework of PBL Method Integrated Social Constructivism

B. Relations Among PBL, SC, and Students' Engagement

Engagement is defined as learners' level of responsibility, awareness, and involvement in the learning process, as well as their relevance to the learning context, enabling intellectual progress and, consequently, energizing academic accomplishment (Fredricks et al., 2016). Active learners, rather than passive observers in a traditional EFL study, take ownership of the learning and teaching processes, incorporating their interests (Kristianto & Gandajaya, 2022; Sousa & Costa, 2022). Behavioral engagement involves active participation in English lessons and diligent effort. Emotional engagement focuses on how individuals react positively or negatively to people and things on campus. Cognitive engagement pertains to being strategic and willing to invest the effort necessary to understand complex ideas or master difficult skills. Social engagement takes various forms in classroom tasks, including the quality of participation and social interaction with classmates.

Lee (2022) provides insights into using PBL in EFL lessons to enhance participants' dedication and promote meaningful engagement within a scientific framework. Given the teaching methods in South Korea, the PBL approach suggests that students can be encouraged to actively integrate into the classroom by coordinating their thinking, acquiring knowledge, and collaborating effectively. As demonstrated by published outcomes from a survey administered to 76 participants as part of an internet-based assessment, adopting the PBL technique has proven highly effective in enhancing learner commitment (Sousa & Costa, 2022).

C. Relations Among PBL, SC, and Students' Self-Efficacy

According to Sedighi et al. (2004), self-efficacy refers to learners' confidence in their skills. This belief is expected to empower them to become more active, have greater trust in dialogue, engage in research, and acquire new knowledge while learning. Textual competence, on the other hand, involves an awareness of the regularities and conventions of texts, genres, and text types, allowing individuals to use language effectively for interpreting, encoding, and decoding words and sentences as part of their grammatical competence.

In the context of group problem-seeking learning, secondary respondents gain self-inspiration, whether through external networks or peer experiences. In the study of Lonergan et al. (2022), participants, aged 13-14 and in Grade 8, attended ten mainstream Science classes in suburban Sydney, Australia. They explored spontaneously through PBL and shared their experiences and conclusions. In the classroom atmosphere of social constructivism, teenagers are no longer passive learners. Instead, self-efficacy is linked to the psychological assumption that promotes teenagers' success in tasks due to their confidence (Granle Jr., 2022).

Through increased communication and interaction, students' participation intensifies, and their self-affirmation also strengthens. Positive behavior from teaching to learning can significantly influence an individual's self-viability, and vice versa. A total of 48 Grade 4 trainees were recruited from an elementary school in Taoyuan City, Taiwan. They compared their abilities to those of their peers in the classroom environment (Chen et al., 2022).

D. Interaction Between Engagement and Efficacy

Self-efficacy plays a vital role in promoting pupils' willingness to engage in in-class activities. Participants with higher self-efficacy levels frequently receive positive feedback and maintain positive relationships and engagement. Lin (2021) investigated the relationship and correlation between engagement and self-efficacy in science learning. Teenagers with strong self-efficacy who master good scientific communication skills can enhance their social interaction and engagement in science. Moreover, learners who develop higher-order thinking skills tend to be more engaged in learning activities. The literature that the researcher reviewed also provides substantial support for the association or relationship between engagement and self-efficacy. For example, Xu et al. (2022) demonstrated that learners also need to understand the value of activities during the learning process, which helps improve pupils' emotional engagement. Musenze et al. (2022) also indicated that respondents with higher self-efficacy levels in completing science assignments exhibited greater cognitive and emotional engagement in science learning, as well as increased behavioral and agentic engagement.

III. Methodology

A. Research Design

A single-group quasi-experimental research design is applied in this investigation to explore the effectiveness of PBL-integrated SC on engagement and self-efficacy among senior secondary teenagers. This approach is widely recognized as a rigorous method for documenting intervention effectiveness (Purswell & Ray, 2014). The conventional method involves selecting one high school in AnShun, chosen for its background and institutional support, with a population of 1200 pupils. Simple random sampling is used to select one intact class from among the 24 groups of grade 11 students. To protect the rights and interests of the participants, data collection is conducted anonymously.

After obtaining consent from the local education department and the high school administration, respondents will receive the 8-week PBL intervention. Pre-test measurements of engagement and efficacy will be distributed during the 1st week, and post-test data will be collected during the 8th week through the online platform named 'WenJuanXing'. In this study, the first instrument is the engagement questionnaire, which is administered in 'math and science' by Fredricks et al. (2016). It consists of 38 items on behavior (11), emotions (11), cognition (9), and social aspects (7) of engagement. The researcher has adapted it to the English curriculum. Items use a 5-point Likert scale, with five indicating 'strongly agree' and one indicating 'strongly disagree.' The second instrument is a self-efficacy questionnaire consisting of 40 items with 2 domains: grammatical competence and textual competence. This questionnaire is directly adopted from Sedighi et al. (2004) and adapted to a 5-point Likert scale.

Figure 1 illustrates the intervention procedure. Initially, the instructor introduces the course outline and guides all learners to identify problems based on the Grade 11 high school English curriculum standard syllabus. Furthermore, 5-7 teenagers form small groups to gather useful information before creating cohesion. They engage in individual and teamwork activities, both offline and online, from hypothesis development to scheming and discussion. Moreover, they not only present and share their insights but also provide and receive timely feedback in the social constructivist atmosphere facilitated through QQ group chat software and the classroom setting, synchronously. This approach ultimately expands and extends the scope of English courses, ensuring a systematic acquisition of knowledge and laying the foundation for exploring new insights.

B. Validation and Reliability

The validation of two instruments is assessed by six experienced high school English experts. As Polit and Beck (2006) suggest, the Content Validity Index (CVI) is generally employed to evaluate content validity for multi-item scales. Additionally, the scale level (S-CVI) is calculated by summing these indices and dividing by the number of items. The S-CVI for engagement measurement is 0.93, exceeding the threshold of 0.90. Similarly, the S-CVI for self-efficacy is 1.0, indicating high validation (Polit & Beck, 2006).

Reliability is monitored through a pilot study involving 30 teenagers who did not participate in this research, from school X. Cronbach's alpha values are computed using SPSS software version 26 and are found to be 0.93 for assessments of teenagers' self-efficacy and 0.86 for their engagement with the material. All test results fall within the range of 0.70 to 0.95, indicating good reliability and high consistency (Yusup, 2018).

IV. Results

A. Demographic Information

Students were selected from one high school in Anshun City, Guizhou Province, China, using random sampling techniques. An intact class from a pool of 24 was chosen to form the experimental group. After initial descriptive statistics cleaning, focusing on monitoring missing values, 45 valid data points were obtained, as shown in Table 1.

In terms of gender statistics, there were 15 female students and 30 male students, making up 67 percent and 33 percent of the total, respectively. Regarding age, there were 19 respondents aged 16, 18 respondents aged 17, and 8 respondents aged 18, representing 42 percent, 40 percent, and 18 percent of the total, respectively.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographics	Detail	Number	Percent
Gender	Male	30	67
	Female	15	33
Age	16 years old	19	42
	17 years old	18	40
	18 years old	8	18

B. Description Analysis of the Respondent Results

Admittedly, after implementing the PBL teaching technique, the resulting outcomes reveal changes in the engagement and self-efficacy of trainees toward the English curriculum. Table 2 displays the mean pre-test score of 129.31 for 45 pupils' engagement, with a standard deviation of 10.15. The post-test scores show an increase (M = 134.09, SD = 8.93). Furthermore, there was an increase in behavioral engagement from 38.71 to 39.38, emotional engagement from 36.89 to 37.93, cognitive engagement from 30.53 to 32.00, and social engagement from 23.09 to 24.78.

Conversely, teenagers' self-efficacy in English learning was measured as (M = 129.42, SD = 16.02) before the intervention and (M = 135.91, SD = 9.53) after the intervention. Notably, there was a positive enhancement in the mean scores for engagement in specific sub-dimensions, with grammatical competence increasing to 74.20 and textual competence reaching 61.71.

TABLE 2
THE DESCRIPTIVE DATA ABOUT ENGAGEMENT AND EFFICACY OF RESPONDENTS

Category		Items	Pre-test				Post-test			
			Min	*Max*	*M*	*SD*	*Min*	*Max*	*M*	*SD*
Engagement		38	107	145	129.31	10.15	114.00	158.00	134.09	8.93
of	*Behavioral*	11	28	44	38.71	4.64	33.00	55.00	39.38	5.53
	Emotional	11	33	44	36.98	4.21	33.00	48.00	37.93	4.85
	Cognitive	9	25	36	30.53	3.28	22.00	36.00	32.00	3.52
	Social	7	18	28	23.09	2.60	21.00	28.00	24.78	2.76
Efficacy		40	86	160	129.42	16.02	116.00	160.00	135.91	9.53
of	*Grammatical Competence*	22	50	88	71.42	8.70	63.00	88.00	74.20	6.22
	Textual Competence	18	36	72	58.00	9.27	53.00	74.00	61.71	5.34

C. Findings of Students' Engagement

The pupils' engagement normality test reveals that the pre-test skewness score is -0.29, and the kurtosis is -0.98, both of which fall within the acceptable range of -1.0 to 1.0, confirming the normal distribution of this data. In contrast, the post-test engagement shows skewness and kurtosis values of 0.17 and 0.11, respectively. The submissions for behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social engagement in the pre-test are (-0.23, -1.21), (0.59, -1.12), (0.15, -1.40), and (0.56, -0.82), respectively, all within the range of ±2.0, indicating a normal distribution. Similarly, the post-test values for these components are (0.86, 0.45), (0.39, -1.27), (-0.66, -0.18), and (-0.20, -1.51), respectively, demonstrating normal distribution as well. Furthermore, the Q-Q plot patterns for the pre-test and post-test scores of total and subdivision engagements show a linear pattern.

Paired-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the pupils' engagement scores before and after the intervention. The results indicate a significant positive mean difference (M = 4.78, SD = 2.95) in engagement, with t(44) = 10.85, p = 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), following the implementation of PBL integrated with the SC technique. Further investigation into the cognitive and social components also reveals positive effects (M = 1.47, p = 0.02) and (M = 1.69, p = 0.001), respectively, although there was only a slight increase in behavioral and emotional engagement. In summary, participants' engagement showed a significant positive increase through the use of PBL in the English curriculum.

TABLE 3
PAIR SAMPLE T-TEST IN STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT

Post - Pre		Paired Differences		*t*	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
		M	*SD*			
Engagement		4.78	2.95	10.85	44	0.00
of	*Behavioral*	0.67	4.55	0.98	44	0.33
	Emotional	0.96	5.21	1.23	44	0.23
	Cognitive	1.47	3.98	2.47	44	0.02
	Social	1.69	3.26	3.48	44	0.00

D. Findings of Students' Self-Efficacy

According to the inferential statistics of the scores, the skewness and kurtosis values of the pre-test scores in self-efficacy are -0.23 and 0.20, respectively, while those for the post-test are 0.23 and -0.14. Being within the range of ±1.0 indicates that these data are normally distributed. The subsection on grammatical competence and textual competence shows skewness and kurtosis results for the pre-test as follows: (0.27, -0.02) and (-0.67, 0.02) individually, and for the post-test: (0.43, -0.43) and (0.29, -0.74) separately. Furthermore, the Q-Q plots for both the pre-test and post-test of self-efficacy exhibit a linear pattern, as do the subdimensions.

When comparing the pupils' self-efficacy scores before and after the experiment, the results reveal a significant difference (M = 6.49, SD = 16.59), t(44) = -2.78, p = 0.01 ($p < 0.05$), in teenagers' English project influenced by PBL innovation. Additionally, not only grammatical competence but also textual competence shows significant improvements at the levels of (M = 2.78, p = 0.04) and (M = 3.71, p = 0.02) respectively. Thus, when students are engaged in a student-centered classroom, teenagers' efficacy in learning English is strengthened after the intervention.

TABLE 4
PAIR SAMPLE T-TEST IN STUDENTS' SELF-EFFICACY

Post - Pre		Paired Differences		*t*	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
		M	*SD*			
Efficacy		6.49	16.59	2.62	44	0.01
of	*Grammatical Competence*	2.78	9.01	2.07	44	0.04
	Textual Competence	3.71	10.61	2.35	44	0.02

E. Correlations of Students' Engagement and Self-Efficacy

The correlation test shows that there is a significant relationship between teenagers' engagement and self-efficacy after using the PBL in the experimental group (Table 5). Meanwhile, there is no significant correlation in the pre-test ($p = 0.13$, $p > 0.05$). Pupils' efficacy scores are consistently associated with engagement scores toward the new instructional strategy, $r(41) = 0.47$, $p = 0.002$ ($p < 0.05$). Increased interaction in the classroom is based on the social constructivism associated with PBL, and learners' self-efficacy is influenced by those engaged in learning English.

Through the Smart-PLS bootstrap program, the data for teenagers' engagement and efficacy after the problem-based teaching method, as well as their second-dimension structural model, are shown in Figure 2. It can be observed that behavioral tendency ($\beta = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$) has the strongest influence on overall engagement, while trainees' grammatical ($\beta = 0.85$) and textual ($\beta = 0.79$) competitiveness scores exceed expectations in terms of efficacy.

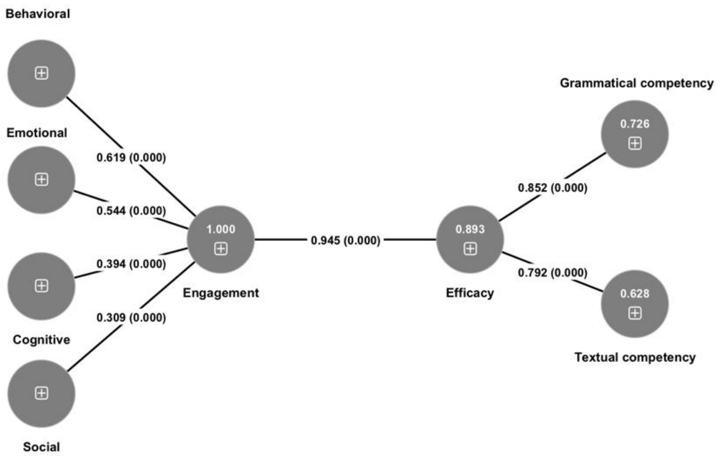


Figure 2. The Engagement and Efficacy Construct Model

V. DISCUSSION

A. Engagement vs PBL and SC Instruction

Pupils' engagement in English learning significantly differs between PBL integrated with SC settings and conventional instruction, particularly in the domains of cognitive and social engagement. This outcome aligns with Lee (2022), who suggests that a more positive psychological attitude stimulates pupils to acquire knowledge online/offline and actively participate in discussions by establishing a comfortable and relaxed educational atmosphere. Teaching assistants effectively support participants by facilitating seamless integration into the course. Within an interactive learning environment, teenagers have more room to showcase their strengths and experience less pressure related to their training. Educators transition into the roles of guides and mentors, while learners enjoy flexible and exciting activities. Teenagers can experience the joy of learning English, as advocated by Sousa and Costa (2022). Collaboration and connectivity among their peers make teenagers more likely to feel successful.

In the cognitive subsection, participation in question-based and collaborative learning settings leads to a significant increase in awareness among individuals with average grades or weak academic backgrounds, both in terms of their own potential and that of their peers (Batubara & Mahardhika, 2020). Furthermore, social engagement experiences a dramatic boost through collective interaction, both online and offline. The utilization of group activities also enhances the competitive consciousness among peers, as they assist trainees in feeling more confident about their self-perceptions by offering support and collaborating when facing similar challenges. Online and offline classrooms foster greater user engagement when there is a clear division of responsibility and cooperation, allowing teenagers to construct their own understanding of textbook material (Chien & Hwang, 2022). Intelligence thrives through social interaction, especially in the context of language studies. These interactions within individuals and their networks, along with their discussions of various components, deepen the impact of language acquisition.

B. Efficacy vs PBL and SC Instruction

Self-efficacy is enhanced when social constructivism interacts with the PBL pedagogy, resulting in greater grammatical competence and coherence compared to before. Pupils can intensify their psychological awareness, in line with Chen et al. (2022), through vicarious experiences gained by observing their peers. This is a key factor contributing to the improvement of students' self-efficacy. The exchange of information through teamwork, as well as the encouragement and compliments from peers and social members, further reinforces self-efficacy. In both online and offline social communication settings, individuals can leverage their respective strengths through collective interaction. Additionally, as emphasized by Lonergan et al. (2022), each learner plays a role distinct from the cognitive tasks or abilities they might acquire from their peers, making it easier for students to develop a positive self-concept. Learners become the focal point of the class, actively engaging in exploration and critical thinking.

Additionally, textual competence is reinforced through problem-solving skills and exploration of the English curriculum, as well as through continuous access to online and offline materials. Since each participant has a unique learning style, instructors embrace PBL instructional strategies, enabling learners to actively confirm their personal identity while working and to establish an educational mode that suits their pace (Lonergan et al., 2022). Admittedly, grammatical competence is enhanced because the same meaning is expressed by different people in an interactive setting. Customers create their own unique insights after acquiring knowledge through inspired questions, benefiting from the convenience and efficiency of network-based awareness construction (Granle Jr., 2022). Teenagers who receive high marks take on the role of experts in solving issues during group discussions, which they find satisfying.

C. Correlation Between Engagement & Efficacy After the Instruction

Engagement becomes apparent in learners' self-efficacy following the introduction of the innovation, even though it remains low. These results align with those of Xu et al. (2022), who also indicate a significant correlation between self-efficacy and engagement in their Pearson correlation analysis. Learners' engagement can be enhanced through collaborative techniques and activities that boost their self-efficacy. In such scenarios, teenagers are exposed to resources from various sources, be it social interactions or internet mining. Students with higher self-efficacy tend to receive frequent appraisals and maintain positive relationships and engagement, thanks to the refinement of the constructivist approach in the PBL model of instruction. Additionally, these findings are in line with those of Musenze et al. (2022), who also found a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and engagement. This underscores the importance of helping teenagers understand the value of activities during the learning process, which, in turn, enhances their emotional engagement with the material.

VI. Conclusion

The English learning project has detailed, argued, and analyzed dependent variables related to pupils' engagement and self-efficacy among Grade 11 high school teenagers in the Chinese region of Guizhou province. Furthermore, through quantitative experimental research, this study confirms the effectiveness of new instructional strategies within the post-epidemic era of English education. The Project-Based Learning (PBL) technique integrated with Self-Concept (SC) can properly assist and benefit pupils' comprehension of the English language, especially in response to China's policy adjustments due to COVID-19. Additionally, the PBL innovation is applicable to Chinese high schools, as it transforms learners from passive participants in conventional English learning approaches to active initiators. This approach fulfills the expectations of students at all proficiency levels, including top students, intermediate learners, and those with limited proficiency, fostering engagement and reducing anxiety in teenagers.

The researcher intends to provide suggestions for future studies comparing the use of PBL and SC in other academic domains. Since different regions exhibit distinct characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds, increasing the sample sizes in larger districts may prove more useful in representing all demographic types. Alternatively, connecting different parts of schools through the internet, such as using a learning management system, can offer a fresh perspective on applying PBL instruction. Further investigation into specific relationships between the use of PBL, engagement, and efficacy, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, can expand the research field.

A. Significant and Limitation of This Study

This research transforms the outdated teaching methods of the past by combining problem-based learning with constructivism, placing learners at the center of the classroom. Through the application and guidance of practical classroom pedagogy, trainers can engage trainees in acquiring English knowledge and enhance teenagers' learning self-efficacy. Additionally, it offers a strategic perspective on the English curriculum in Chinese high schools, even amidst chaotic and collaborative course conditions.

The research sample is limited to only 45 intact members, and the study is conducted in a single district in China. Due to these limitations, the results cannot be generalized to the millions of secondary school teenagers in China unless they share the same cultural context. This limitation is particularly significant given the prevalence of conventional teaching strategies and fixed-class instruction in China.

B. Pedagogical Implications

Nowadays, pupils are becoming increasingly sophisticated in digital experiences and personalized insights, especially in the Covid-19 pandemic post-era. Secondary teenagers require a more comprehensive educational pedagogy to activate their engagement, and trainers need to focus on attracting and interacting with them rather than strict supervision. Instructors claim to be aware of the importance of guidance and care in facilitating knowledge acquisition and problem-solving skills mastering, as awareness is fostered through cooperative teaching and learning among participants. Additionally, these study outcomes provide Chinese educators with implications aligned with current circumstances. In the classroom, instructors' responsibilities include overseeing the teaching process and serving as facilitators, researchers, and observers while pupils acquire new skills. School administrators should provide training for instructors and organize communication meetings to foster dual learning, creating a seamless environment for both trainers and trainees to utilize innovation.

REFERENCES

[1] Amineh, R. J., & Asl, H. D. (2015). Review of constructivism and social constructivism. *Journal of Social Sciences, Literature and Languages*, *1*(1), 9–16. https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Review-of-Constructivism-and-Social-Constructivism-Amineh-Asl/38903f4a7255496f75124d639e14e9b810c17370 (Retrieved on 12/12/2022)

[2] Batubara, M. H., & Mahardhika, M. G. S. (2020). A*n analysis on students' difficulties in changing active to passive voice. Jurnal As-Salam*, *4*(1), 61–78. https://doi.org/10.37249/as-salam.v4i1.175

[3] Chen, C. M., Wang, J. Y., & Zhao, R. H. (2022). An effective method for incentivizing groups implemented in a collaborative problem-based learning system to enhance positive peer interaction and learning performance. *Interactive Learning Environments*, *30*(3), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2019.1663435

[4] Chien, S., & Hwang, G. (2022). A question, observation, and organisation-based SVVR approach to enhancing students' presentation performance, classroom engagement, and technology acceptance in a cultural course. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *53*(2), 229–247. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13159

[5] Chinese Ministry of Education. (2001). *Gāozhōng kèchéng fāng'àn hé kèchéng biāozhǔ* [High School Curriculum Plan and Curriculum Standards]. Chinese Ministry of Education. http://www.edu.cn/20180117/324939.shtml (Retrieved on 12/12/2022)

[6] Fredricks, J. A., Wang, M. Te, Schall Linn, J., Hofkens, T. L., Sung, H., Parr, A., & Allerton, J. (2016). Using qualitative methods to develop a survey measure of math and science engagement. *Learning and Instruction*, *43*(1), 5–15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.01.009

[7] Ge, S., Leng, C. H., & Nizam Shaharom, M. S. (2022). The effect of students' readiness and achievement in online learning integrates problem-based learning pedagogy during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Chinese Education*, *11*(3), 1-11. https://doi.org/10.1177/2212585X221144901

[8] Granle Jr., K. I. (2022). Beyond the socratic method: Exploring alternative theories in legal education. *Scholars International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, *5*(1), 22–29. https://doi.org/10.36348/sijlcj.2022.v05i01.004

[9] Kristianto, H., & Gandajaya, L. (2022). Offline vs online problem-based learning: a case study of student engagement and learning outcomes. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education*, *20*(1), 106–121. https://doi.org/10.1108/ITSE-09-2021-0166

[10] Lee, J. (2022). Problem-based gaming via an augmented reality mobile game and a printed game in foreign language education. *Education and Information Technologies*, *27*(1), 743–771. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10391-1

[11] Lin, T. J. (2021). Multi-dimensional explorations into the relationships between high school students' science learning self-efficacy and engagement. *International Journal of Science Education*, *43*(8), 1193–1207. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500693.2021.1904523

[12] Lonergan, R., Cumming, T. M., & O'Neill, S. C. (2022). Exploring the efficacy of problem-based learning in diverse secondary school classrooms: Characteristics and goals of problem-based learning. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *112*(1), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2022.101945

[13] Margolis, A. A. (2020). Zone of proximal development, scaffolding and teaching practice. *Cultural-Historical Psychology*, *16*(3), 15–26. https://doi.org/10.17759/chp.2020160303

[14] Muna Aljohani. (2017). Principles of "Constructivism" in foreign language teaching. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, *7*(1), 1–5. https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5836/2017.01.013

[15] Musenze, I. A., Mayende, T. S., Kalenzi, A., & Namono, R. (2022). Perceived organizational support, self-efficacy and work engagement: testing for the interaction effects. *Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*, *38*(2), 201–228. https://doi.org/10.1108/jeas-08-2020-0141

[16] Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2006). The content validity index: Are you sure you know what's being reported? Critique and recommendations. *Research in Nursing & Health*, *29*(5), 489–497. https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.20147

[17] Purswell, K. E., & Ray, D. C. (2014). Research with small samples: Considerations for single case and randomized small group experimental designs. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, *5*(2), 116–126. https://doi.org/10.1177/2150137814552474

[18] Sedighi, F., Alavi, S., & Samani, S. (2004). Developing a foreign language learning self-efficacy scale for Iranian students. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities of Shiraz University*, *21*(40), 94–101. https://www.sid.ir/paper/13336/en (Retrieved on 12/12/2022)

[19] Sousa, M. J., & Costa, J. M. (2022). Discovering entrepreneurship competencies through problem-based learning in higher education students. *Education Sciences*, *12*(3), 1–11. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12030185

[20] Xu, Y., Liu, D., & Tang, D. (2022). Decent work and innovative work behaviour: Mediating roles of work engagement, intrinsic motivation and job self-efficacy. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *31*(1), 49–63. https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12480
[21] Yan, L., Whitelock-Wainwright, A., Guan, Q., Wen, G., Gašević, D., & Chen, G. (2021). Students' experience of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: A province-wide survey study. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *52*(5), 2038–2057. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13102
[22] Yew, E. H. J., & Goh, K. (2016). Problem-based learning: An overview of its process and Impact on learning. *Health Professions Education*, *2*(2), 75–79. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hpe.2016.01.004
[23] Yusup, F. (2018). Uji validitas dan reliabilitas. *Jurnal Tarbiyah: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, *7*(1), 17–23. https://doi.org/10.18592/tarbiyah.v7i1.2100
[24] Zuo, M., Ma, Y., Hu, Y., & Luo, H. (2021). K-12 students' online learning experiences during COVID-19: Lessons from China. *Frontiers of Education in China*, *16*(1), 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11516-021-0001-8.

Qian Wang is a candidate doctoral student at the University of Malaya. Also, she is a senior lecturer at JingGangShan University in China. Her areas of expertise include cross-cultural studies and language education.

Shigang Ge is a candidate doctoral student at the University of Malaya. Also, he was ever a high school teacher at AnShun No.2 high school in China. He earned experience in secondary education of China.

Amira Najiha Yahya is a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya. Her areas of expertise include parenting, fathering, and working with children and adolescents.

Norfaezah Md. Khalid is a senior lecturer in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Universiti Malaya. Her areas of expertise are counseling, career counseling, and family counseling.

Jing Li is an upper secondary teacher at AnShun No.2 high school in China. She has 7 years of experience teaching high school students and has a degree in teaching English in China.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 911-919, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.24

Pragma-Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Environmental Slogans

Wasan N. Fadhil
English Department, Kerbala University, Kerbala, Iraq

***Abstract*—One of the most effective ways to create awareness among people to care for the environment and keep it serene is framing slogans in images. This paper is a pragma-multimodal analysis of environmental slogans with images created on different social media platforms. It aims to discover the illocutionary act of each text and explore how each text cooperates with its image to create a comprehensive meaning. The dataset selected for this paper includes ten slogans with images. This paper was conducted qualitatively using a descriptive-analytical approach. Findings reveal that these slogans convey various illocutionary acts such as requesting, inviting, or asserting. Also, there is an inter-connectedness between the text and its image, which helps construct a successful meaning.**

***Index Terms*—speech act, multimodal discourse analysis, slogans, semiotic components**

I. Introduction

Words and semiotic resources such as images, gaze, and colour construct some texts. Such text is called multimodal. The analysis of these texts is called multimodal discourse analysis. Multimodal discourse analysis is based on systemic functional linguistics founded by Halliday. Multimodal discourse analysis, which flourished in the early 1990s, is a new hot spot in the discourse analysis field; thus, it has become the focus of Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2001) and O' Halloran (1999).

In a face–to–face conversation, people communicate using various cues other than spoken words, such as posture, clothes, facial expression, eye contact, the distance they sit or how they stand. All these work together to give the complete meaning of this communication. Similarly, written texts include not only linguistics but also images, texts, and colour in the modern day. A multimodal discourse analysis aims to detail the visual, audio, and linguistic features that create a semiotic whole (Jones, 2012, pp. 23-27).

The interest in various communication resources results from the ubiquity of sound, pictures, and video through TV, computers, and the internet (Iedema, 2003, p. 33). These texts are rarely made of words. They also include charts, graphs, and photographs. It is important that the producers of such texts don't arrange the diverse resources along with the writing on the text at random, but semantic purposes govern their arrangements (Royce, 2002). Even the typeface selected and the placement of paragraphs on a page can convey meaning.

The essence of multimodality is to gain beyond approaches where every semiotic mode is a potential meaning connected with the meaning of other modes, creating the meaning of the whole text. The meaning created performs various functions. Thus, one must integrate words with images, sounds, and colours to build a successful meaning when looking at these texts.

People can see different texts of this type, such as slogans, which contain linguistic and semiotic resources. A slogan is a word, phrase, or even a catchy sentence that is easy to read and remember. These slogans are tools for openly conveying ideas and capturing viewers' attention. They are of different types. One of them deals with the environment to show how it is essential to take care of this environment and keep it safe for all to continue life. If we misbalance the natural cycle of this environment, this will destroy the planet's life. The slogans selected for this paper consist of texts with inscriptions and images involving visual, gestural, and spatial modes.

This paper is a pragma-multimodal analysis of environmental slogans. It attempts to answer the following questions:

1- What is the illocutionary act of each text?

2- How do various resources such as words, images, and colours work together to build a complete meaning?

Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1- exploring the illocutionary acts of each text.

2- finding out how various semiotic resources, such as words, images, and colours, work together and co-contextualize the meaning of the text.

II. Literature Review

A. Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is concerned with analyzing and studying the uses of language. Brown and Yule (1983) define discourse analysis as" how humans use language to communicate". Jorgensen and Philips (2002) define discourse analysis as the study of different patterns that people's utterances follow when participating in different social situations.

McCarthy (1991) states that discourse analysis is a wide-ranging and heterogeneous discipline that finds its unity in the description of language above the sentence and an interest in the contexts and cultural influences that affect language in use (p. 7). Thus, discourse analysis concentrates on the relationship between the linguistic form and its functions, considering that these discourses have different social uses and elements of contexts such as participants, place, time, topic or culture. All these are crucial in the interpretation of language in use.

B. Environmental Slogans

The term environment is derived from the French word environ, which means everything that surrounds us. It is a sum total of all the living and non-living elements and their effects on human life. While all living or biotic elements are animals, plants, forests, fisheries and birds, non-living elements include water, land, sunlight, rocks, and air. Thus, everything on Earth is part of the environment, whether living or non-living (Byjus https:// byjus.com).

The environment has various functions. It provides the supply of resources, sustains life, and enhances the quality of life. What is required is to take care of this environment. This is done by framing catchy slogans and publishing them on social media platforms as these slogans might affect others; their social effect might control others and reform how they recognize them (Castells, 2009). These slogans might consist of a text only or a text and image. Images might include photographs, diagrams, maps or cartoons. Images could have grammar of their own. Therefore, these environmental images are common in web pages that hold many ideas worldwide.

C. Speech Acts

The speech act is an act performed via a speaker's utterance, which affects the hearer. Speech act theory was first introduced by Austin in his book How to Do Things with Words. He divides speech acts into three categories:

1- locutionary act is the act of saying something that makes sense in language.

2- An illocutionary act is an act performed through the medium of language, such as stating, promising, or warning.

3- perlocutionary act refers to the authentic effect of a locution on the listener, such as convincing, persuading, or surprising.

According to Searle (1979), there are five categories of illocutionary acts. These are:

1- Representative (assertive): These speech acts are used to state what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Assertive speech acts involve suggesting, claiming, informing, and others.

2- Directive: This type of speech act gets the listener to do some action. Ordering, commanding, asking, or requesting are examples of directive speech acts.

3- Commissive: This kind is used when the speaker commits himself or herself to some future action, such as promising, offering, vowing, and others.

4- Expressive: This kind is used when the speaker expresses his psychological state, such as thanking, apologizing, welcoming, or refusing.

5- Declarative: In uttering a declaration, the speaker produces a new state of affairs, such as naming, declaring, or appointing.

D. Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Multimodality means the combination of more than one mode or means for successful communication. O' Holloran (2011) states that multimodal discourse analysis" extends the study of language per se to the study of language in combination with other resources, such as images, scientific symbolism, gesture, action, music, and sound". While language is the only means of communication, it is considered just one part of a multimodal ensemble from a multimodal viewpoint. Thus, as Baldry and Thibault (2006) state, the central point of multimodal discourse analysis is how various resources are combined in a certain social context for a specific communicative purpose. Kress and van Leeuwen (cited in Diyan & Dina) illustrate that images, text, and colour are design elements that serve as a sign system of knowledge of visual and viewer relationships.

Jewitt (2013) sees multimodality as an interdisciplinary approach derived from semiotic resources. He (2013, pp. 251-252) adds that meaning in the mode is interconnected with the senses formed by other modes to work together to communicate successfully. A relation between modes contributes to the construction of meaning. Kress (2010, p. 1) shows the benefits of each mode used within a multimodal discourse analysis as follows:

Using three modes in one sign - writing, image, and colour- also has real benefits. Each mode does a specific thing: the image shows what takes too long to read, and writing names that would be difficult to show. Colour is used to highlight specific aspects of the overall message.

Olivier (2021) mentions four levels of multimodality within a multimodal learning system:

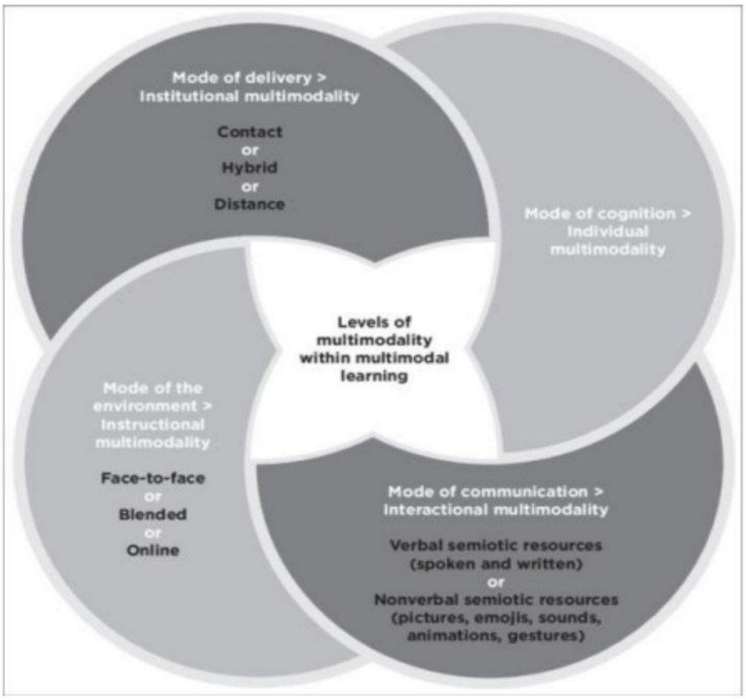


Figure 1. Levels of Multimodality Within Multimodal Learning

Each of these levels has certain resources. The one which is selected depends on what modes the given context contains. Interactional multimodality, which has linguistic and nonlinguistic elements, is preferred for analyzing environmental slogans to show how important the environment is with all its living and non-living elements.

According to Arola, Sheppard, and Ball (2014), there are five modes of multimodal communication.

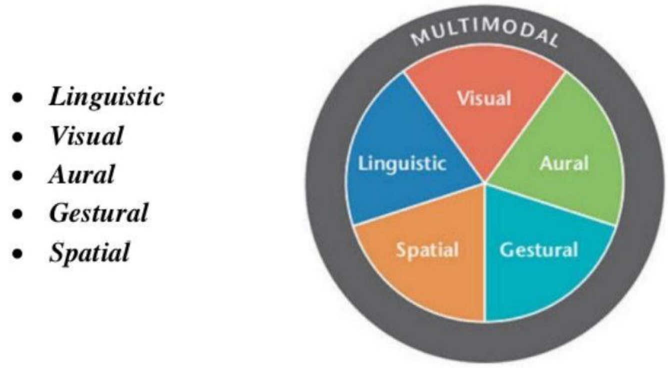


Figure 2. The Five Modes of Multimodal Communication Modes (Web Services, 2015)

This model is utilized in analyzing environmental slogans.

III. Methodology

The data are ten samples of environmental slogans that are put in text and images. These slogans express various perspectives about the importance of the environment; thus, one must put it as the central concern.

Olivier (2021) introduces four levels of multimodality within multimodal learning. One level, called interactional communication, incorporates verbal and non-verbal elements, is chosen. Depending on the context of environmental slogans, the analysis is done under the modal of Arola, Sheppard, and Ball (2014), which involves five modes. These are verbal, visual, gestural, aural, and spatial. The verbal mode is sub-analyzed according to Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts to determine which is dominantly performed. These are representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. Also, multimodal semiotic modes in the slogans are analyzed following how they construct a comprehensive meaning about the environment.

IV. Data Analysis

1-First Image

This image involves two modes: verbal and non-verbal. The verbal part begins with World Environmental Day. On this day, there is a celebration all over the world on the 5th of June every year to raise awareness about environment conservation, suggest ways to prevent any depleting picture of this environment and recognize the importance of ecology as a whole that carries on all forms of life.

The text holds the slogan of urging people to care for their life and environment. It reminds people of something bad that happened to the environment by mentioning the world (broken) because human beings encounter many bad events, such as the deadly COVID-19 virus. It has the illocutionary act of directive, inviting people forward to change the situation by forgetting all bad events, healing themselves from the wounds and taking care of this environment.

Combining this verbal part with this image's visual, gestural, and spatial parts makes more sense. The visual part is represented by colour, light, plant, spot, soil, and arms. The colour shows the side of life, which is green, and this triggers refreshment. The gesture of the hands holding the plant with soil indicates that it is precious and in front of people with a prominent position in the image. Thus, taking care of the plant is essential as it is one aspect of the environment. The adoption of orange to create inscriptions on the text distinguishes such slogans for viewers and reinforces the intention of these slogans. The verbal and non-verbal modes work together to give the complete meaning of the text. If the slogan is alone, the message will not be so significant as no one will take care of the image. Accordingly, the parts of the image and the text familiarize people with the need for environmental conservation.

2-Second Image

The second slogan is (let's go green as it makes the environment clean). This is another invitation to make the environment better for living. This slogan deploys directive illocutionary act to make the audience perform an action, which is environment safety and keeping it green for all because this is what is urgently needed. Going green refers to the knowledge, principles, and best practices that can help us protect and keep our environment clean and serene for us and future generations.

The slogan's adoption of green and orange colours emphasizes the importance of the environment and keeps it serene for all. In addition, these colours are signs of life. The other colour is white, which refers to the cleanliness of the buildings. Then, within the image is a small family with three members: a wife, a husband, and a child. Their life goes on peacefully since they take care of their environment. Thus, this nonlinguistic aspect cooperates with the linguistic one to enhance the message and motivate people to change the environment to be clean.

3-Third Image

The third slogan is about changing the climate, which is very rife in environmental campaigns. The verbal text of the image is (we have to change to save the world from climate change). This statement has the illocutionary act of ordering through the lexical item, which aims to keep people taking action for the environment. Humans are the main stakeholders in taking care of the environment. Using the verb save indicates that something dangerous must be saved from. The visual and spatial aspects of the text support this. The colour is green again in the apple, which lies on the .beach. This position attracts people's attention to see what this place looks like. The second colour is the grey of the sands, which is a sign of danger if one is not very careful about the environment. The colour and place of the text are more prominent and influential for the viewers. The combination of verbal, visual, and spatial aspects of the image gives a comprehensive and complete meaning.

4-Fourth Image

The deployment of directive illocutionary acts reinforces the importance of the environment. The lexical item Run is utilized in this slogan to make pungency to the need to be personally involved in taking care of the environment. It aims at urging people to help the environment. This triggers the sense of living in poor conditions. The environment needs help to be protected as it suffers from poor living conditions.

The image has a plant with a green colour that represents life and happiness. Inserting the buildings on the plants is a sign of life, showing that protection of the environment is a source for a better situation. Furthermore, the shape of the water spout is another symbol of life that people need and must be protected. The complete sense of the image is revealed through combining these linguistic and nonlinguistic parts of the text.

5-Fifth Image

The text is (let us do our small bit to make the world a cleaner and healthier. Happy World Environment Day). In the verbal mode, the text is a clear message urging people to care for the place in which they live. The text has the illocutionary act of asking people to protect the environment to be cleaner and healthier, and what is required is only a small effort.

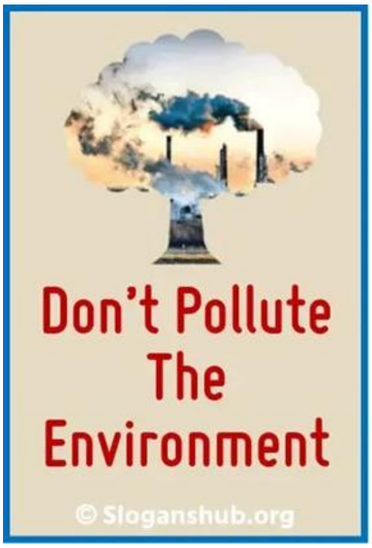
The visual part, which urges people to read what is found inside the image, is represented by the green colour of the plants, which are still alive, as there are hands that take care of these plants; thus, they hold water droppings. More importantly, the text of the image is written in white to be more prominent and fascinating. The ground is purple, which activates the image of the coming spring. Consequently, the two parts work hand in hand to interpret the whole message.

6-Sixth Image

To take care of the environment means to take care of all that it involves, whether living things such as plants, animals, birds or non-living things such as water, land, or rocks. Using the illocutionary act of assertiveness, the slogan informs the viewers that planting a tree is not a waste of time. Instead, it is a good act as trees are essential not only for the ecosystem but for our existence, too. They clean the air, they provide us with oxygen, and they absorb carbon dioxide. They also add beauty to our lands.

The visual part of the image is represented by the green colour of the plants, which may affect the physiological and emotional side, making us realize how a good act is to spend time with trees, such as giving them water by the gesture of the hands. Again, the text is written in a white colour to be distinguished. Such slogans (both verbal and visual parts) inspire us to take care of the whole environment.

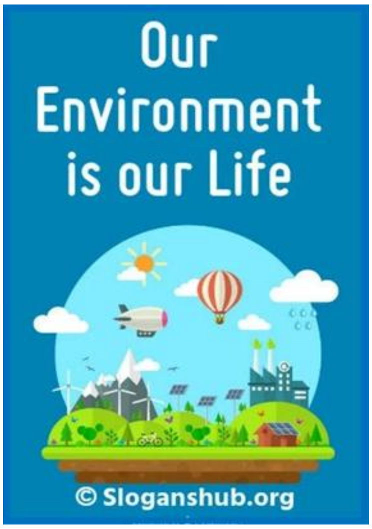
7-Seventh Image



The verbal part of this image (Don't pollute the environment) focuses on another aspect that is also harmful to the environment, as it affects the lives of human beings and puts them at great risk. This aspect is called pollution, which means air, water, and soil contamination. Taking care of the environment involves not polluting it. This image has the illocutionary act of requesting people to stop pollution. If people encounter any problem, they have to find a solution, not a source of pollution, as there is only one Earth.

The non-verbal part of this image involves the text being written in red, which means there is something dangerous. This danger comes from chimneys releasing harmful pollutants into the air. These pollutants are black in colour as they hurt the health of humans, such as respiratory diseases.

8-Eighth Image



The verbal part of this image summarizes what the word environment means. It is our whole life as it provides us with everything we need: the air that we breathe, the food that we eat, the water we drink, and the land where we live. The illocutionary act of this image is informing people what the word environment means. It is our soul. , this protection is everyone's responsibility to increase the importance of protecting this environment.

What we need in this life is represented by the visual part of this image. Nature is essential in this life. Several trees that need water that comes from rain are found. There is an aeroplane which is used for inoculation of the sow. Everything in this image is part of the environment, and they are important for our lives. Thus, each one must do his/ her part to save the environment. Mixing colours creates something beautiful, which attracts the attention of viewers. The text is written in white to be prominent against the background, which is in blue. By indicating how the environment is our life through verbal and non-verbal aspects of the image, these slogans make people behave positively towards the environment.

9-The Ninth Image

Taking care of the environment is necessary for our sake and the sake of generations that will come. This is shown through utilizing the directive speech act. Thus, all inhabitants must do what is required in all their efforts to save our planet, the Earth. The environments provide the necessary conditions for life that affect even future generations. Encountering many environmental problems, such as pollution, climate change, and deforestation, has long-term impacts on future generations. We cannot imagine our life without food or water, etc. A healthy environment will be beneficial for us and the generations that come.

The locution and its image are closely interrelated, which is reflected by the fact that such an act is rendered through visual and gestural aspects of the slogan. The slogan is written in black on a white background for prominence. There is a hand holding the planet. The gesture of the hand shows that you have one planet only, and you are obliged to take care of it and inspire change. It also shows how the environment is essential for us and future generations. Without necessary conditions, neither we nor future generations are going to survive.

10-The Tenth Image

Increasing awareness and caring for the environment is responsible for feeling relief and smiling. This is shown through the deployment of the Directive Speech Act. Thus, drinking clean water, breathing pure air, planting trees, etc., increase our energy and reduce illness. As a result, we will be proud of ourselves as we have one home, one planet.

Such meaning is manifested through the slogan's visual, gestural, and spatial aspects. The location of this image is written in a black colour on a background, which is in white. Below this location is a picture full of all the good aspects of a good environment. A duck is swimming in water, several trees are planted, and the sun is rising. This picture attracts the viewers to read the text and increases awareness about the importance of the environment. The text and its image work together to give the complete meaning of the slogan.

V. Conclusion

In the analysis of ten samples, the study has found that pragma-multimodal discourse analysis has an integral role in interpreting environmental slogans. Each of the modes has a complementary role and reinforces the role of other modes. That is, there is an inter-connectedness in meaning between the text and its image. Directive illocutionary act of the verbal mode in interactional multimodality is utilized dominantly. Such a result is natural as the directive requires the viewers to take care of the environment and put that issue as a central concern.

Each mode of nonverbal elements has its importance in a way that aids in grasping the texts easily. In addition, they add beauty to the texts, which attracts the viewers. Thus, all modes are combined together to create a successful meaning that makes it the responsibility of all to conserve the environment and avoid its depletion.

REFERENCES

[1] Arola, K. L., Sheppard, J. and Ball, C. E. (2014). *Writer/ Designer: A guide to making multimodal projects.* Bedford/St. Martin's.

[2] Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words.* Oxford University Press.

[3] Brown, G. and Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge University Press.

[4] Byju's https://byjus.com. *Environment- Meaning, Definition, Function, Example.* Retrieved at 15-11-2023.

[5] Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford University Press.

[6] Jewitt, C. (2013). *The Routledge handbook of multimodal analysis*. Routledge.

[7] Jones, R. H. (2012). *Discourse analysis.* Routledge.

[8] Jorgensen, M. W. and Philips, L. (2002). *Discourse analysis as theory and method.* Sage Publication.

[9] Kress, G., and van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. Arnold.

[10] Iedema, R. (2003). Multimodality, resemiotization: Extending the analysis of discourse as multi-semiotic practice. *Visual Communication*, *2*(1), 29-57.

[11] Liu, J. (2013). Visual images interpretive strategies in multimodal texts. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *4*(6). DOI:10.4304/jltr.4.6.1259- 1263

[12] Liu, J. (2019). A multimodal discourse analysis of the interactive meaning in public service advertisement. *Journal of Advances in Linguistics*, *10*, 1523-1534. https://Doi-org/10.24297/Jal.vIoio.8196

[13] McCarthy, M. (1991). *Discourse analysis for language teachers.* Cambridge University Press.

[14] O' Halloran, K. (1999).Towards a systemic functional analysis of multisemiotic mathematics texts. Semiotica, *124*(1-2), 1-29. doi:10.1515/semi.1999.124.1-2.1

[15] O' Halloran, K. (2011). Multimodal discourse analysis. In K. Hyland and B. Paltridge (eds.) *Companion to Discourse.* London.

[16] Olivier, J. (2021). Self –directed multimodal learning within A context of transformative open education. In J. Olivier, (Ed.). *Self – directed multimodal learning In higher education* (pp. 1-49).

[17] Searle, J. R. (1979). *Expression and meaning: Studies in the theory of speech acts.* Cambridge University Press.

[18] Sloganshub.org/ save- tree- slogans- taglines/ Retrieved at 15-11-2023

Wasan N. Fadhil was born in Baquaba/ Diyala (1977); married and has two children; currently lives in Kerbala in Al-Sidra Street. She got her Bachelor Degree in English language and linguistics from Al-Mustansiria university/ Iraq (1995-1999). She got her Master Degree in English language and Linguistics from Al-Mustansiria university/ Iraq (2000-2002). Currently, she is an assistant professor at Karbala University/ Iraq in English language and Linguistics. She is teaching both B.A. and M. A. students. She is supervised on three M.A students. Her M.A thesis is entitled *Morphology and Semantics Interface in English Word- Formation*. Now she has an interest in pragmatic analysis, critical analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis.

She participated in over five international as well as local conferences; participated in and presented more than five workshops and seminars. She published nearly thirteen academic papers in local and international journals.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 920-927, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.25

The Perspectives of Students on the Role of Instructors' Facemasks in Hindering the Oral Communication Skills of Students Learning English at PYD, PSAU in the KSA

Muawia O. Elhag Abdallah
Preparatory Year Deanship, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Elrashid M. Gadir
College of Language Sciences, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The present study aims to find out the impact of instructors' facemasks in hindering oral communication skills among students by investigating the factors that lead to such a hindrance in language learning and suggesting suitable solutions for reducing the negative effects of wearing facemasks and bettering communication skills. Findings indicate that, though wearing a facemask is mandatory for personal health and prevention against COVID-19, it hinders the students from developing their oral communication skills and prevents them from observing the facial expressions of English instructors that are hidden behind those facemasks. Tone and pitch are very essential in the process of oral communication and the changing of speech sounds is helpful to maintain oral communication speech channels. Nonetheless, it was observed that transparent facemask solves the problems of hiding facial and verbal expressions of the lips, and the video lessons compensate for the oral communication weaknesses of students. In view of the findings, it was therefore recommended that wearing a transparent facemask along with providing students with extra video lessons can be effective in helping students improve their oral communication skills.**

***Index Terms*—COVID-19, facemask, learning English, oral communication skills**

I. Introduction

Preparatory year university students recently witnessed many changes in how they learn due to the quarantine and social distancing imposed by the health authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some students faced complete lockdown and studied online while others continued to study face-to-face in the classroom but they adhered to social distancing and other health requirements for instructors and students, such as wearing facemasks. According to Yi et al. (2021, p. 1), “The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in the recommended/required use of facemasks in public”. Indeed, during the COVID-19 pandemic, wearing a mask became mandatory in both open and closed areas in all public and private health, social and educational institutions. As a result, the learning of oral communication skills was notably affected by this practice of wearing facemasks.

It is sometimes difficult to understand the message conveyed by the speaker because of the mask which, in most cases, hinders vocal tone, facial expressions, gestures, and sometimes even direct and focused eye contact. In fact, Spitzer (2020) states that “covering the lower half of the face reduces the ability to communicate, interpret, and mimic the expressions of those with whom we interact” (p. 1). Young and Travis (2012), assert that “In the two-way communication process, people share meaning, verbally and nonverbally” (p. 2). For that reason, the present study seeks to reveal the role of instructors’ facemasks in hindering the learning of oral communication skills both verbally and nonverbally among students. It also seeks to discover the resulting difficulties of learning oral communication skills and suggests possible solutions to help students learn them more effectively while both they and their instructors are wearing facemasks.

Communication is essential to conveying a message to its recipients. According to Young and Travis (2012), “Communication is a two-way process” (p. 2). Wearing facemasks became an obligation during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, when English language instructors wear masks, it can affect the students understanding while learning. These effects are many. As a result, the present study also attempts to clarify the role instructors' facemasks play in hindering oral communication skills according to Saudi Arabian English language students at the tertiary level.

Oral communication is defined as “the exchange of thought, notions, information and knowledge between speaker and listener” (Dimbleby & Burton, 1998, p. 26). It has also been defined as “either the exchange of thoughts or information by speech, signals, knowledge, awareness, conduct or as an interpersonal rapport between individuals” (Rai, 2010, p. 6). Kotzman and Kotzman (2008) believe that “Communication is a simultaneous, two-part process involving speaking and listening—even when you are talking to yourself" (p. 18). Indeed, in order to communicate you need to exchange a message; this message can be in the form of thought information, knowledge, signals, speech, writing, or behavior. Therefore, communication is extremely vital for building relationships, enabling people to share their experiences and connect with others. When people communicate they tend "to initiate or improve relationships, get things we want, negotiate the best price, conduct business, meet people, function in teams and learn new things" (Young & Travis, 2012, p. 3).

The communication process includes "communicators, messages, a channel, circumstances, feedback, and, in some instances, noise" (Young & Travis, 2012, p. 4). According to Rickheit and Strohner (2008), in communication situations, two partners use the following five links: "information transmission and feedback; informational medium; referential knowledge; partner knowledge and mindreading; and physical and social situation" (p. 20). The researchers think that the above-mentioned five links enhance the realization of efficient communication which yields fruitful and successful understanding between partners.

The message can be verbal and nonverbal; nonverbal messages are actions without words. Nonverbals can be gestures, the way the voice is used (whether it is loud, soft, high, or low), and the clothes people wear. The way the message is replicated can enhance or hinder the effective decoding of a verbal message. Moreover, when someone speaks, the characteristics of delivery include the tone, pitch, rate, and projection, and all of these vocal characteristics of a verbal message help emphasize or de-emphasize key thoughts. "If messages are not delivered properly, then their meaning may be distorted and decoded incorrectly" (Young & Travis, 2012, p. 6). The above-mentioned use of verbal and nonverbal messages helps to better the communication link between two or more people. Incomplete practices of communication will produce unclear understanding and any ideas conveyed may be misinterpreted. Coleman presents actionable body language tips to compliment verbal skills such as "stimulate positive feelings by smiling, keep your voice down to appear authoritative, improve the speech by using gestures, maintaining eye contact and managing facial expressions" (2018, p. 21). Harmer (2001, p. 64) asserts that the teacher "is a teaching aid and a part of the roles adopted in the classroom." He further ensures that "we are a kind of teaching aids ourselves so that we are useful when using mime and gestures, as language models and as providers of comprehensible input" (Harmer, 2001, p. 64). Mimes and gestures are strong mediums to convey meaning and make the learning atmosphere fruitful. Meaningful and clear messages are a good attempt at providing a better and more productive understanding for language learners in the process of communication.

Spitzer's (2020) comment about masking the face partially makes it obvious that facemasks render it difficult to converse, elucidate, and show actual facial expressions which are very important to communicating meaning in a language classroom. This clearly shows that facemasks are actual barriers to communication and interpretation and hinder interaction between communicating partners.

Speaking is the medium that language learners use to interact verbally to realize specific goals or to express their viewpoints. This can also be referred to as talking. Widdowson (1978) holds the view that "We can then say that talking involves the use of both aural and visual media since it is the activity which makes use of gesture and other paralinguistic phenomena" (p. 59). Speaking is a crucial skill to develop because it is the most common way people communicate globally.

Factors that impact speaking performance include motivation, personality type (introversion or extroversion), self-confidence, anxiety, and class size (Ying et al, 2021; Mohammed & Abdallah, 2020). The other factor, added by the researchers of the present study, is the wearing of facemasks which decreases the abilities of efficient communication between instructors and learners of English.

II. Literature Review

Eight previous studies relevant to the present work were examined. Alrowayeh (2017) stated that the importance of his study arose from the importance of oral communication in EFL learning. It had been noticed, in general, that not much emphasis was given to the teaching of spoken communication skills in English classes while there was a great stress put upon the other skills like reading and writing. In his research conducted in 2017, Alrowayeh focused on students from various grade levels at the Higher Institute of Telecommunication and Navigation (HITN) in Kuwait. Employing a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, his study revealed several factors influencing oral communication in the EFL classroom. These factors included teachers' attitudes towards student errors, classroom atmosphere, student anxiety and fear of making mistakes, reluctance to communicate in English inside and outside the classroom, challenges in speaking English, excessive emphasis on grammar in the curriculum, and limited utilization of recordings for listening exercises.

Palpanadan and Ahmed (2018) explored the crucial challenges faced by graduates when they tried to converse in English. A survey technique was used to collect data from 150 Civil Engineering graduates from a Malaysian university. Data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics and Factor Analysis which showed that there were four prime factors responsible for poor language skills: lack of practice, poor reading habits, poor vocabulary and poor study habits.

Roy (2020) conducted his study in Australian secondary school classrooms where masks were used when teaching Drama. Roy used observation followed by interviews with students as tools of the study. The results indicated that masks could potentially benefit students academically, emotionally, and in their self-awareness development.

Specifically, masks may offer a more inclusive approach to assisting students with Special Education Needs (SEN), enhancing their confidence and overall educational journey.

In his examination of the influence of facemasks on language instruction, Spitzer (2020) suggests that wearing facemasks could play a role in curbing the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, particularly given the potential for transmission by asymptomatic individuals. However, his investigation also revealed that covering the lower part of the face hindered the ability to communicate, interpret, and mirror the facial expressions of others during interactions. This resulted in decreased recognition of positive emotions and heightened amplification of negative emotions. Consequently, emotional mimicry, contagion, and overall emotional expression were diminished, adversely affecting the rapport between educators and students and undermining group cohesion and learning outcomes. The benefits and burdens of facemasks in educational institutions, therefore, should be seriously considered and made clear to both teachers and students.

Yi et al. (2021) asserted that the onset of the coronavirus pandemic led to the widespread recommendation or requirement of wearing facemasks in public settings. Their findings revealed that the use of facemasks posed challenges to communication, particularly in environments with competing background noise. Therefore, it was imperative to assess the potential impact of wearing facemasks on speech clarity in noisy surroundings, where excessive background noise could hinder effective communication.

In their study, Yi et al. (2021) investigated the effects of wearing transparent facemasks and employing clear speech techniques to enhance verbal communication. The researchers evaluated listener word identification accuracy across four conditions: (1) different types of masks (i.e., no mask, transparent mask, and disposable facemask), (2) presentation modes (i.e., auditory and audiovisual), (3) speaking styles (i.e., conversational speech and clear speech), and (4) with two types of background noise (i.e., speech-shaped noise and four-talker babble at a −5 signal-to-noise ratio).

The results indicated that, in noisy environments, listeners' word identification performance was inferior when speakers wore disposable facemasks or transparent masks compared to no masks. Listeners exhibited better word identification accuracy in the audiovisual presentation condition when clear speech was utilized. Moreover, the combination of facemasks and background noise had a detrimental effect on speech intelligibility for listeners. Furthermore, transparent masks were found to enhance the comprehension of target sentences by providing visual cues. Lastly, clear speech was demonstrated to mitigate challenging communication scenarios, compensating for the lack of visual information and diminished acoustic signals.

Truong et al. (2021) investigated the effect of facemasks on listeners’ recall of spoken sentences where 32 native German listeners watched video recordings of a native speaker producing German sentences with and without facemasks. Afterward, they completed a cued-recall task. The results showed that listeners recalled significantly fewer words when the sentences had been spoken with facemasks. This could imply that wearing facemasks raised cognitive processing requirements, potentially reducing the capacity to encode spoken language into memory. This finding holds significance for policymakers navigating the effects of facemasks on verbal communication amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bottalico et al. (2020) examined the impact of facemask usage on classroom communication, assessing three types of facemasks - fabric, surgical, and N95 - on the Speech Intelligibility (SI) of college students in simulated classroom settings. The study involved presenting speech stimuli amidst speech-shaped noise, with a signal-to-noise ratio of +3 dB, and varying reverberation times (0.4 s and 3.1 s) to replicate realistic classroom conditions. Results indicated that fabric masks led to a notably greater decrease in SI compared to the other masks, suggesting that surgical masks or N95 masks are preferable in educational settings.

Porschmann et al. (2020) asserted that the global mandate for wearing facemasks during the COVID-19 pandemic has become widespread. Their study delved into how typical facemasks affect voice projection. To assess the transmission loss induced by masks and their impact on voice directionality, the research evaluated the full-spherical voice directionality of a dummy head equipped with a mouth simulator, each covered with various masks: medical masks, filtering facepiece respirator masks, and cloth face coverings. Findings revealed a substantial frequency-dependent transmission loss, particularly above 2 kHz, albeit varying across different masks. Additionally, the two facepiece respirator masks notably altered speech directionality, as evidenced by the Directivity Index (DI). In comparison to measurements conducted without a mask, the DI showed deviations of up to 7 dB at frequencies exceeding 3 kHz. Conversely, deviations for all other masks remained below 2 dB across all third-octave frequency bands.

III. Methodology

This study aims to find out the role played by instructors’ facemasks in hindering oral communication skills among students. It investigates how wearing facemasks hampers the learning of English and suggests suitable solutions for better communication skills to combat the effects of wearing facemasks.

It is hypothesized that the instructors' facemasks affect the learning of oral communication skills by English students in the Preparatory Year Deanship program. Hence, the findings from this research hold value for curriculum developers and syllabus designers of English language programs in Saudi Arabia and similar educational institutions worldwide. Additionally, language instructors across various settings stand to benefit from the insights offered by this study.

Furthermore, the study is limited to the effects of wearing facemasks by instructors of English at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University in the Preparatory Year Deanship program during the 2021/2022 academic year.

A qualitative and descriptive research method was used with data being collected through a questionnaire where 40 students responded to the questionnaire statements. Moreover, the method adopted was descriptive and analytical where the researcher used 18 items for the questionnaire which were modified by experts in the field of applied linguistics.

Tools & Procedures

The questionnaire was distributed to 40 Engineering students in their second semester of the Preparatory Year Deanship program. It is structured to be answered by ticking "Agree", "Not sure", or "Disagree". The questionnaires were then analyzed by SPSS. The analysis of the questionnaire given to the study participants is presented in Table 1, and the validity and reliability of the data in Table 2.

TABLE 1
ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Statement	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1. Wearing a facemask is very important to my health.	Agree	38	95.0%
	Not sure	1	2.5%
	Disagree	1	2.5%
2. Oral interaction between the instructor of English and us is very important.	Agree	35	87.5%
	Not sure	3	7.5%
	Disagree	2	5.0%
3. It is hard sometimes to communicate with a facemask.	Agree	29	72.5%
	Not sure	4	10.0%
	Disagree	7	17.5%
4. Wearing a facemask sometimes does not help me listen well to the English instructor's voice.	Agree	30	75.0%
	Not sure	4	10.0%
	Disagree	6	15.0%
5. Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to the English instructor.	Agree	29	72.5%
	Not sure	7	17.5%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
6. Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to my classmates.	Agree	28	70.0%
	Not sure	6	15.0%
	Disagree	6	15.0%
7. Sometimes, I cannot concentrate well with the instructor while he is talking to us because of the facemask.	Agree	31	77.5%
	Not sure	4	10.0%
	Disagree	5	12.5%
8. In order to enhance better understanding, I have to see the instructor's facial expressions.	Agree	34	85.0%
	Not sure	2	5.0%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
9. I cannot notice if the instructor of English is upset while he is wearing a facemask.	Agree	27	67.5%
	Not sure	5	12.5%
	Disagree	8	20.0%
10. I cannot see the instructor's smile when he is wearing a facemask.	Agree	35	87.5%
	Not sure	2	5.0%
	Disagree	3	7.5%
11. Seeing the lips while speaking with the English instructor is very helpful in communication.	Agree	34	85.0%
	Not sure	3	7.5%
	Disagree	3	7.5%
12. I sometimes do not notice the instructor when he is looking at me to answer a question.	Agree	29	72.5%
	Not sure	7	17.5%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
13. The English instructor's tone of voice must be clear.	Agree	28	70.0%
	Not sure	8	20.0%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
14. Altering of speech sounds while the English instructor is talking is very helpful to understand his words.	Agree	32	80.0%
	Not sure	6	15.0%
	Disagree	2	5.0%
15. I do not understand the instructor's speech while he is wearing a facemask and when there is a little noise inside the classroom	Agree	33	82.5%
	Not sure	3	7.5%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
16. It is important to make the mask transparent.	Agree	29	72.5%
	Not sure	6	15.0%
	Disagree	5	12.5%
17. It is important to wear a transparent mask to see the lips and all facial expressions of the instructor while he is speaking.	Agree	31	77.5%
	Not sure	5	12.5%
	Disagree	4	10.0%
18. It is sometimes a very good idea to use video lessons in English to help me communicate instead of real lessons taught by the instructor who is wearing a facemask.	Agree	34	85.0%
	Not sure	4	10.0%
	Disagree	2	5.0%

TABLE 2
VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	
0.986	18	
	Reliability	Validity
S 1	0.577	0.760
S 2	0.863	0.929
S 3	0.942	0.971
S 4	0.961	0.980
S 5	0.963	0.981
S 6	0.949	0.974
S 7	0.967	0.983
S 8	0.924	0.961
S 9	0.894	0.946
S 10	0.444	0.666
S 11	0.909	0.953
S 12	0.963	0.981
S 13	0.945	0.972
S 14	0.929	0.964
S 15	0.945	0.972
S 16	0.968	0.984
S 17	0.966	0983
S 18	0.904	0.951
P Value		0.04

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

The opinions of 38 respondents out of 40 agreed with the first statement “Wearing a facemask is very important to my health” which clearly declared the importance of wearing facemasks to protect their health. Spitzer’s (2020) assertion coincided with the first statement which stated that facemasks could prevent the spread of the virus SARS-CoV-2 in particular as it could spread from people who present no symptoms.

Thirty-five respondents agreed that “Oral interaction between the instructor of English and us is very important” - the second statement of the questionnaire, while 29 respondents agreed with the third statement which presented the idea that “It is hard sometimes to communicate with a facemask.” This coincides with 30 respondents who agree with statement four: “Wearing a facemask sometimes does not help me listen well to the English instructor's voice.” Moreover, 29 of the respondents agreed that “Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to the English instructor.” - the fifth statement - and 28 participants agreed with the sixth statement: “Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to my classmates.” This leads to the seventh statement which was “Sometimes, I cannot concentrate well with the instructor while he is talking to us because of the facemask.” to which 31 respondents agreed.

It was apparent from the questionnaire that, despite the positive use of facemasks, they hampered effective oral communication skills between the instructors and the students. It was stated earlier by Alrowayeh (2017) that the facemask was one of the factors that affected oral communication skills in EFL classrooms. Moreover, Palpanadan and Ahmed (2018) found four primary factors as barriers to effective communication skills: lack of practice, poor reading habits, poor vocabulary and poor study habits. Indeed, these factors can occur when wearing a facemask. The results of the study conducted by Bottalico et al. (2020) postulated that the fabric mask yielded a significantly greater reduction in speech intelligibility compared to other masks, which jibes with the present research. They further recommended surgical masks or N95 masks in teaching environments.

Continuing with the questionnaire statements, 34 out of 40 respondents, agreed that “In order to enhance better understanding, I have to see the instructor's facial expressions”. In the four statements that followed, the majority of the respondents agreed that they could not see if the instructor was “upset”, “smiling”, moving his lips or even looking at the student while wearing a facemask and answering a question.

Respondents agreed at a frequency of 28, 32, and 33, respectively, with statements 13, 14, and 15 (“The English instructor's tone of voice must be clear”, “Altering of speech sounds while the English instructor is talking is very helpful to understand his words”, and “I do not understand the instructor's speech while he is wearing a facemask and when there is a little noise inside the classroom”, respectively).

As a result, certain body parts as a whole including lip movement, smiling, eye contact and even the feelings conveyed take part in reaching the goal of communication to yield fruitful interaction in learning English which in the presence of the facemasks is missed or not realized.

In statements 16 (“It is important to make the mask transparent.”) and 17 (“It is important to wear a transparent mask to see the lips and all facial expressions of the instructor while he is speaking.”), 29 and 31 respondents, respectively, agreed that the facemask should be transparent to see the lips and facial expressions of the instructor while speaking.

A study by Yi et al. (2021) concurred with the above findings and asserted that transparent masks facilitated the ability to understand target sentences by providing visual information.

In the final statement of the questionnaire – “It is sometimes a very good idea to use video lessons in English to help me communicate instead of real lessons taught by the instructor who is wearing a facemask.” - 34 respondents agreed with the idea of video lessons to compensate for handicaps caused by the lack of direct communication because of the facemasks barrier.

As a result of the questionnaire, there must be some suitable suggestions and solutions to such problems in interactive communication in the presence of facemask use. It is very wise to adapt to the present situation and coexist with the problems of facemask use. The focus on using transparent masks makes students familiar with additional sources of virtual oral communication for the sake of vivid interaction which is represented in video lessons. In the study carried out by Porschmann et al. (2020), the results showed a significant frequency-dependent transmission loss which varied depending on the mask.

V. Findings

The researchers found that wearing a facemask is a mandatory procedure for personal health against COVID-19; however, the use of facemasks hampers the students from enhancing their oral communication skills because facemasks hide or partially or fully obscure the facial expressions of English instructors. The tone and pitch of voice are very essential in the process of oral communication and changing speech sounds helps maintain oral communication speech channels. Therefore, a transparent facemask solves the problem of the masks hiding facial and verbal expressions. In addition, video lessons compensate for the oral communication weaknesses of students to a large extent.

VI. Conclusion

The assumption on which this paper is based clearly states that the instructors' facemasks affected the oral communication skills of students in learning English at the Preparatory Year Deanship. Moreover, the results obtained in the present paper indicate that the majority of the students regard the importance of the facemask as something vital to keep them safe and healthy. However, oral interaction is also essential, and it is hard to communicate with a facemask because wearing a facemask does not help students hear properly, and to that end, it affects their acquisition of fluent oral communication. Furthermore, facial expressions enhance the understanding of the students, but when the students cannot see the instructors’ expressions, they fail to find out whether the instructor is upset or happy. The masks on their instructor’s faces conceal their lip movements, and even when the instructor seeks an answer from a student, the mask poses hinders oral communication. The instructor's tone of voice must be clear because the alteration of speech sound is very efficient in oral communication. Students and teachers are therefore encouraged to use transparent facemasks so as to enable them to see the lip movement and facial expressions for vivid oral communication skills. Students can also be compensated by watching extra lessons of video in teaching English to enable them to have direct oral communication skills enhancement. Answers from respondents are in favor of the hypothesis assumption. Hence, the analysis of the hypothesis proved that it has been achieved and confirmed by the questionnaire statements. It is, however, recommended to wear a transparent facemask which can be effective in oral communication. It is also necessary to provide students with extra video lessons to help them reinforce their oral communication skills.

APPENDIX

TABLE 3
THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Statement	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1. Wearing a facemask is very important to my health.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
2. Oral interaction between the instructor of English and us is very important.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
3. It is hard sometimes to communicate with a facemask.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
4. Wearing a facemask sometimes does not help me listen well to the English instructor's voice.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
5. Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to the English instructor.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
6. Wearing a facemask affects my oral speech to my classmates.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
7. Sometimes, I cannot concentrate well with the instructor while he is talking to us because of the facemask.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
8. In order to enhance better understanding, I have to see the instructor's facial expressions.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
9. I cannot notice if the instructor of English is upset while he is wearing a facemask.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
10. I cannot see the instructor's smile when he is wearing a facemask.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
11. Seeing the lips while speaking with the English instructor is very helpful in communication.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
12. I sometimes do not notice the instructor when he is looking at me to answer a question.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
13. The English instructor's tone of voice must be clear.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
14. Altering of speech sounds while the English instructor is talking is very helpful to understand his words.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
15. I do not understand the instructor's speech while he is wearing a facemask and when there is a little noise inside the classroom	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
16. It is important to make the mask transparent.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
17. It is important to wear a transparent mask to see the lips and all facial expressions of the instructor while he is speaking.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		
18. It is sometimes a very good idea to use video lessons in English to help me communicate instead of real lessons taught by the instructor who is wearing a facemask.	Agree		
	Not sure		
	Disagree		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors express their appreciation to the Deanship of Scientific Research at the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia, and the Preparatory Year Unit of the English Department for their support.

REFERENCES

[1] Alrowayeh, J. (2017). Factors Affecting Oral Communication in the EFL Classroom in Kuwait. *JFEES*, *41*(1), 15-54. DOI: 10.21608/jfees.2017.84175

[2] Bottalico, P., Murgia, S., Puglis, E., G., Astofi, A. & Kirk, I., K. (2020). Effect of masks on speech intelligibility in auralized classrooms. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *148*(5), 2878-2884. https://doi.org/10.1121/10.0002450

[3] Coleman, K. (2018). *Effective Communication: Skills and Strategies to Effectively speak your Mind Without Being Misunderstood*: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

[4] Dimbleby, R. & Burton, G. (1985). *More Than Words - An Introduction to Communication*, Methuen.

[5] Harmer, J. (2001). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*: Longman.

[6] Kotzman, M. & Kotzman, A. (2008). *Listen to Me Listen to You: A step-by-step guide to communication skills training*. ACER press

[7] Mohammed, M., Abdallah, M., & Adam, F. (2020). Factors Influence Sudanese University Students' Oral Communication Skills. *European Academic Research Journal, VIII*(3), 1289-1308.

[8] Palpanadan, T., S. & Ahmed, I. (2018). Factors Affecting English Oral Communication Among Malaysian Civil Engineering Graduates: An Exploratory Analysis. *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology*, *9*(11), 608-618.

[9] Porschman, C., Lubeck, T. & Arend, M., J. (2020). Impact of facemasks on voice radiation. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *148*(6), 3663-3670. https://doi.org/10.1121/10.0002853

[10] Rai, U. (2010). *English Language Communication Skills*. Himalaya Publishing House.

[11] Rickeheit, G. & Strohner. H. (2008). *Handbook of Communication Competence: Language and Communication Problems Practical Solutions*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG.

[12] Roy, D. (2020). Masks Method and Impact in the Classroom. *Creative Education*, *11*, 710-734. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2020.115052

[13] Spitzer, M. (2020). Masked education? The benefits and burdens of wearing facemasks in schools during the current Corona pandemic. *Trends in Neuroscience and Education*, *20*, doi: 10.1016/j.tine.2020.100138

[14] Truong, L., T., Beck, D., S. & Weber, A. (2021). The Impact of facemasks on the recall of spoken sentences. *The Journal of Acoustical Society of America*, *149*(1), 142-144. https://doi.org/10.1121/10.0002951

[15] Widdowson, H., G. (1978). *Teaching Language as Communication*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

[16] Yi, H., Pingsterhaus. A. and Song. W. (2021). Effects of Wearing Face Masks While Using Different Speaking Styles in Noise on Speech Intelligibility During the COVID-19. Pandemic. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, Article 682677, 1-16. DOI: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.682677

[17] Ying, Y. H., Siang, W., E., W., & Mohamad, M. (2021). The Challenges of Learning English Skills and the Integration of Social Media and Video Conferencing Tools to Help ESL Learners Coping with the Challenges during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Literature Review. *Creative Education*, *12*(7), 1503-1516. https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2021.127115

[18] Young, K., S. & Travis, P., H. (2012). *Oral Communication: Skills, Choices, and Consequences*. 3rd edn. USA: Waveland Press, Inc.

Muawia Osman Elhag was born in Gezira, Sudan in 1971. He obtained a Bachelor Degree in English Language & Literature; from College of Arts, Omdurman Islamic University, Khartoum, Sudan, in 1996. He was granted MA in English Language Teaching (ELT); from Nile Valley University, Khartoum, Sudan, in 2013. He was awarded PhD in English Language Teaching (ELT); from Nile Valley University, Atbara, Nile State, Sudan, in 2017.

He has been teaching at different universities since 2013. Currently, he is an Associate Professor at the Preparatory Year Deanship, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Muawia's current research interests include ELT, testing and assessment and teaching Literature.

Elrashid Mohamed Abdel Gadir was born in Gezira, Sudan in 1961. He obtained a Bachelor Degree in English Language & Literature; from College of Arts, Omdurman Islamic University, Khartoum, Sudan, in 1985. He was granted MA in translation and interpreting from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom in 1991. He was awarded PhD in Translation from Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom in 1998.

He has been teaching Translation and Interpreting courses at King Saud University, College of Language Science, Department of English since 2001.

Dr. Elrashid current research interests include book translation into both Arabic and English besides translation and interpreting.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 928-934, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.26

Exploring the Effect of Arabizi on English Writing by Arab English Learners

Sereen Mousa Jubran
English Department, Al Balqa Applied University, Amman, Jordan

***Abstract*—The study explores the impact of the Arabizi phenomenon on English writing by Arab English Learners. Due to the popularity of social networks, Arab students combine Roman numbers and letters to produce a new writing code with unconventional rules. The study is significant because most researchers studied the impact of Arabizi on the Arabic language. In contrast, this study focused on the effect of Arabizi on English writing by Arab learners. The study sample consisted of twenty sophomore female students majoring in the English language at one of the Jordanian governmental universities. The main research questions are how Arabizi affects English writing and the justification behind the continuity of this new writing code. The researcher analysed samples of the intervention of Arabizi on writing in English to answer the first question. To answer the second question, the researcher interviewed the sample members to investigate the reasons for the continuity of this new writing code. The study results concluded that not all English foreign language learners use Arabizi, while others use it regularly for several reasons, although it affects their English writing. By the end of the study, the researcher presents recommendations for linguists and English language teachers.**

***Index Terms*—Arabizi, English writing, Standard Arabic writing, Arab students, Al Balqa Applied University**

I. Introduction

Rapid technological developments have increased the importance of the English language because it dominated all technological devices and applications such as mobile phones, online chat, WhatsApp, Facebook, and many others. As technology affected all people's lives, it influenced how people communicate with each other by using new electronic sources such as online networks. This transformational revolution in communication shortened distances and provided people with different types of applications, which became a common way to communicate with other parts of the world more accessible and faster. This new way of communication, an online Social Network, enables people to share pictures, ideas, and feelings using Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp, and others. Unfortunately, at that time (1990), many internet sites were not yet supported by Arabic keyboards, and the only available way to communicate was to use the English language script. As a result, Arabic speakers tried to find a way to communicate effectively and were forced to find an alternative means of communication by blending Arabic with Latin script. This means of communication is known as Aabizi (Bianchi, 2012; Yaghan, 2008). Young people have modified the language by mixing Arabic and English terminology and spreading vocabulary, which has stripped it of its beauty.

Arabizi is a kind of writing where Arabic words are written in Latin script without following any rules, leading to significant variation in the Arabic written word. The phenomena first appeared in cyberspace, propelled by the widespread adoption of cell phones that lacked sophisticated Arabic keyboards.

Nowadays, Arabic keyboards and scripts are available on social media, yet it is the most widespread phenomenon among young Arabs. This phenomenon, Arabize, has become very popular among Arab youth and has developed by them on social media since 1990 until the present time (Warschauer et al., 2002). The popularity of this phenomenon enabled Arab youth to chat by using non-Arabic-supporting technology such as Facebook, mobile phones, Twitter, and other social websites to achieve ease and quick communication between families and friends.

The researcher has noticed that students in English writing use this new linguistic writing phenomenon unconsciously. So, this study explores the effect of using Arabizi on English writing among Arab native speakers because this type of writing is used habitually among youth more than using Standard Arabic. Also, the researcher sheds light on the reasons and the justifications behind the continuity of using Arabize, although Arabic keyboards are supported in social media applications.

A. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the fact that most researchers investigated the effect of Arabizi on Arabic language writing. In contrast, this study investigated the impact of Arabizi on English writing. Arab users on social media frequently employ creative spellings of English terms to condense writing. This employment can make distinguishing between English and Arabizi more difficult.

B. Characteristics of the Arabic Language

Before discussing the Arabizi phenomenon, it is worth having a general introduction to the Arabic language. Like all other languages in the Semitic family, Arabic is written from right to left using rounded and connected letters.

According to Holes (2004), diacritics are used to express short vowels in written Arabic, which consists only of consonants and long vowels. Since The Glorious Quran is written in Arabic, the language and script are revered throughout the Arab world.

Most of the writing systems of all languages in the world are based on rules that link spoken language sounds to written symbols. The standards that relate symbols and sounds vary significantly between languages, and it cannot be very easy or different from the Arabic language. Most educated Arabs know standard Arabic, although they speak one of these vernaculars and use it in everyday communication (Palfreyman & Al Khalil, 2003; Taha, 2015).

Arabic is written cursively and consists of consonants, long vowels, and diacritics representing the short vowels (Taha, 2015; Panović, 2018). The absence of Arabic short vowels (diacritics) from most handwritten and printed Arabic texts becomes troublesome for readers who lack the appropriate grammatical knowledge of the Arabic language. Each Arabic letter represents a sound; digraphs and silent letters do not occur in Arabic. Moreover, each letter is written differently according to its place in the word. Accordingly, the forms of writing the alphabet may occur at the beginning of the term, in the middle, in the final position, or isolated. Moreover, some letters have the same shape, distinguished by several dots above the letters. Unlike the Latin alphabet, Arabic Alphabet does not use lower- or upper-case letters (no capitalisation). In addition, the similarities in the shapes of the letters and the need to distinguish between them using dots are seen as another primary concern of critics of the Arabic alphabet.

C. Arabizi Phenomenon

Arabizi is thought to have grown primarily because of technology and the internet. At first, it was a way to talk to each other in Arabic because the technology did not have Arabic keyboards. However, it keeps growing and improving even though the Arabic language is now widely available on social networks, computers, and other devices like mobile phones. Arabicizi is a language with a phonetic system that combines Arabic and English. It can link the Arabic alphabet systems, and Latin has made it quite popular.

Users of Arabizi produce a new orthography by substituting English characters for Arabic letters, and they use numerals as letters to signify sounds not found in the English language. Some academics refer to this new spelling as Arabizi, a phrase that combines the two Arabic words (Englezi, Arabi), which stand for Arabic and English, respectively. This phenomenon (Arabizi) has many different terms used to describe this phenomenon. For example, Yagan (2008) states that Arabizi is slang and comes from merging the two languages englizi (English) and 3arabi (Arabic). In contrast, Aboelezz (2012) defines Latinized Arabic as an alternate orthographic representation of the Arabic language using Roman or Latin characters. Despite the different names to describe Arabizi, they all agree that Arabizi uses a mixture of Latin words and Arabic words and numbers. The Arabic text is transliterated in its Latin form, and the numbers are to replace untranslatable letters in Latin alphabets (Bjornsson, 2010).

D. Related Literature and Studies

Since Arabizi's rise in popularity rapidly among young Arab speakers, several scholars have been prompted to examine the benefits and drawbacks of the language for Arab nations. Arabizi combines the Latin alphabet with Arabic numerals to create a shorthand form of the Arabic language. It is mainly used as a chat language due to its convenience, quickness, and technological compatibility. These enhancements simplify surfing the web and sending texts from mobile devices. It has experienced rapid expansion and rising appeal, especially among Arab youth. Rapid developments in technical communication and the rise of English as a global language have all contributed to this expansion. As Arabizi continues to expand and spread, it is crucial to comprehend its positive and harmful effects on Arab students when learning a foreign language. Arabizi phenomenon has produced a significant gap among researchers, educators, and religious men. Most of them were against the widespread of this phenomenon because they claimed that it would affect Arab identity and promote practices of Western culture. Also, Arabizi has been criticised by Arabic language scholars, who argue that using this new linguistic code harms the Arabic language and the preservation of Arab identity. Opponents of using the Arabizi claim that users will grow to be illiterate in their mother language, Standard Arabic (Allehaiby, 2013; Al-Shaer, 2016). They add that using Arabizi in everyday writing will lead to losing the ability to lead and write in Standard Arabic. Furthermore, Darwish (2014) adds that Arabizi lacks the essential characteristics or rules in the Arabic language taught at schools, such as structure, grammar, and spelling.

Arabizi has been the subject of numerous studies examining it from various angles. Opponents of the phenomenon conducted studies on multiple concerns with negative results and claims of using Arabizi on these concerns. Some researchers investigated the effect of Arabizi on the performance of the Arabic language and culture. They claimed it is a Westernisation tool that will make people lose their Arabic language, identity, and culture (Al-Hawsani, 2014; Alsharafi-Taim, 2014). Others examined the users' attitudes towards using Arabizi (Al-Hawsani, 2014; Almandhari, 2014). In contrast, others explored the reasons behind using Arabizi (Abdel- Ghaffar et al., 2011; Asslaman & Haraq, 2014; Keong et al., 2015; Romaih, 2014; Srage, 2014; Yaghan, 2008).

Taha (2015) examined if Arabizi is considered a threat to Arabic identity and language. His study participants asserted and alerted that Arabizi is a dangerous phenomenon for the Arabic language. Moreover, Ghazal (2014), in his article in The Jordan Times Newspaper, investigated the effect of Arbizi on the Arabic language. The interviewers claimed that because of using Arabizi all the time, they no longer can write correct Arabic or English. Al-Shaer (2016) investigated the effect of Arabizi on Palestinian students' standard Arabic spelling abilities. The results showed that those who frequently use Arabizi online tend to have poorer spelling skills in their home language. Moreover, the results of Bahrainwala (2011) indicated that the interviewers of her study asserted that this phenomenon is not valuable and refused to use it because it lacks rules and uniformity, which affects their writing.

On the other hand, advocates claim that it is a natural phenomenon and a simple language youth use to facilitate communication (Alshwuairekh, 2014). Others argue that Arabizi has nothing to do with identity and culture or strips the Arabs from their mother language (Mohd-Asraft, 2005). Another survey with 28 participants was carried out by Abdel-Ghaffar et al. (2011). It concluded that Arabizi allowed its users to exchange a one-of-a-kind code that connects them or, more accurately, forms their speech community. Most participants, however, reported that their feeling of Arab identity was unaffected using Arabizi.

E. Questions of the Study

1- How does Arabizi affect students’ English writing?
2- What are the justifications for the continuity of using Arabizi?

II. Methodology

The researcher observed that Arab students who write in English use Arabizi by mixing English letters but Arabic words and blending some numerals as letters. To examine the effect of Arabizi on students' English writing, the researcher analysed samples of students writing in which they use Arabizi. Also, the researcher interviews the students to investigate the reasons behind the continuity of using Arabizi.

The researcher used a mixed method design because a mixed method helps the researcher to get a complete picture than a single quantitative or qualitative method and integrates the advantages of both methods (Daniel, 2016) as a standalone method.

The study sample consisted of twenty female sophomore students majoring in the English language at Al Balqa Applied University during the academic year 2022-2023. All participants enrolled in a paragraph writing course. To answer the first question, the researcher analyses samples of Arabic native students' English writing to examine the effect of Arabizi on their English writing. In contrast, the second instrument is an interview with one question on the reasons behind the continuity of using Arabizi from their points of view. All the participants attended face-to-face lectures, so it was easy to interview them and collect their answers directly. The idea of interviewing them face to face is to get an accurate impression when answering the interview questions.

The researcher interviews the students and records their responses on a tape recorder to present the interview in an objective and authentic recitation form. During the interviews, the students could respond in either English or Arabic and provide sufficient time to provide honest feedback regarding the factors contributing to the continued use of Arabizi. Each participant offered extensive information because of having ample time to answer interview questions and provide detailed information. The researcher had the interviews transcribed word for word into written texts so that they could analyse the participants' responses. Following the transcription of the interviews, the researcher arranged the findings according to the participants' points of view.

III. Data Analysis and Findings

To answer the first question: How does Arabizi affect students’ English writing? The researcher collected many writing samples submitted by the students, which they produced by the sample of the study during their writing paragraph course. Of the total sample, ten lack any Arabizi writing, whereas the percentage of using Arabizi varies in the rest samples. Table 1 shows the most common substitution words of Arabizi when writing in English.

TABLE 1
EXAMPLES OF ARABIZI EFFECT ON ENGLISH WRITING

	English sentence	Substitution/ Arabizi	Sentence in Arabizi	Word type
1	Where are you from?	Enta, men, wain	“Enti men wain”	Wh- question
2	The weekend is boring	el	el weekend is boring	Article
3	Any news about the fire	ay	ay news about the fire	Determiner
4	But they left the country	bas	Bas they left the country early	Conjunction
5	She told me that the exam is difficult	Ana	She told ana that the exam is difficult	Pronoun
6	Hala is too young to drive a car	2	Hala is 2 young 2 driving a car	Adverb /preposition
7	They bought a car and house	wa	They bought a car wa house	Conjunction
8	A7mad was very angry because his mother cooked lentil	7	A7mad was very angry because his mother cooked 3adas	Proper name
9	In a minute	fe	fe a minute	Preposition
10	What did you buy from the mall yesterday?	u	What did u buy from the mall yesterday?	Pronoun
11	The homework was too much for him	kteer	The homework was kteer for him.	Quantifier
12	No	la	Giving an answer	adverb
13	You are the best friend ever	enta	u the best friend ever	Pronoun
14	I want you to buy me a dress because I do not have money.	U,2, cuz	“I want u 2 buy me a dress cuz I do not have money.	Subject/preposition/adverb

Some students in the paragraph writing course did not use Arabizi (n=10). Although they do not use Arabizi, the researcher interviewed them to discover the reasons behind their resistance. Ten of the participants use Arabizi all the time(n=10). The researcher used numbers instead of names to keep the information confidential.

A. Data From the Interview

To answer the second question, "What are the justifications for the continuity of using Arabizi from students’ perspectives”? The researcher interviewed the students to find reasons behind using or opposing Arabizi.

(a). Findings From Non-Users of Arabizi

The interview finding revealed that some participants did not use Arabizi for different reasons and showed strong dissatisfaction. They opposed to use of the new type of writing.

Participant 1: “Arabizi is a mix of languages that do not make sense, and students should not use it.”
Participant 3: “This style of writing is hard to understand because it does not have any basic rules.”
Participant 7: “Destroys English and Arabic spelling as well.”
Participant 5: “It attacks the integrity of any language.”
Participant 9: “Affect English language skills, writing, for example.”
Participant 11: “Users of Arabizi would never get any better in English writing if they continued to blend English with Arabic letters and numerals.”
Participant 13: “It is the language of the losers as they cannot write in English.”
Participant 17: “Arabizi is a mix of languages that is neither necessary nor justified.”
Participant 19: “Arabizi could make it harder for us to learn English as a Foreign language.”
Participant 15: “Users of Arabizi know only half of the English language.”

(b). Findings From Users of Arabizi

Participant 2: “Arabizi helped me to write in English though I mix it when writing in English.”
Participant 8: “I use Arabizi when I do not know the word in English.”
Participant 20: “I mix Arabizi and English because English is difficult.”
Participant 4: “In Arabizi, I do not have to write correct English. Everything is accepted.”
Participant 16: “I usually have errors in English spelling even before I used Arabizi”.
Participant 18: “It is a habit, and I use it excessively because I am not good at English.”
Participant 6: “I tried not to use it when I write in English, but I failed since I use it habitually.”
Participant 12: “I mix between English and Arabizi unconsciously”.
Participant 10: “Having spelling mistakes is natural in learning English.”
Participant 14: “I use Arabizi instead of English when I cannot find a word as accurate as Arabic.”

IV. DISCUSSION

Many Arabizi words share the same script as English terms, which can confuse them. Constant mixing of Arabic and English might have unpredictable results, such as substituting native Arabic terms for English ones. As seen from Table 1 above, most substitute is related to articles, determiners, prepositions, pronouns, conjunctions, and pronouns; however, students replace them unconsciously. For example, the proper name “Ahmad” seems that the users chat with a friend’s name “Ahmad”, and they substitute the H with the number (7) in English as they used to do when using Arbizi. They tend to engage in random jumps between the Arabic and English languages.

Moreover, in sentence (6), the problem appears clearly. Users used the same number 2 to substitute two English concepts from other grammatical categories. The first one is the adverb “too,” whereas the second one is the preposition “to “followed by a verb (to+ infinitive). In this case, Arab students use the same number for two different words in English, and it seems that they will not be able to differentiate between them in writing in English; otherwise, they use two different numbers for the two different words. In the Table above, for example, “Enti men wain”? Is the substitution of the question in English “Where are you from”? The word “men” is an English word, yet it has another meaning in English. In Arabizi, it substitutes the preposition “from” in English. This sentence (number 1) can cause ambiguity because users of Arabizi can practice writing the word “men” in English writing. By frequent use, students may mix the word's actual meaning and the other meaning in Arabizi since they use Arabizi unconsciously. Also, users tend to shorten text using non-English words to substitute the original one.

Moreover, in sentence number (14) (“I want u 2 buy me a dress cuz I do not have money”), the English letter u substitute the English word (You), 2 for (To), and cus instead of (Because). Utilising this type of mingling can undoubtedly generate problems which affect their English writing. Yet, this has not prevented Arab students from learning and extensively employing Arabizi. In their study, Shehadi and Wintner (2022) provided an example of how Arabizi changed the word's grammatical category. The word subtweet in English is a verb, but adding the (a), an Arabic prefix (derivational morpheme), converts the verb into a noun. In sentence six, the number (2) has changed the verb drive into a noun when adding the number (2). This change is because of the effect of Arabizi on users when writing in English. The challenge facing Arab students is the low-performance level in English which decreases their self-confidence in writing in English. At the same time, they are obliged to use it with their peers since it is a trend among them. For example, scrutinising the Table above, in sentence number (8), the substitution appears in using the noun lentil, which users replaced with Arabizi letters. Accordingly, one of the reasons to shift to Arabizi is the familiarity with English vocabulary which creates difficulties in their English writing.

The internet's globalisation has affected all languages, including English, Japanese, Spanish, and Arabic. For example, the situation in the United States is identical to that in Jordan. Modern American teenagers' growing social media usage has made texting impact their spelling and grammar abilities (Brent & Lewis, 2013). In other words, there have been significant changes in writing, and when using social media and messaging apps, young people nowadays disregard grammar and spelling conventions. Beyond the scope of social media, young people might be impacted by this frequent usage of abbreviations. Social media informal communication leads to some dialects, discouraging young people from utilising traditional language. Using the proper English language is intimidating by all the Internet acronyms and new slang (Brent & Lewis, 2013). Researchers and English teachers in the United States are increasingly worried that young people will suffer from losing their literacy skills, which might have disastrous consequences like the loss of practical writing abilities.

A. Interview Findings From Non-Users of Arabizi

During the interview, a common thread of resistance and dissatisfaction with Arabizi among those who were against its use. The participants held the opinion that it would be resolved soon. They attributed this sentiment to various factors, including the fact that writing in Arabic on social media, different software programs, and platforms is now feasible. Teenagers only use it, and when those teenagers get older, they will stop using it. Additionally, it is simply a trend right now, and it will end soon because English education has developed, and people will start to use either English or Arabic instead.

The following are the justifications of the non-users of this type of writing provided their explanations for rejecting this type of writing style. Three students echo the same view that Arabizi is an unnecessary and unjustifiable linguistic blend, and deciphering this writing style is without any common framework provided (participants 1, 3, and 17). One significant comment from non-users is that Arabizi threatens the written Arabic and English language, so there is no advantage to utilising it. She added that she could express herself better in Arabic and English, so learning or using them is unnecessary (participant 7). Another participant asserted that users of Arabizi attacked any language's integrity and negatively affected English spelling. Arabic and English suffer from this incorrect writing style (Participant 5). On the other hand, one participant stated that users would never improve in writing English if they kept mixing English letters and numbers with Arabic, unlike the findings of Alghamdi (2018), where (7%) of the participants declared that Arabizi assisted them in learning English faster and improved their English writing and reading because they used English words regularly.

An interesting answer came from the participant (13), who described Arabizi as the language of losers, and writing in Arabizi is not a source of pride. Another student added that if Arabizi keeps going on, it could hurt the English language since it influences the vocabulary of Arabic-speaking countries. Beyond doubt, it could make it harder for students to learn English as a Foreign language (participants 9,11, 15, and 19).

B. Interview Findings From Users of Arabizi

On the contrary, users of Arabizi have their justifications. The following are their answers. Two participants who use Arabizi asserted that they unconsciously mix Arabizi words when writing in English because they use it more than in

English (participants 6 and 12). Other students stated that writing in Arabizi instead of English when they cannot find the right word in English because English is complex, and their English is poor for finding quick equivalence vocabulary (20 and 8). Other participants reported that Arabizi is not the reason behind these spelling mistakes. Even without using Arabizi, they suffer from learning the correct English spelling (16). Another participant noted that spelling mistakes are natural while learning a foreign language (10). Participant (4) claimed that during English classes, the instructors criticised our poor English spelling every time, so if the mistake is in English or Arabizi, the results are red blood ink. Participant (4) added, "Repeatedly, I used to apologise with a promise of not using Arabizi when writing in English, yet I always mix Arabizi when writing in English". At the same time, student number (2) defended Arabizi positively because it breaks the ice of using English. The participant added that before writing in Arabizi, "I was reluctant to write in English because my English is weak, yet Arabize encourages me to write in English". The answer of participant (2) was unexpected but exciting where the participant was sincere in justifying the effect of Arabizi in writing in English.

V. Conclusion

The entire study aims to investigate the effect of Arabizi on foreign language learners writing in English. While previous studies investigated Arabizi from different aspects (Alghamdi, 2018; Assalman & Haraq, 2014) among Arab youth, this study does not match any of the previous ones because it investigated Arabizi from different aspects, which is the effect of this new writing style affected English Writing. While teaching EFL students an English paragraph writing course, the researcher collected a sample of students writing in which students integrated strange words and letters with English paragraphs. Half of the participants in this study hold a negative attitude towards the effect of Arabizi on learning English in general. On the other hand, the other ten participants asserted that unconsciously mixing some Arabizi letters or words while writing in English is natural because any foreign language learner would have spelling mistakes without Arabizi.

The presence of this writing code has found its way outside the virtual world in Jordan and other Arab countries, creating a state of contradictions. For example, in this study, half of the learners believe that Arabizi is a new writing variety that haunted Jordan, which complicated the process of learning a foreign language. Other participants declared that this new type of writing was used among peers and family to facilitate communication. They strongly asserted that Arabizi did not affect their learning of English as a foreign language because they already faced problems learning it.

If the usefulness of Arabizi in English classes is considered, the situation becomes more of a dilemma. The student writing samples used in this research warn ESL instructors about a problem with which they may be unfamiliar. Whether or not Arabizi is a new writing style, it is nonetheless a fact that needs to be addressed, especially by those learning English as a second language. This study does not advocate for teaching English with the help of the Arabizi; instead, it provides a quick introduction to the impact of Arabizi on EFL classrooms (Jubran, 2023).

According to Saide (2019), losing proficiency in the native language can also result in losing ability in the second language. Students may acquire only a partial command of that language by ignoring grammatical correctness and spelling in English or another second language they are attempting to learn.

Therefore, English language instruction must be reconsidered significantly since most young people recognise the value of communicating well in English. Traditional approaches to teaching languages, such as Arabic and English, may no longer be applicable or useful. It's essential to remember this when interacting with the digital generation (Buckingham, 2013) of today's students. Teaching English to today's students requires considering the pervasive presence of technology in their daily lives. More frequent use of technology in the classroom is needed to keep the attention of young people in Arab countries where English is taught.

References

[1] Abdel-Ghaffar, N., Elshamly, N., Farrag, M., & Muhammed, R. (2011). *Summary of Arabizi or Romanization: The dilemma of writing Arabic texts*. Paper presented at the Jīl Jadīd Conference, Austin, TX.

[2] Aboelezz, M. (2012). We are young. We are trendy. Buy our product! The use of Latinized Arabic in edited, printed press in Egypt. *United Academics Journal of Social Sciences*, *2*, 48-72. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from https://www.academia.edu/1481874/_We_are_young_We_are_trendy_Buy_our_product_The_use_of_Latinized_Arabic_in_printed_edited_magazines_in_Egypt

[3] Alghamdi, H. & Petraki, E. (2018). Arabizi in Saudi Arabia: A Deviant Form of Language or Simply a Form of Expression? *Social Sciences*, *7*(9), 155, pp. 1-19. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci7090155

[4] Al-Hawsani, N. (2014). Araa'a talibat almarhalah althanaweeah fi estekhdam al-arabizi fi dawlat alemarat alarabyyah almotahedah [High school female students' opinions about the use of Arabizi in UAE] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab youth's language in new social media] (*Vol. 1*, pp. 261-284). Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for The Arabic Language.

[5] Allehaiby, W. H. (2013). Arabizi: An analysis of the Romanization of the Arabic Script from a sociolinguistic perspective. *Arab World English Journal*, *4*(3), 52-62. Retrieved January 19, 2023, from https://awej.org/images/AllIssues/Volume4/Volume4Number3Sept2013/5.pdf

[6] Almandhari, R. (2014). Mostawa estekhdam alarabizi lada alshabab alomani fi mawaqea altawasol alejtemaey [How much Arabizi is used by Omani youth on social networking sites] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab

youth's language in new social media] (*Vol. 1*, pp. 205-234). Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for The Arabic Language.
[7] Alsharafi-Taim, M. (2014). Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah [Arab youth's language in new social media] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab youth's language in new social media] *(Vol. 1*, pp. 399-435). Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for the Arabic Language.
[8] Al-Shaer, I. M. R. (2016). Does Arabizi constitute a threat to Arabic? *Arab World English Journal*, *7*(3), 18-30. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol7no3.2
[9] Alshwuairekh, S. (2014). Thaherat alarabizi [The Arabizi phenomenon] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab youth's language in new social media] (*Vol. 1*, pp. 27-30). Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for the Arabic Language.
[10] Assalman, A., & Haraq, F. (2014). Alarabizi men manthoor hasooby [Arabizi from a computational view] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab youth's language in new social media] *(Vol. 1*, pp. 47-58). Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for The Arabic Language.
[11] Bahrainwala, L. (2011). *You Say Hello. I Say Mar7aba: Exploring the Digi-Speak That Powered the Arab Revolution*. Retrieved February 15, 2023,https://d.lib.msu.edu/etd/720.
[12] Bianchi, R. (2012). Glocal Arabic online: The case of 3arabizi. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *2*(4), 483. DOI: 10.14746/ssllt.2012.2.4.3
[13] Bjornsson, J. A. (2010). Egyptian Romanized Arabic: A Study of Selected Features from Communication among Egyptian Youth on Facebook. [Unpublished Master Thesis]. University of Oslo. retrieved January 19, 2023, from https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/24250/Bjoernsson_master.pdf
[14] Brent, E. & Lewis, S. (2013). *Learn Sociology*. Jones & Bartlett Learning Publisher.
[15] Buckingham, D. (2013). *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary Culture.* John Wiley & Sons.
[16] Daniel, E. (2016). The Usefulness of Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches and Methods in Researching Problem-Solving Ability in Science Education Curriculum. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *Vol.7*, No.15, pp. 91-100.Retrieved April 19, 2023, from https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1103224
[17] Darwish, K. (2014). Arabizi Detection and Conversion to Arabic. *Association for Computational Linguistics*, pp. 217-224. DOI: 10.3115/v1/W14-3629
[18] Ghazal, M. (2014). Arabizi popularity threatening Arabic proficiency among native speakers, experts warn. *Jordanian Times.* Retrieved March 10, 2023, from http://www.vista.sahafi.jo/art.php?id=6a38ae8ff303c7bdcc9887be0ec0bcb368a9f71c
[19] Holes, C. (2004). *Modern Arabic: Structures, functions, and varieties.* Georgetown University Press.
[20] Jubran, S. M. (2023). The role of cross translation in learning English as a foreign language. *Perspektivy nauki i obrazovania – Perspectives of Science and Education*, *63*(3), 189-200. Doi: 10.32744/pse.2023.3.12
[21] Keong, Y., Hameed, O. & Abdulbaqi, I. (2015). The use of Arabizi in English texting by Arab postgraduate students at UKM. *The English Literature Journal*, *2*, pp. 281–88.
[22] Mohd-Asraf, R. (2005). English and Islam: A clash of civilisations? Journal of Language, *Identity & Education*, *4*(2), 103-118.
[23] Palfreyman, D. & Al Khalil, M. (2003). “A Funky Language for Teenzz to Use:” Representing Gulf Arabic in Instant Messaging. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2003.tb00355.x
[24] Panović, I. (2018). ‘You don't have enough letters to make this noise’: Arabic speakers' creative engagements with the Roman script. *Language Sciences*, *65*, 70-81. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2017.03.010
[25] Romaih, M. (2014). Thaqafat tagheer alloghah lada shabab alaalam alaraby wa atharaha alaa alhawyyah althaqafyyah [The culture of language change and its effects on Arab youth cultural identity] *Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab youth's language in new social media] *(Vol. 1*, pp. 235-260*)*. Riyadh: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for the Arabic Language.
[26] Saide, A. (2019). *Arabizi -- Help or Harm? An Analysis of the Impacts of Arabizi: Threat Or Benefit to the Written Arabic Language?* Doctoral Thesis. https://doi.org/10.26191/dv3w-kt10 University of Dayton, United States of America, Ohio.
[27] Srage, N. (2014). Alarabizi: derasat halaah min lobnan [Arabizi: A case study from Lebanon]. *In Loghat alshabab alaraby fi wasayel altawasol alhadithah* [Arab Youth’s Language in New social media]. Riyadh: King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz International Center for The Arabic Language, pp. 50–105.
[28] Shehadi, S. & Wintner, S. (2022). Identifying Code-Switching in Arabizi. In *Proceedings of the Seventh Arabic Natural Language Processing Workshop (WANLP)*, pages 194–204, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (Hybrid). Association for Computational Linguistics. Retrieved June 23 from https://aclanthology.org/2022.wanlp-1.18.pdf
[29] Taha, M. (2015). Arabizi: Is code-switching a threat to the Arabic language? *Proceedings of The Asian Conference on Arts & Humanities (ACAH2015)*. American University of Sharjah, UAE: The International Academic Forum. Retrieved March 12, 2023, from http://papers.iafor.org/wp-content/uploads/papers/acah2015/ACAH2015_13058.pdf
[30] Warschauer, M., El Said, G. & Zohry, A. (2002). Language choice online: Globalisation and identity in Egypt. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication 7*, Issue 4, JCMC744. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2002.tb00157.x
[31] Yaghan, M.A. (2008). Arabizi: A Contemporary Style of Arabic Slang. *Design Issues*, *24*(2), pp. 39–52. https://doi.org/10.1162/desi.2008.24.2.39

Sereen M. Jubran was born in Amman- Jordan, and she got her bachelor's degree in English Language from Al -Yarmouk University -Jordan in 1984. She earned her master's in teaching English from the University of Jordan in Amman- Jordan 2002. She got her PhD in Teaching English Language from Amman Arab University Amman-Jordan in 2011. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Princess Alia University College/ Al-Balqa Applied University. Her research interests are mainly in teaching writing – Teaching English Skills, Writing research in English. She has taught several English skills courses such as Paragraph Writing- Essay Writing- Writing Research in English- Reading- Listening.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 935-945, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.27

The Literature Course Mapping in the Undergraduate Curricula of EFL Education: A Case Study in Several Countries in Asia

Hasna Hasna*
Language and Literature Education Study Program, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia;
English Education Study Program, Tadulako University, Palu, Indonesia

Pratiwi Retnaningdyah
English Literature Study Program, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

Ali Mustofa
Language and Literature Education Study Program, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia

***Abstract*—This study aims to map the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in Asia, particularly in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan[1], and analyze the literature course mapping in the Indonesian, Thai, and Taiwanese undergraduate curricula of EFL education. The significance of the study lies in its contribution to the structure of the undergraduate curriculum of EFL education, addressing global higher education challenges in the twenty-first century. This research employed a case study approach in Asia involving quantitative mapping of curricula documents from several universities in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan, followed by qualitative analysis of curricula documents. The results indicate that, on average, the twelve target universities allocate 6% of the total obligatory completed semester credits to the literature course for a Bachelor of Teaching degree. Most of these universities position the literature course at a moderately low level with their curricula. Ideally, the literature course allocation could be increased to 15% if the linguistics and general language skills course group is also set at 15%, while the elective course group should be at 6%. Since the data were validated using time triangulation, future research should explore additional data validation techniques, such as in-depth interviews or questionnaires.**

***Index Terms*—curriculum design, EFL education curriculum, English language arts, ELT, literature course**

I. Introduction

Since the early nineteenth century, literature has been used to teach language (Prinsloo, 2018). Several studies have demonstrated the benefits of employing literature in language instruction, such as how it helps prepare students in the classroom for life outside of the classroom (Kang & Zhu, 2022). Reading scholarly literary works can help students develop their critical thinking (Naraian, 2010). Furthermore, reading literary texts can increase a student's knowledge of the world, advance ethics, and help students make better-informed judgments about the world around them and the environment (Schrijvers et al., 2019). Even though a review study finds that there is little proof that literary and narrative texts can successfully upgrade the critical thinking abilities of English language learners, most literature studies have shown many advantages of literary texts (Soufi & See, 2019).

Apart from this fact, it is clarified that in an American literature course, some typical schemes of applying the necessary reasoning were used (Bethea, 1995). It is also suggested that since a piece of fictional writing can be perceived as an expression of the authentic 'outside-the-classroom' experience in general, it may offer insights into how to better prepare students 'inside-the–classroom' extending beyond a mere understanding of the learning environment. Moreover, it has been discovered that transformative dialogic literature teaching (TDLT) has a decisive impact on students' happiness production, learning senses, and learners' use of literary devices. TDLT remarkably impacts students' understanding of society's essence (i.e., other people's general knowledge and relevant experiences, such as compassion as signs, symbolism, and tasteful mindfulness) (Schrijvers et al., 2019).

In addition, the literature is very useful as a technique, material, and approach in English language teaching (ELT) (Adelaja et al., 2023; Atai & Fatahi-Majd, 2014; Choudhary, 2016). The literature can be used to teach language skills and language components, such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary (Feng et al., 2023; Finn et al., 2023; Qiu & Xu, 2022; van der Elst-Koeiman et al., 2022; Youjun & Xiaomei, 2022; Zhang & Zhang, 2023).

* Corresponding Author. Email: hasna.19031@mhs.unesa.ac.id
[1] Taiwan is a part of China.

Besides as a technique, the literature can also be used as an authentic resource for English teaching and learning materials (Grecu, 2023). Thus, the literature is a teaching technique and material and a principle in teaching, which is well-known as an approach. Accordingly, it is important to consider the literature in the undergraduate curriculum English as a foreign language (EFL) education.

The growing interest concerning the literature on ELT exists globally; however, it has little influence in Indonesia. One of the focuses of ELT studies in Indonesia is still the study of the status and function of English in Indonesia (Tauchid et al., 2022). In contrast, the expansion of material for teaching in Indonesia in accord with the racially mixed situation through applying social factors of the linguistic system at the secondary level concludes that teachers should produce material improvement for teaching, with whatever involves independent multicultural awareness (Kusumaningputri & Widodo, 2018). Additionally, EFL research in Indonesia has been initiated through literary works for children in English (Arrafii, 2021). However, the EFL curriculum assessment in Indonesia still shows that an important part of the curriculum, which goes to English, does not mention the literature at all.

The researchers in Indonesia have paid little attention to using literature as teaching material for undergraduate students of EFL education. Teaching the literature as an approach and source of teaching materials faces the same issue. Seven issues and dilemmas exist in teaching the literature in the EFL context in Indonesia (Musthafa, 2015). Only a few scholars show interest in using the literature to teach the English language in Indonesia. How can Indonesian curriculum designers become interested in incorporating the literature into the curriculum with the ideal balance? If they introduce the literature course with fewer semester credits than the ideal proportion, how can Indonesian EFL education students compete with students from various countries worldwide? Therefore, retaining the literature in the Indonesian English education curriculum is essential (Puadi Ilyas, 2016).

Through online observation, this study has found that most educational universities allocate fewer semester credits to the literature course than to some other course groups in their curricula. Some universities even classify the literature course as an elective course. Given the suboptimal condition of the EFL education curriculum in Indonesia, it is essential to investigate why most curriculum designers particularly in public teaching universities in Indonesia assign fewer semester credits to the literature course. To bolster the data from Indonesia, this study also examines the undergraduate curricula of EFL education from Thailand and Taiwan. Therefore, the primary aim of this study is to assess the presence of the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan. Furthermore, it seeks to analyze the outcomes of mapping the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan under national and international EFL education policies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Equivalencies among Indonesia, Thailand, Taiwan, and foreign qualifications should be specified to enhance their international competitiveness and facilitate global trade. Therefore, a curriculum structure for the undergraduate students of EFL education that aligns with the educational policies in Asian countries related to teacher education should be established (Susilo, 2015). This curriculum structure can serve as the benchmark for developing the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education across Asia. Additionally, it can be utilized to analyze the mapping of the literature course. A simplified diagram illustrating the theoretical framework used in this study is presented in Figure 1.

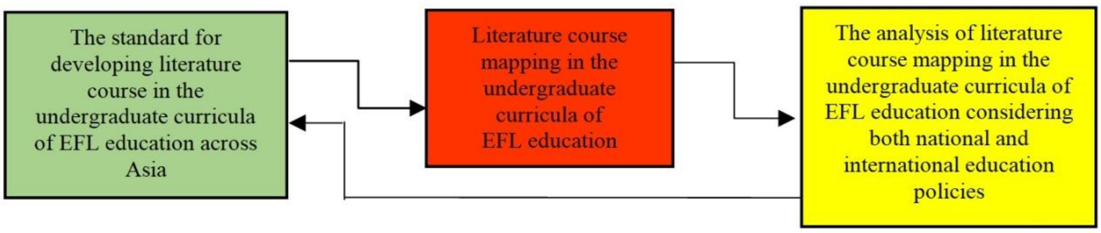


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

A. *The Undergraduate Curriculum of EFL Education*

When designing a curriculum, it is imperative to consider both national and international language education policies (Belousova, 2019). Just as government policies come with their own set of challenges that need to be addressed, these related policies should be the primary concern of every curriculum designer. The development and implementation of language policies predominantly fall under the purview of the education sector. In the realm of language learning, various challenges can manifest, such as difficulties in acquiring a new language, which may lead to a negative attitude. Learning a language does not inherently increase tolerance. Mere knowledge of different races does not always evoke empathy, and moral arguments do not invariably alter prejudice (Griffiths & Oxford, 2014). There are myriad factors interwoven with language learning, including individual motivation, specific needs, ethnic backgrounds, cultural diversity, the importance of one’s mother tongue or vernacular, minority languages, linguistic aspects of migration, the role of lingua franca or multilingualism, and economic prerequisites. Therefore, the study of languages should progress comprehensively and holistically to foster tolerance and promote ethnic understanding.

UNESCO has declared peace, global comprehension, and advancement in education, culture, and science as solutions to language education issues. Numerous initiatives of the World Conference of Ministers of Education on eradicating illiteracy were of considerable interest (Limage, 1999). These initiatives include the intergovernmental conference on language policies in Africa and the regional conference of ministers of education in Asia and Oceania (McCormick, 2014; Spreen & Vally, 2006). Teaching in the mother tongue in primary schools in a multilingual environment, teaching foreign languages and the literature for peace and international understanding, and the international symposium on education for the twenty-first century are factors causing the eradication of illiteracy (Paul-Binyamin & Reingold, 2014; Varughese, 2017).

In Indonesia, all schools have been instructed by the Ministry of Education and Culture to use three languages, namely regional language, Indonesian (national language), and English (foreign language), since the 2015/2016 academic year. Students need regional languages to preserve culture in each area of Indonesia (Tauchid et al., 2022). Teachers should employ Indonesian and English in teaching all subjects in senior high school, as English is crucial for success in higher education (Maulana et al., 2015). Additionally, besides its significance at the university level, Indonesia needs a foreign language strategy due to the current European Common Market Agreement (ECMA), AFTA, APEC, and MEA, as the agreement within the ASEAN community (Tanhueco-Nepomuceno, 2019). Students require foreign languages to promote Indonesian culture in the tourist industry and creative economy, as well as to elevate Indonesian to the status of a global language (Tauchid et al., 2022). One option that policymakers and curriculum designers should consider is teaching the literature in senior high schools and universities using national and foreign languages while teaching it in elementary and junior high schools using vernaculars (local language) and national language.

Due to the political and legal implementation of the ASEAN Economic Society; Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan must be accessible to all the ASEAN countries in terms of international commerce and other matters, allowing their students to compete with students from other countries of the ASEAN. Providing international professional recognition is necessary for Indonesian, Thai, and Taiwanese students after their studies. Therefore, the Indonesian, Thai, and Taiwanese governments must address the issues faced by their students by implementing various language and language education policies.

First, the Indonesian government issued the Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lectures (Charina et al., 2022; Suyadi et al., 2022). Presidential Decree No. 8/2012 established the Indonesian Qualification Framework, standardized by the Directorate of Higher Education (DIKTI) (Rachman, 2023). To promote the implementation of higher education curricula, the Indonesian government also released Ministerial Decree No. 49 in 2014, which pertains to the National Standard of Higher Education for the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia (Bruns et al., 2019). The Minister of Research, Technology, and Higher Education issued an official letter number 17/M/1/2015 to provide new authorization for teacher professional certification (Rachman, 2023).

Second, it is crucial to understand the roles of the literature in the English curriculum considering the ELT issues in Thailand, the Thai government's solutions, and academics' recommendations. The key stage indicators for classes 10-12, according to the Thailand Basic Education Core Curriculum, are 'choosing, explaining, participating, and analyzing/discussing native speakers' culture (Keawsomnuk, 2017). Literature has a close relationship with culture, and students will speak, analyze, and discuss native speakers' cultures by reading and listening to short stories, novels, and poems written by native speakers, including by watching native dramas and movies. Literature-based resources can assist in a student-centered strategy and inspire students to learn English. The number of courses and credits each semester for each subject should be the only aspect of the Thai curriculum that should be criticized.

Third, Taiwan set a goal to become a bilingual English-Mandarin Chinese country by 2030, opening doors for American educational technology firms. With an emphasis on K-12 students and its civil service, Taiwan enacted a policy to become a bilingual English–Mandarin Chinese nation by 2030. Although English is Taiwan's most widely taught foreign language (beginning in primary schools), oral proficiency needs more improvement than reading and writing. The moment is right for American educational technology companies to enter the Taiwanese market. Due to local regulations, only a few foreign instructors reside in Taiwan. Consequently, Taiwan wants to increase the number of bilingual instructors by utilizing online and educational technology solutions.

B. The Focus of Teaching Literature in Undergraduate EFL Education

In all the shaping, the crude material of the literature is language, either written or spoken. In this study, we embraced an adaptation of the literature definition by centering on fictional stories, poetries, and dramas—the three major sorts (or genres) of 'imaginative or inventive writing' that shape the heart of the literature because schools and universities have instructed it for a nation. Curriculum designers may choose numerous works to incorporate; as of now, ones 'of recognized imaginative value' and hence have a place in what researchers call the canon, a select, if much-debate and ever-evolving, list of the most highly and broadly regarded works (Su & Zhong, 2022). In addition, the literature in ELT should use canonical texts and consider the development of linguistics and communicative skills through critical literary readings and cultural interpretative attempts (Çıraklı & Kılıçkaya, 2011).

We can see the roles of literature in language learning from three viewpoints, i.e., from students, teachers, and scholars. Some scholars have researched the significance of the literature in students' language learning (Calafato & Paran, 2019; Kang & Zhu, 2022; Naraian, 2010; Prinsloo, 2018; Schrijvers et al., 2019). Students believe that short stories can help them acquire vocabulary, syntax, semantics, and language skills in reading, writing, and speaking (Prinsloo, 2018). We can heighten the students' interests and involvement in literary texts when the topics are relevant to them (Naishtat-Bornstein & Dvir, 2019). Several teachers detailed determining delight through reading the Russian and English literature accept most emphatically in the literature's capacity to advance social mindfulness throughout their learners, including moving forward sight words and reading capabilities of their learners (Calafato & Paran, 2019). Regarding the scholars' findings concerning the significance of the literature in English Language Teaching (ELT), there is a claim that a (quasi) experimental investigation is necessary to illuminate how the literature instruction could assist students in gaining a deeper understanding of human nature (Schrijvers et al., 2019). They have investigated transformative dialogic literature teaching (TDLT). They compared the use of TDLT and regular literature teaching (RLT). It appears that TDLT enhances students' understanding of human nature, provides eudaimonic reasons for reading, offers a detailed approach to dealing with challenges in literary texts, and inspires literature education, while RLT does not.

Due to the importance of literary texts in ELT, the appropriate proportion of the literature course must be considered in the undergraduate curriculum of EFL education. The curriculum involves the careful selection and organization of a course's objectives, content, grouping, and techniques—such as integrating technology during the COVID-19 pandemic—teaching approaches, learning outcomes, and evaluation (Pokhrel & Chhetri, 2021; Rao, 2020; Srinivasan, 2016). Besides curriculum definition, within the curriculum concept, we should know the curriculum framework, quality of the curriculum, curriculum development, curriculum evaluation, and curriculum analysis. Curriculum designers should conduct curriculum analysis before evaluating the implementation of a curriculum. They can develop the curriculum based on the curriculum evaluation.

Instead of tracking strategic literature framed on curriculum development of higher education, scholars have conducted research on curriculum development between 2000 and 2019 by tracking the views of teachers and stakeholders. Many studies examine need assessment, teaching methods, and teaching strategies more extensively than the selection of content, monitoring, planning, designing, curriculum evaluation, and curriculum implementation (Kirkgöz, 2008). Most of the studies favored qualitative over mixed-methods and quantitative research. Even some research does not take a particular stance when looking at curriculum development. Also, no curriculum development study was conducted in 2000–2005 and 2007. Between 2006 and 2019, the United States and the United Kingdom produced 14% of the articles on curriculum development, followed by Turkey at 12%, Iran at 8%, and other nations at 2% to 4%.

Few studies have looked at curricular analysis in developing nations. One research examined the curricula of developing and expanding nations. The report claims that the scholars examined 14 curricula from various nations. Brazil, Croatia, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, Hong Kong, Hungary, Israel, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Singapore, Sweden, the Czech Republic, and 14 other nations made up the group, for a total of 28 nations. This is calculated as 14 (the stated nations) plus the 14 other nations. The findings demonstrate that the curriculum documents include the strategic language performance concepts underpinning the development of cultural competence (Lavrenteva & Orland-Barak, 2015). Therefore, it is clear from the study's findings that it only considers societal factors. Some researchers in Malaysia and Saudi Arabia have conducted EFL curriculum analysis, particularly the EFL reading curriculum.

The analyses in Malaysia focus on the theories, different teaching and learning methods, and the functions of L2 reading instructions as they are mirrored in the Malaysian EFL secondary reading curriculum (Hwang & Kim, 2019). The analysis in Saudi Arabia centers on determining the degree of cognitive demands that reading tasks should have for students in academic and foundational programs (Alshahrani et al., 2022). Additionally, most curriculum analyses in Indonesia, like those in Turkey, concentrate on secondary schools, especially the 2013 curriculum (Böhn & Deutscher, 2022; Yee et al., 2023).

Following the research gap in curriculum analysis, this study primarily aims to analyze the undergraduate EFL education curriculum at 10 public teaching universities in Indonesia, including one each in Thailand and Taiwan. The curriculum analysis focuses on mapping the literature course in the curricula of twelve target universities. Analyzing the results of the mapping is the secondary focus of this study. The outcomes of this study should serve as the benchmark for curriculum development in Asia because they are crucial for countries' economic growth in Asia. Given the limitations of earlier studies and the pressing need to know how the undergraduate EFL programs of the target universities position the literature course in their curriculum, we address the following study questions:

1. How are the literature course mapped in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan?
2. What are the analysis results of the literature course mapping in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan following the international and national policies of EFL education?

III. Methodology

This research employed a case study approach in Asia, utilizing both quantitative mapping of curricula documents from selected universities in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan, as well as qualitative analysis of curricula documents. The study aimed to determine the presence of the literature course in the undergraduate EFL curricula across ten public teaching universities in Indonesia, with an additional one university each in Thailand and Taiwan. Subsequently, the study analyzed the literature course mapping in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education, aligning the curricula with both international and national language and education policies.

This study used a case study, as it exclusively concentrated on EFL programs within the ten best public teaching universities in Indonesia, with one additional institution each in Thailand and Taiwan. While there are other countries in the same geographical region, specifically within Asia, they would likely yield different results if included in the same case study. The research design employed in this study was a descriptive case study, as it aimed to provide a comprehensive description of the EFL curricula documents in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan. To achieve this objective, document reviews were conducted to capture the experiences, perspectives, and worldviews of individuals within the specific contexts under investigation, making these methods essential in the context of a descriptive study (Britton, 2023).

A. Samples and Sources of the Samples

Data sources for this study included the undergraduate documents of EFL curricula downloaded from the websites of the top ten public teaching universities in Indonesia, as well as one university each in Thailand and Taiwan.

B. Instrument

This study employed document guidelines as instruments. We analyzed curricula documents using the document sheet, specifically the curriculum document analysis guidelines. These guidelines encompassed all types of courses, enabling us to determine the percentage of each type.

C. Data Analysis

We employed mixed methods to analyze the undergraduate curricula documents of EFL education. We downloaded these documents from the websites of the ten best public teaching universities in Indonesia, as well as from one university in Thailand and one in Taiwan. We used the possible curriculum structure for the Bachelor of Teaching proposed by Susilo (2015).

D. Procedure

The study involved four steps. These four steps included visiting the website of each undergraduate EFL program to access the online documents of its curriculum, validating the curriculum documents, analyzing the curriculum documents, and interpreting the curriculum documents. All these steps were completed for all target universities.

IV. RESULTS

A. The Literature Course Mapping

This study calculated the credit allocation of each component of the generic description to determine the presence of a literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education in Indonesia, Thailand, and Taiwan. The objective is to ascertain the total number of semesters credits each university requires its students to complete to obtain a Bachelor of Teaching degree. The total number of semester credits is important for calculating the percentage allocation to each component of the generic description and comparing it with the literature course. There are ten public teaching universities in Indonesia (referred to as U1-U10), one university in Thailand (U11), and one in Taiwan (U12). The credit allocation for each component of the generic description incorporated into the curricula by these twelve universities can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1
CREDIT ALLOCATION FOR EACH COMPONENT OF GENERIC DESCRIPTION

No	Component of Generic Description	Number of Credit Allocation												The Average of Credit Allocation Percentage
		U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	
1	Values and Attitudes	30	15	26	18	20	23	23	18	17	21	30	24	22
2	Teaching skills	29	20	19	15	27	23	20	26	21	19	39	16	23
3	Linguistics & General Language Skills or GL Components	45	48	45	35	52	48	32	66	67	37	24	16	43
4	Research in Language Teaching	15	12	32	8	14	15	16	12	2	4	6	3	12
5	Literature	6	10	6	13	10	6	8	13	8	0	3	15	8

No	Component of Generic Description	Number of Credit Allocation U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	The Average of Credit Allocation Percentage
6	ESP	45	2	24	24	6	11	30	0	3	6	0	0	13
7	Managerial Skills	3	3	0	2	2	3	3	0	2	0	12	0	3
8	Twenty-first Work Competency	18	0	0	7	7	6	3	4	9	6	6	8	6
9	Elective Courses	12	36	9	16	8	22	6	6	10	0	21	52	17
Number of Completed Semester Credits		203	146	161	138	146	157	141	145	139	93	141	134	145

Table 1 shows that among the twelve universities spanning three countries, the average credit allocation for the literature course is eight. It is worth noting that one university (U10) does not offer a literature course to its students. Conversely, another university (U12) mandates its students to complete 15 credits for the literature course, the highest credit requirement among the twelve universities.

The placement of the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education was evaluated based on the percentage of credit allocation for each component of generic description, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
CREDIT ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE FOR EACH COMPONENT OF GENERIC DESCRIPTION

No	Component of Generic Description	Percentage of Credit Allocation U1	U2	U3	U4	U5	U6	U7	U8	U9	U10	U11	U12	The Average of Credit Allocation Percentage
1	Values and Attitudes	15	10	16	13	14	15	16	12	12	23	21	18	15
2	Teaching Skills	14	14	12	11	18	15	14	18	15	20	28	12	16
3	Linguistics & General Language Skills or GL Components	22	33	28	25	36	31	23	46	48	40	17	12	30
4	Research in Language Teaching	7	8	20	6	10	10	11	8	1	4	4	2	8
5	Literature	3	7	4	9	7	4	6	9	6	0	2	11	6
6	ESP	22	1	15	17	4	7	21	0	2	6	0	0	8
7	Managerial Skills	1	2	0	1	1	2	2	0	1	0	9	0	2
8	Twenty-first Work Competency	9	0	0	5	5	4	2	3	6	6	4	6	4
9	Elective Courses	6	25	6	12	5	14	4	4	7	0	15	39	11
Number of Percentages		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 2 reveals that the average percentage allocated by the twelve universities for literature course is 6% of the total number of completed semesters credits. Particularly, U4 and U8 allocate 9% credit, while U12 allocates 11%. Conversely, U1, U3, U6, U10, and U11 designate 3%, 4%, 0%, and 2% respectively for the literature course in their curricula. Moderately, U2 and U5 assign 7%, and U7 and U9 allocate 6%. To gain a deeper understanding of the placement of the literature course in the undergraduate EFL curriculum, an analysis of the percentage allocation of credit for each generic description is needed.

The position of the literature course at the subject group level is evaluated by the percentage level of credit allocation shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
LEVEL OF CREDIT ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE

No	Component of Generic Description	The Average of Credit Allocation Percentage	The Level of Credit Allocation Percentage
1	Values and Attitudes	15	3
2	Teaching skills	16	2
3	Linguistics & General Language Skills or GL Components	30	1
4	Research in Language Teaching	8	5
5	Literature	6	6
6	ESP	8	5
7	Managerial Skills	2	8
8	Twenty-first Work Competency	4	7
9	Elective Courses	11	4
	Number of Percentage	69	

Table 3 shows that the literature course is ranked 6th out of eight subject groups. The participants have given high rankings (levels 1, 2, and 3) to linguistics & general language skills or GL components, teaching skills, and values and attitudes course groups. The elective courses, such as ESP, research in language teaching, and the literature course groups, hold moderate positions (levels 4, 5, and 6). Two groups, namely 'managerial skills' and 'twenty-first work competency', receive low rankings (7 and 8).

B. The Analysis of Literature Course Mapping

The proposed curriculum structure for a Bachelor of Teaching, as developed by Susilo, aligns with both international and national policies of EFL language education (Susilo, 2015). As part of this study, an examination was conducted to assess the presence of the literature course within the undergraduate curricula of EFL education, using Susilo's curriculum framework. Literature course is integrated into the field of knowledge, constituting 60% of the total credit requirements for a bachelor's degree. The courses within the field of knowledge are categorized into four distinct groups: linguistics and general language skills (GL components), research in language teaching, the literature, and ESP.

When analyzing the data to determine the ideal proportion of the literature course in the undergraduate curricula of EFL education, this study reveals that the average percentage of credit allocation for the literature course is 6%. Even though the literature course is at a moderate level, some universities prioritize two-course groups above the literature course in the moderate-level category. This implies that the literature course is at the lowest end of the moderate-level spectrum.

In addition, Table 2 shows that among twelve universities, five universities (U1, U3, U6, U10, and U11) place the literature course at a low level. Only one university (U12) positions it at a high level. The remaining five universities (U2, U4, U5, U7, U8, and U9) appreciate it at moderate level. In summary, data from Table 2, particularly the credit allocation percentages for the literature course determined by the universities, were coded as 'unexpected' for 1%-5% credit allocation, 'moderately expected' for 6%-10%, and 'highly expected' for 11%-15%. We present the results of coding in Table 4 and the percentage of categories in Table 5.

TABLE 4
CATEGORY OF CREDIT ALLOCATION PERCENTAGE FOR THE LITERATURE COURSE

No	University Code	Literature Course Percentage	Percentage Category
1	U1	3	Unexpected
2	U2	7	Moderately Expected
3	U3	4	Unexpected
4	U4	9	Moderately Expected
5	U5	7	Moderately Expected
6	U6	4	Unexpected
7	U7	6	Moderately Expected
8	U8	9	Moderately Expected
9	U9	6	Moderately Expected
10	U10	0	Unexpected
No	University Code	Literature Course Percentage	Percentage Category
11	U11	2	Unexpected
12	U12	11	Highly Expected
Percentage Average		6	Moderately Expected

TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE OF CATEGORY

No	Percentage Category	Number of University	University Percentage
1	Highly Expected	1	8
2	Moderately Expected	6	50
3	Unexpected	5	42
Total		12	100

From Tables 4 and 5, five universities (42%) require their students to take the literature course, which accounts for only 5% or less than the total number of credits required for students to obtain a Bachelor of Teaching degree. Six universities (50% of the total target universities) require between 6% and 10% of compulsory credits to be dedicated to the literature course. Therefore, most of the target universities incorporate the literature course into their curricula with a moderately expected level according to Susilo's curriculum structure. However, one university (8%) includes the literature course in its curriculum with a 'highly expected' level, but the percentage of the literature course credits remains minimal as the 'highly expected' category represents only 11% to 15%. Moreover, one university (8%) has the lowest requirement among the others.

V. DISCUSSION

Following the average credit allocation percentage in Table 2, it is evident that the factors affecting the literature course group prevent it from the ideal proportions. The values and attitudes courses group accounts for 15%, the linguistics, general language skills, and GL components courses group makes up 30%; and the elective courses group constitutes 11% of the curricula. However, according to Susilo's curriculum structure states, the values and attitude courses group should only be 5%. It is also worth noting that, if feasible, the curricula should include courses, like *Pancasila* (Indonesian basic values) and religion, in English, apart from *Bahasa Indonesia* (the official language of Indonesia) (Susilo, 2015). In Indonesia, in addition to national mandatory courses (*Pancasila*, *Bahasa Indonesia*, and community service, which typically involve student engagement with community empowerment in remote villages), there are university and faculty mandatory courses. National, university, and faculty mandatory courses are categorized under the values and attitudes courses group.

Consequently, to meet the literature course percentage requirement in Susilo's curriculum structure, the curriculum designers should reduce the values and attitudes course group by 10%. They should also decrease the linguistics, general language skills, and GL components course group by 15%. Furthermore, they should eliminate the elective courses group. To decrease the percentage of values and attitudes course groups, they should merge some university and faculty course groups that are related. Materials for the literature course can include some national courses, such as religion, *Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan* (civic education), and *Pendidikan Karakter* and *Anti Korupsi* (character education and anti-corruption). Additionally, the population of Indonesia comprises various ethnicities, cultures, and religions, and it is crucial for students must learn to understand each other's differences. The primary objective of the literature course is to enhance students' comprehension of the fundamentals of cross-cultural misunderstanding, which is essential for promoting tolerance among different ethnic groups and achieving communicative competence.

Literature course encompasses cross-cultural understanding course because it delves into the culture of English native speakers–Western culture–as well as the cultures of the students and speakers of other languages worldwide. This is because the writers of literary works are from native speakers and other speakers worldwide. This is because the writers of literary works hail from the Western part and various parts of the world. Even though Susilo places the cross-cultural understanding course within the twenty-first-century work competency group, it does not affect the literature course. The key point is that the cross-cultural understanding course should encompass both Western and Eastern cultures to ensure that students gain a comprehensive understanding of Western culture while also preserving and promoting their own.

Considering the curriculum designers may face difficulties in reducing the percentage of values and attitudes courses group, as it has been determined by the government, faculty, and university stakeholders to be at 15%. Additionally, apart from the values and attitude courses group, the university or faculty stakeholders have also determined the percentage for the elective course group. Although most elective courses are parts of field knowledge, we anticipate that curriculum designers will encounter challenges in decreasing the percentage of elective course groups from the maximum percentage standard, which is 6% in Indonesia. Given that the data indicate an average credit allocation percentage of 11%, it may be possible to reduce it by 5%.

Unlike values & attitude courses, linguistics, general language skills, and GL components courses are parts of field knowledge. Field knowledge comprises four components of generic descriptions (4-course groups): linguistics, general language skills, and GL components; research in language teaching; ESP; and the literature. Since Susilo's curriculum structure provides a 60% portion for field knowledge, every component should be 15%. If the linguistics, general language skills, and GL components courses group, which have 30% displayed by data, is changed to 15%, 9% can be given to the literature to be 15% (6% + 9% = 15%). The rest 6% can be added to the ESP percentage (6% + 8% = 14%). To make ESP 15%, 1% can be taken from the elective course (11% - 1% = 10%). Since the elective course group is possibly reduced to 6%, the 4% can be added to teaching skills to be 20% (16% + 4% = 20%). Thus, managerial skills should be at 2% and twenty-first work competency at 4%.

VI. Conclusion

The literature course can fulfill the portion required by the EFL curriculum structure for a Bachelor of teaching, i.e., 15% of the total number of credits to achieve a bachelor's degree; both values and attitudes courses have whether 5% or 15% and if we delete or reduce the elective course to be 6%. There are reasons why linguistics, general language skills, and GL components course groups should have a maximum 15% portion, i.e., linguistics contains language theories and language structure smaller than that of applied linguistics, such as the literature and ESP courses. We can teach linguistics through integrated strategy in the literature and ESP courses. If we teach the students more general language skills courses, they will have difficulties in oral and written communication in specific situations. Thus, the portion of linguistics, general language skills, and GL components courses group should be the same as the literature and ESP courses, i.e., 15%. The three-course groups should be balanced because we can expect the literature course group to prepare the students mostly to communicate outside the classroom, ESP inside and outside, and linguistics, general language skills, and GL components inside.

Furthermore, if the curriculum designers have difficulties deleting the percentage of the elective course group, its maximum percentage must be 6%. This is intended to increase the percentage of teaching skills courses to a minimum of 20%. In conclusion, it is possible to modify Susilo's curriculum structure by considering the condition of the data of this study, i.e., first, each of values and attitudes; linguistics, general language skills, and GL components; the literature; and ESP has 15%. Second, the teaching skills group has 20%. Third, research in language teaching has 8%. Fourth, the managerial skills group has 2%. Fifth, twenty-first work competency has 4% and elective course 6%.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors wish to thank to the Education Fund Management Institute–Research, Technology, and Higher Education Ministry and Finance Ministry of the Republic of Indonesia, for funding this activity through BPPDN (Beasiswa Pendidikan Pascasarjana Dalam Negeri) No. B/67/DD3/KD.02.00/2019.

REFERENCES

[1] Adelaja, A. A., Akinbami, C. A. O., Jiboye, T., & Ogbolu, G. (2023). Students' intention towards self-employment: An application of ELT theory on the effectiveness of entrepreneurial education types. *International Journal of Management Education*, *21*(2), 100738. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijme.2022.100738

[2] Alshahrani, A., Dennehy, D., & Mäntymäki, M. (2022). An attention-based view of AI assimilation in public sector organizations: The case of Saudi Arabia. *Government Information Quarterly*, *39*(4), 101617. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2021.101617

[3] Arrafii, M. A. (2021). Indonesian teachers' conceptions of values and dimensions of assessment practice: The effect of teachers' characteristics. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *98*(February), 103245. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103245

[4] Atai, M. R., & Fatahi-Majd, M. (2014). Exploring the practices and cognitions of Iranian ELT instructors and subject teachers in teaching EAP reading comprehension. *English for Specific Purposes*, *33*(1), 27–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2013.07.007

[5] Belousova, T. (2019). Internationalization of Higher Education in Kerala: A Performance Audit. *Higher Education for the Future*, *6*(1), 7–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347631118802647

[6] Bethea, D. M. (1995). Brodsky's and Nabokov's Bilingualism(s): Translation, American Poetry, and the Muttersprache. *Russian Literature*, *37*(2–3), 157–184. https://doi.org/10.1016/0304-3479(95)90633-U

[7] Böhn, S., & Deutscher, V. (2022). Dropout from initial vocational training – A meta-synthesis of reasons from the apprentice's point of view. *Educational Research Review*, *35*(February), 100414. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2021.100414

[8] Britton, E. R. (2023). Developing teacher feedback literacy through self-study: Exploring written commentary in a critical language writing curriculum. *Assessing Writing*, *56*(April), 100709. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.asw.2023.100709

[9] Bruns, B., Macdonald, I. H., & Schneider, B. R. (2019). The politics of quality reforms and the challenges for SDGs in education. *World Development*, *118*, 27–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2019.02.008

[10] Calafato, R., & Paran, A. (2019). Age as a factor in Russian EFL teacher attitudes towards literature in language education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *79*, 28–37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2018.12.002

[11] Charina, A., Kurnia, G., Mulyana, A., & Mizuno, K. (2022). Sustainable Education and Open Innovation for Small Industry Sustainability Post COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, *8*(4), 215. https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc8040215

[12] Choudhary, S. (2016). A Literary Approach to Teaching English Language in a Multiculutral Classroom. *Higher Learning Research Communications*, *6*(4). https://doi.org/10.18870/hlrc.v6i4.352

[13] Çıraklı, M. Z., & Kılıçkaya, F. (2011). Literature courses in EFL curriculum: Pre-service language teachers' perceptions. *Pegem Eğitim ve Öğretim Dergisi*, *1*(3), 11–15. https://doi.org/10.14527/c1s3m2

[14] Feng, R., Alsager, H. N., Azizi, Z., & Sarabani, L. (2023). Impact of mind-mapping technique on EFL learners' vocabulary recall and retention, learning motivation, and willingness to communicate. *Heliyon*, *9*(6), e16560. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e16560

[15] Finn, E., Hewetson, R. ., Howells, S. ., Clifton, J. ., & Cardell, E. (2023). What students can teach each other: Promoting optimal voice use for teaching through a speech-language pathology student-led voice clinic. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *123*(April), 104053. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104053

[16] Grecu, Y. V. (2023). Differentiated instruction: Curriculum and resources provide a roadmap to help English teachers meet students' needs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *125*(April), 104064. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2023.104064

[17] Griffiths, C., & Oxford, R. L. (2014). The twenty-first century landscape of language learning strategies: Introduction to this special issue. *System*, *43*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2013.12.009

[18] Hwang, H., & Kim, H. (2019). A Comparative Analysis of EFL Students' Needs and Evaluation of English Curriculum: A Case Study from Korea. *English Teaching*, *74*(4), 3–28. https://doi.org/10.15858/engtea.74.4.201912.3

[19] Kang, D.-M., & Zhu, J. (2022). Tertiary-level students' L2 reticence in relation to teacher leadership in an English-medium classroom. *System*, *106*(June), 102776. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102776

[20] Keawsomnuk, P. (2017). Management of basic education for ethnic groups in highland and border regions of Thailand. *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, *38*(2), 97–104. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.kjss.2016.11.004

[21] Kirkgöz, Y. (2008). A case study of teachers' implementation of curriculum innovation in English language teaching in Turkish primary education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *24*(7), 1859–1875. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.02.007

[22] Kusumaningputri, R., & Widodo, H. P. (2018). Promoting Indonesian university students' critical intercultural awareness in tertiary EAL classrooms: The use of digital photograph-mediated intercultural tasks. *System*, *72*(Oktober), 49–61. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2017.10.003

[23] Lavrenteva, E., & Orland-Barak, L. (2015). The treatment of culture in the foreign language curriculum: an analysis of national curriculum documents. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, *47*(5), 653–684. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2015.1056233

[24] Limage, L. J. (1999). Literacy practices and literacy policies: Where has UNESCO been and where might it be going? *International Journal of Educational Development*, *19*(1), 75–89. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0738-0593(98)00036-4

[25] Maulana, R., Helms-Lorenz, M., & van de Grift, W. (2015). Pupils' perceptions of teaching behaviour: Evaluation of an instrument and importance for academic motivation in Indonesian secondary education. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *69*, 98–112. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2014.11.002

[26] McCormick, A. (2014). Who are the custodians of Pacific "post-2015" education futures? Policy discourses, education for all

and the millennium development goals. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *39*(2014), 173–182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.07.009

[27] Musthafa, B. (2015). Seven issues and dilemmas in literature teaching in EFL context: Lessons from Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *4*(2), 136–145. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v4i2.690

[28] Naishtat-Bornstein, L., & Dvir, N. (2019). 'Kareen's Class of Torture'—A case study of a student's personal writing. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *86*, 102885. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102885

[29] Naraian, S. (2010). General, special and ... inclusive: Refiguring professional identities in a collaboratively taught classroom. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *26*(8), 1677–1686. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.06.020

[30] Paul-Binyamin, I., & Reingold, R. (2014). Multiculturalism in teacher education institutes - The relationship between formulated official policies and grassroots initiatives. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *42*, 47–57. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2014.04.008

[31] Pokhrel, S., & Chhetri, R. (2021). A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning. *Higher Education for the Future*, *8*(1), 133–141. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347631120983481

[32] Prinsloo, C. (2018). Students' intrinsic perspectives on the diverse functions of short stories beyond language learning. *System*, *74*, 87–97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.02.019

[33] Puadi Ilyas, H. (2016). Retaining Literature in the Indonesian ELT Curriculum. *Studies in English Language and Education*, *3*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v3i1.3384

[34] Qiu, X., & Xu, J. (2022). "Listening should be done communicatively": Do task-supported language teaching and post-task self-reflection facilitate the development of L2 listening proficiency? *System*, *109*(October), 102897. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102897

[35] Rachman, M. A. (2023). Scholarship for catching up? The Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) scholarship program as a pillar of economic development policy. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *96*(January), 102701. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102701

[36] Rao, N. J. (2020). Outcome-based Education: An Outline. *Higher Education for the Future*, *7*(1), 5–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347631119886418

[37] Schrijvers, M., Janssen, T., Fialho, O., de Maeyer, S., & Rijlaarsdam, G. (2019). Transformative Dialogic Literature Teaching fosters adolescents' insight into human nature and motivation. *Learning and Instruction*, *63*(May), 101216. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2019.101216

[38] Soufi, N. El, & See, B. H. (2019). Does explicit teaching of critical thinking improve critical thinking skills of English language learners in higher education? A critical review of causal evidence. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, *60*(November 2018), 140–162. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2018.12.006

[39] Spreen, C. A., & Vally, S. (2006). Education rights, education policies and inequality in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *26*(4), 352–362. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2005.09.004

[40] Srinivasan, R. (2016). Teaching about Teaching. *Higher Education for the Future*, *3*(2), 197–212. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347631116650551

[41] Su, J., & Zhong, Y. (2022). Artificial Intelligence (AI) in early childhood education: Curriculum design and future directions. *Computers and Education: Artificial Intelligence*, *3*(April), 100072. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.caeai.2022.100072

[42] Susilo, S. (2015). Curriculum of EFL Teacher Education and Indonesian Qualification Framework: A Blip of the Future Direction. *Dinamika Ilmu*, *15*(1), 11. https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v15i1.98

[43] Suyadi, Nuryana, Z., Sutrisno, & Baidi. (2022). Academic reform and sustainability of Islamic higher education in Indonesia. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *89*, 102534. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102534

[44] Tanhueco-Nepomuceno, L. (2019). Internationalization among selected HEIs in the ASEAN region: Basis for a proposed framework for an internationalized campus. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *65*(June), 152–171. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2018.07.003

[45] Tauchid, A., Saleh, M., Hartono, R., & Mujiyanto, J. (2022). English as an international language (EIL) views in Indonesia and Japan: A survey research. *Heliyon*, *8*(January). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e10785

[46] van der Elst-Koeiman, M., Segers, E., Severing, R., & Verhoeven, L. (2022). Learning to read in mother tongue or foreign language: Comparing Papiamento-Dutch reading skills in the post-colonial Dutch Caribbean. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *95*(February), 102138. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2022.102138

[47] Varughese, R. (2017). National Policy on Education and Higher Education. *Higher Education for the Future*, *4*(2), 158–165. https://doi.org/10.1177/2347631117706275

[48] Yee, S., Rupp, D., & Holzberger, D. (2023). What kind of individual support activities in interventions foster pre-service and beginning teachers ' self-efficacy ? A meta-analysis. *Educational Research Review*, *40*(August), 100552. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2023.100552

[49] Youjun, T., & Xiaomei, M. (2022). Computational thinking: A mediation tool and higher-order thinking for linking EFL grammar knowledge with competency. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *46*(September), 101143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2022.101143

[50] Zhang, J., & Zhang, L. J. (2023). Examining the relationship between English as a foreign language learners' cognitive abilities and L2 grit in predicting their writing performance. *Learning and Instruction*, *88*(July), 101808. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2023.101808

Hasna Hasna was born in Rappang, South Sulawesi, Indonesia on March 18, 1979. She received her master degree in English education from State University of Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia in 2015. She is a doctorate student at State University of Surabaya (Universitas Negeri Surabaya), Indonesia. Her bachelor of teaching degree is from Tadulako University in 2004. She has been a permanent lecturer of the English Education Department, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tadulako University since April 1, 2006. Her areas of focus in research include teaching literature to English education department students, teaching linguistics, language skills, and language components using literary texts, teaching ESP, and cultural studies. Mrs. Hasna is a member of Indonesian Researchers in English Language and Education (I-Reaad) and Asosiasi Linguistik Terapan Indonesia (ALTI).

Pratiwi Retnaningdyah was born in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia on August 03, 1967. She is a senior permanent lecturer in English Literature Study Program, English Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Surabaya (Universitas Negeri Surabaya), East Java, Indonesia. She is a Professor of English Literature at Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Her research interests range from gender and literature, postcolonial literature, cultural studies, and literacy as social practice. Prof. Retnaningdyah has published a paper entitled “Literacy Infrastructure, Access to Books, and the Implementation of the School Literacy Movement in Primary Schools in Indonesia”. The paper has been published since 2018 in IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering (Elsevier). It could be accessed through DOI: 10.1088/1757-899X/296/1/012045. She has contributed as well to some papers, which are published in the Journal of Intercultural Studies, Southern Communication Journal, and Asian Journal of Communication.

Ali Mustofa was born in Jombang, East Java, Indonesia on June 14, 1975. He is a senior lecturer at Language and Literature Education and English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Arts, State University of Surabaya (Universitas Negeri Surabaya), East Java, Indonesia. His research interests are literature, gender studies, cultural studies, post-colonialism, and the teaching of literature. He has published some papers in Studies in Media and Communication, (Elsevier), Studies in English Language and Education (Elsevier), Journal of English Language Studies, Journal of Intercultural Studies, Southern Communication Journal, Asian Journal of Communication, Journal of Physics: Conference Series (Elsevier), and IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering (Elsevier).

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 946-952, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.28

Unlocking the Potential: Exploring EFL Instructors' Perception in Enhancing Oral Proficiency of Saudi EFL Learners

Ruqayyah N. Moafa
English Language Institute, Jazan University, Jazan, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—This study examines English language teachers' perceptions of their instructional strategies in daily English as a Foreign Language classroom instruction in Saudi Arabia. The study focuses on three aspects of second language learning: lesson planning, classroom management, and external pressures from tests and assessments. Ten EFL teachers were chosen randomly based on specific criteria such as having at least three years of teaching experience, no familiarity with the research, and currently engaged in full-time EFL instruction for Saudi students. Semi-structured interviews were used in the study, each lasting approximately 55 minutes. The information was gathered in three stages: deconstruction, coding, and incorporation into the larger dataset. The study concluded that teachers play a vital role in the language classroom, implementing instructional practices to prepare students for exams and other academic demands. In conclusion, improving English speaking skills is essential for success in today's competitive global world. Teachers should embrace pedagogical approaches, prioritizing learning and incorporating diverse activities to engage students and foster creativity.**

***Index Terms*—EFL, ELLs, oral communication, speaking skill, instructors**

I. Introduction

Greater global interconnectedness has resulted from the increasing use of English as a language of international communication. Due to its widespread use across diverse regions worldwide, English has been designated as a global language. Business, education, technology, tourism, science, and entertainment are just a few of the many fields that extensively use the English language. Wang (2019) asserts that English is utilized extensively across numerous fields, including politics, business, and education on a worldwide basis. According to Rost (2015), more than 85 percent of all research papers are published in English, making it the language of choice for scientific research publications. Furthermore, it should be noted that most scholarly works on universities are written in English (Rost, 2015).

Globalization has also increased the emphasis on acquiring English language proficiency among young learners (He & Chen, 2017; Wolf & Butler, 2017). Accordingly, many English language learning programs and institutions have been established worldwide. Furthermore, the global need for English language teachers has increased as the population of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners has grown (Tsang, 2017). These programs have gone beyond simply providing English language instruction to learners (Wang, 2019). Thus, the domain of language instruction, language acquisition, and related evaluations has experienced notable growth, extending beyond European countries (He & Chen, 2017). Therefore, English language classes have become a fundamental component of the curriculum in middle and high schools in countries where English is not the first language. Additionally, certain academic institutions have even implemented English classes at elementary schools (Wolf & Butler, 2017).

The increasing attention to EFL instruction in Saudi Arabia (SA) may be attributed, in part, to the shifting dynamics within the broader global economy. In addition, the current situation has created a need for educational systems to enhance the quality of EFL programs, which in turn facilitate the learners' acquisition and proficiency, enabling them to communicate effectively within a condensed timeframe (Wang, 2019). Therefore, educators specializing in foreign language instruction and researchers in applied linguistics endeavor to identify the most optimal and efficacious methodologies for imparting foreign language skills. Specifically, the primary objective of foreign language instruction is to facilitate the learners' acquisition of the chosen language and enable them effective communication within a condensed timeframe (Wang, 2019).

Research Objective

The existing body of literature has provided limited coverage on the subject of EFL teachers and the instructional strategies employed to enhance oral English language acquisition (Ming & Wang, 2017). The research problem pertains to previous studies that suggest a limited understanding of effective instructional practices and barriers to their implementation in real-world EFL contexts. These factors may contribute to the inadequate development of oral proficiency among Saudi EFL students. The investigation of how EFL instructors in Saudi Arabia employ instructional strategies via lesson plans, classroom management, and addressing external pressures stemming from tests and assessments could yield significant insights into effective teaching methods and the resolution of challenges associated with fostering oral proficiency in EFL learners. Examining these domains through the lens of educators may yield valuable insights into the various interpretations of these issues.

II. Literature Review

In the contemporary era of the global economy, the ability to effectively engage in cross-cultural communication holds paramount significance. Language is essential for facilitating communication among individuals from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds. Ineffective communication has been identified as a major hindrance to achieving objectives and aspirations in this developing era (Richards & Richards, 1990). English is widely acknowledged as a global language, enabling effective communication among individuals from diverse geographical locations, encompassing countries, states, nations, and continents.

A. The Art of Oral Communication

One of the most notable competencies that can be acquired through participation in language training is the aptitude to engage in communication within a foreign linguistic context effectively. Oral proficiency in a foreign language is commonly considered to be the most crucial skill among the four fundamental language skills. According to Brown and Yule (1983), effectively speaking is the primary skill students are assessed in real-world situations. However, oral communication poses significant challenges for individuals learning a new language. It seems to present the greatest difficulty among the four essential skills in the English language (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022). Despite its significance, EFL students' instruction of speaking skills continues to rely heavily on methods such as dialogue memorization and drill repetition.

According to Khamkhien (2010), in order to ensure the success of students in the modern world, English teachers must instruct English Language Learners (ELLs) in the essential skills required for enhancing their oral communication abilities and effectively navigating real-life situations (Khamkhien, 2010). Moreover, Chaney and Burk (1998) emphasize that to facilitate students in completing their education and achieving success in their respective fields, there should be a growing emphasis on enhancing their oral communication skills (Chaney & Burk, 1998).

The study conducted by Robert and Meenakshi (2022) revealed that, despite undergoing extensive periods of instruction, students encounter persistent difficulties in effectively expressing themselves in English within ordinary situations. Hence, it is imperative for ELLs to realize the importance of their oral communication skills and strive to improve them as an initial step. Incorporating conversational skills in EFL classes can help students acquire these skills, leading to enhanced performance and success in extracurricular pursuits. The importance of incorporating oral communication abilities within English language instruction cannot be overstated (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022).

B. Significance of English-Speaking Skill

In order to actualize the aspirations and behaviors within the context of a globalized society, language instructors must engage in the exchange of ideas and perspectives with people from diverse geographical locations. In today’s highly competitive global world, EFL/ESL learners aspire to enhance their oral communication abilities to succeed. Furthermore, it has been asserted that a significant proportion of employment decisions rely on persons’ communication abilities, specifically their proficiency in oral expression (Beltrán, 2000). Moreover, acquiring these speaking skills can significantly contribute to professional advancement. Moreover, the acquisition of effective speaking skills confers greater benefits to business professionals seeking to promote their organizations (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022).

According to Robert and Meenakshi (2022), speakers with exceptional motivation and inspiration skills are frequently celebrated for their remarkable aptitude for enhancing and stimulating their listeners. It is essential for students studying EFL to prioritize the development of their speaking abilities, given the significant role these skills play across various professional domains. Furthermore, educators are strongly encouraged to implement a variety of effective methodologies within the educational setting to foster student engagement and enhance their proficiency in oral communication in English classes (Nunan, 1989).

Robert and Meenakshi (2022) stated that there is minimal uncertainty regarding the potential for ELLs to significantly improve their oral communication abilities through regular and persistent practice. Subsequently, individuals can effectively participate in academic discourse and deliberations within the classroom setting, thereby perpetually refining their oratory aptitude. According to Robert and Meenakshi (2022), ELLs can deliver presentations without the anxiety they might have previously encountered if they meticulously practice these skills. Furthermore, ELLs develop self-confidence and improve their skills in decision-making and problem-solving. In addition, ELLs exhibit enhanced performance during job interviews, ensuring their access to optimal prospects for professional establishment. Individuals can foster positive relationships with their colleagues and actively pursue opportunities for professional growth. Hence, the development of speaking abilities plays a pivotal role in fostering the overall academic progress of ELLs (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022).

C. Teacher’s Role in Teaching Oral Skills

Proficiency in oral communication is a must in various contexts, as it plays a crucial role in captivating and inspiring students. Hence, EFL/ESL instructors must understand the prevailing social atmosphere and actively incorporate these oral communication abilities in their ELLs by employing the latest pedagogical approaches for teaching speaking skills (Jackson, 2018). This highlights educators' need to relinquish antiquated methodologies in favor of innovative approaches that hold students' attention and inspire their active engagement in the various activities conducted within conventional English classrooms.

According to Rao (2019), English teachers must utilize various strategies to facilitate the development of speaking skills among EFL/ESL learners. There is a high likelihood that students’ speaking skills will experience significant growth when they engage in tasks within an enjoyable setting. In addition, to ensure that ELLs have sufficient opportunities to engage in the instructional activities that occur in English classrooms, teachers need to adopt a learner-centered approach, moving away from a traditional teacher-centered approach (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000). Providing tasks to students facilitates their achievement and fosters the development of critical thinking skills and the ability to work autonomously.

In the context of EFL instruction, educators often utilize brainstorming techniques as a means to inspire ELLs to generate a greater number of sentences and engage in self-reflection, thereby fostering the development of original ideas. By employing this approach, students are afforded unrestricted autonomy to present arguments about any topic of relevance. According to McLaren et al. (2005), learners are intrinsically motivated to generate many ideas due to the absence of rigid guidelines dictating how their ideas should be expressed. In order to improve the involvement of ELLs in different activities and strengthen their oral communication skills, ESL/EFL instructors should integrate the brainstorming technique into their instructional sessions (Robert & Meenakshi, 2022).

English teachers should consider the needs and preferences of students when choosing themes for these activities. It is noteworthy to acknowledge the statement made by Rao (2018) regarding the significance of considering learners' needs and interests in the selection of themes. This approach fosters a higher level of engagement and enthusiasm among students, leading them to invest greater effort and dedication toward the assigned subjects (Rao, 2018). Consequently, educators must embrace pedagogical approaches that prioritize learner-centered methodologies, with greater emphasis on fostering speaking skills and employing diverse activities to involve students actively.

Storytelling is another technique where listening to expressions and ideas helps develop speaking skills. According to Brown (2004), it is argued that due to these stories’ fictional and fabricated nature, no established criterion exists for penalizing children by deducting points. To effectively complete the narrative, this approach promotes the active participation of all ELLs by encouraging them to contribute one minimum sentence. Consequently, educators should actively promote using a wide range of phrases among students, aiming to significantly enhance their proficiency in oral communication and foster their creativity within a stimulating and pleasurable environment. It is essential to facilitate the development of speaking skills among EFL learners, so it is recommended that teachers incorporate the utilization of stories, songs, and movies in their instructional approach. This is supported by research conducted by Wallace et al. (2010), which suggests that integrating songs and movies in language learning can effectively enhance learners' communication abilities.

III. METHODS

This study aimed to investigate the perspectives of language educators in Saudi Arabia regarding their utilization of pedagogical approaches to facilitate the acquisition of oral English language skills among Saudi students. The present study encompassed three dimensions of second language acquisition as perceived by a group of ten educators, specifically examining (a) pedagogical strategies on lesson planning, (b) pedagogical strategies about classroom management, and (c) pedagogical strategies of external pressures stemming from tests and assessments.

A. Research Questions

The research questions that will be addressed in this study are as follows:

- What are the perceptions of English language teachers in Saudi Arabia regarding their instructional strategies in their daily English as a Foreign Language classroom instruction?

1. What are the perspectives of English language educators regarding how to incorporate instructional strategies in response to external pressures stemming from tests and assessments?
2. What are English language teachers’ perceptions regarding implementing instructional practices for classroom management?
3. What are English language teachers’ perceptions regarding implementing instructional practices of lesson plans to support students' acquisition of oral English skills?

B. Participants

A total of ten EFL teachers were randomly chosen for the research. In order to qualify for inclusion in the study, instructors had to meet specific criteria, including having at least three years of teaching experience, holding a Master's degree or higher in language teaching, having no prior knowledge of the research, and currently being fully committed to teaching EFL to Saudi students on a full-time basis.

C. Instrument

The present study employed semi-structured interviews (see Appendix B) as a methodological approach to investigate the perspectives of language teachers in Saudi Arabia regarding the instructional strategies they employ in their daily EFL instruction.

D. Data Collection

A total of ten semi-structured interviews were carried out. Each interview had a duration of approximately 55 minutes. The author employed three principal methodologies for data collection, following the recommendations of Cheung and Hennebry-Leung (2020). Initially, the researchers employed a journal as a means to document their observations and analyses on the progression of the study. This enabled the researchers to take into account cultural variables and the specific circumstances present within educational settings.

Additionally, the researcher was engaged in note-taking during the interview sessions, intending to utilize these notes to construct themes for data analysis subsequently. Furthermore, the interviews were audio-recorded after obtaining consent from every participant. Subsequently, the data was transcribed into a unified Microsoft Word document, encompassing participants' responses, field notes, and identified themes derived from the data. The present document was accessed and employed while conducting data analysis. The author employed manual transcription strategies throughout the entirety of the process.

E. Data Analysis

The data analysis process consisted of three distinct stages: firstly, the aggregate information was deconstructed into segmented components; secondly, the data was coded to establish descriptive and accessible categories; and finally, discrepant cases were incorporated into the larger dataset. The utilization of this approach ensured the integrity of the study's results. It upheld the ethical tenet of documenting all participant responses, irrespective of their conformity with overarching patterns observed in the interview data.

The data underwent a systematic deconstruction process consisting of nine operational steps. These steps encompassed various procedures such as segregating responses based on individual questions, categorizing the findings into thematic groups aligned with Sato and McNamara's (2019) theoretical framework, and cross-validating the emerging themes through triangulation of the collected data. The initial steps facilitated categorizing primary and secondary themes of the individual responses.

During the interview, the identified themes were organized into distinct categories as reported by participants and subsequently prepared for processing and classification using NVivo software. The sixth step entailed the presentation of sophisticated themes that arose from data analysis, both through manual examination and with the aid of NVivo software. The seventh step entailed examining and comparing emerging themes from the participants' responses with the predefined theme impressions documented. The eighth step involved excluding any primary or secondary findings that correlate with personal viewpoints.

The resulting themes obtained from these procedures encompassed data that were categorized into four main groups, each participant's answer being assigned a corresponding label based on their classification. The themes that emerged from this methodology were indicative of the participant's individual responses to the interview questions and the inconsistent data associated with each question.

The themes identified in this study encompassed the participants' overall observations, which revolved around various aspects such as class size, testing materials, classroom management, and the demanding nature of testing pressures. The aforementioned themes encapsulated the majority of respondents' viewpoints, with a small number of participants expressing contrasting opinions. The discrepant themes observed in the study were indicative of minority perspectives that deviated from the prevailing opinions held by the majority within the respective groups. It is important to note that these themes only represented the articulated beliefs of a limited number of participants.

IV. RESULTS

The research centered on the participants' viewpoints regarding the caliber of pedagogical training methods, the instructional strategies utilized in the classroom, and the effectiveness of these approaches in adequately equipping students for end-of-year assessments and other rigorous academic reasons. Acquiring a more thorough understanding of this subject is vital for the progress of Saudi educational institutions. The participants identified the benefits, drawbacks, and limitations associated with the current approaches.

The study's conceptual framework and research techniques closely emulated Sato and McNamara's (2019) general-purpose second language oral competence theory. The 12 interview questions were formulated to evaluate the following domains: (a) the pedagogical approaches employed by ESL instructors for classroom preparation, (b) the techniques utilized for classroom management to deliver information to students and enhance their linguistic abilities, and (c) the strategies employed to equip students for examinations and other academic demands. The main research question in this study was: “What are the perceptions of English language teachers in Saudi Arabia regarding their instructional strategies in their daily English as a Foreign Language classroom instruction?” Thus, the responses to the interview questions indicated a widespread belief that instructors' current instructional preparation methods were varied and very effective. The participants noted that these tactics were likely to enhance the progress of EFL learners in several aspects of language acquisition abilities.

The participants' replies to the four questions 4-7 demonstrated a link with the themes addressed in the research question, “What are the perspectives held by English language educators regarding how to incorporate instructional strategies in response to external pressures stemming from tests and assessments?” Most participants indicated that they must utilize different strategies for prioritizing test preparation. One participant stated that teachers must “Understand the Source of Pressure, create a Supportive Classroom Environment, promote a Positive Mindset towards Assessments, and Incorporate Formative Assessment.” Another participant suggested that teachers need to “focus on comprehensive grammar, vocabulary expansion, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Additionally, teachers need to offer tailored strategies specifically designed to address standardized test formats, question types, and time management, ensuring students are well-prepared for exams.” The replies revealed that teachers recognize the need to implement focused interventions to support students in their preparation for demanding scenarios, such as formal tests. One of the participants insisted on the importance of motivating the students by saying, “The essential element here is the intrinsic motivation of the students themselves and the extent of practice they carry to familiarize themselves with these exams”. The participants here acknowledged that EFL teachers are preparing their students for the standardized text by employing strategies that enhance their students' achievements. One participant stated, “My institution is aware of the factors of success in such tests and makes them available to the students by different means; that is why it is left to the student in this respect”.

Analysis of the answers to the three questions 8-10 indicated that participants employed various methods to enhance the education and development of EFL students, both within and outside the classroom. The findings were consistent with the question, “What are the perceptions of English language teachers regarding implementing instructional practices for classroom management?”. Responses revealed that teachers motivated students to improve their English outside the classroom by participating in activities such as watching movies, listening to music, and engaging in similar practices. Furthermore, the participants indicated that these strategies can enhance students' proficiency. For example, one participant stated, “Provide feedback that highlights what students are doing well while gently addressing errors. Encourage self-correction and offer guidance on improvement.” In addition, participants demonstrated their utilization of many strategies to foster student motivation. One of the participants explained, “Ensure teachers are approachable and supportive, creating a safe space for students to seek guidance and clarification without hesitation. By fostering an environment that values effort, encourages participation, and supports learning from mistakes, EFL students can feel more confident and motivated to engage in English language practice”.

The participants offered feedback on the two questions 11-12, designed to investigate the research question “What are the perceptions of English language teachers regarding implementing instructional practices of lesson plans to support students' acquisition of oral English skills?” One of the participants stated, “A teacher is a place where the two essential entities (the curriculum and students) get connected.” Another participant explained, “Teachers play a vital role in curriculum development as they bring their expertise, experience, and knowledge of their students to shape the curriculum.” The third participant illustrated, “The teacher's role is to understand and consider the immediate needs of the students during teaching, modify and adapt the material to suit the needs of the learners.” The data showed that all participants agreed that the teacher plays a vital role in the language classroom.

The researcher noted that participants employed diverse ways to facilitate the advancement of EFL students, including direct instruction, demonstration, interactive teaching, cooperative Learning and peer teaching, and role-play. These activities were intended to motivate students to utilize their linguistic abilities outside the confines of the classroom. In the end, the participants firmly stated that the current EFL teaching techniques used to prepare students for their final exams and other requirements for achieving excellent performance. It was stated by one of the participants that “It is best advised to follow TTT (Test, Teach and test) and PPP (Present, Practice and produce) while presenting a lesson plan to the students. While using TTT, a teacher can be aware of the gaps in the knowledge and later teach and test again, which can be repeated. For lower levels, PPP is suggested where the teacher presents the material, allowing the opportunity for controlled practice. In the end, students can produce meaningful oral and written communication”.

V. Conclusion and Discussion

The study emphasizes the prevailing patterns among EFL educators in enhancing students' proficiency in language learning. The researcher found that EFL educators are embracing more innovative approaches, such as communicative language teaching and using technology in the classroom. These educators understand the importance of creating an engaging and interactive learning environment to foster students' language acquisition. The study highlights the need for professional development opportunities and ongoing support for EFL educators to continuously improve their teaching practices and effectively enhance students' language proficiency. According to Sato and McNamara's (2019) theory, these schools positively affect on learner development in terms of classroom management. These topics could enhance other educational reform initiatives to resolve persistent issues in Saudi Arabia's university-level EFL education. The study's contribution is in line with the endeavors of other educators and has the potential to enhance EFL education in Saudi Arabia and beyond.

APPENDIX. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Kindly elaborate on the instructional strategies employed in EFL classrooms.
2. To what extent does your school's EFL model demonstrate efficacy in enhancing students' proficiency in English grammar and vocabulary in a formal context?
3. How do you perceive that these strengths contribute to enhancing the students' formal linguistic skills?
4. How do you utilize data to inform instructional decisions about extrinsic pressures arising from tests and assessments?
5. What strategies would you employ to effectively implement an instructional intervention in the classroom that addresses the impact of extrinsic pressures stemming from tests and assessments?
6. In what ways do you perceive the English language instruction program at your school to enhance students' preparation for standardized language exams?
7. What are the potential gaps, barriers, or limitations that hinder the progress of EFL students in acquiring the necessary skills to achieve passing scores in standardized language examinations successfully?
8. How do you foster a supportive environment for EFL students to engage in English language practice, even in the face of errors?
9. In what way do you anticipate that these methodologies will foster the cultivation of English-speaking skills among your students?
10. How do you actively facilitate the participation of EFL learners? Which strategies do you consider to be particularly advantageous?
11. How do you conceptualize the teacher's role in implementing curriculum, specifically in relation to the utilization of lesson plans designed to facilitate the development of oral English skills among EFL students?
12. Kindly elucidate the instructional methodologies employed in the presentation of lesson plans to students.

REFERENCES

[1] Beltrán, E.V. (2000). Roles of teachers A case study based on: Diary of a language teacher (JOACHIM APPEL 1995). *Semantic Scholar.* Retrieved November 11, 2023, from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Roles-of-teachers-A-case-studybased-on%3A-Diary-of-a-Beltr%C3%A1n/11fbda2d6dffe1a965b31e32689576ade2ee74a0

[2] Brown, G. A., & Yule, G. (1983). *Teaching the spoken language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[3] Brown, H. D. (2004). *Language Assessment Principles and Classroom Practices*. London: Pearson Edition.

[4] Celce-Murcia, M., & Olshtain, E. (2000). *Discourse and context in language teaching: A guide for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[5] Chaney, A. L., & Burk, T. L. (1998). *Teaching Oral Communication in Grades K-8*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

[6] Cheung, A., & Hennebry-Leung, M. (2020). Exploring ESL teachers' beliefs and practices of teaching literary texts: A case study in Hong Kong. *Language Teaching Research, 23*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820933447

[7] He, L., & Chen, D. (2017). Developing common listening ability scales for Chinese learners of English. *Language Testing in Asia*, *7*(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/:10.1186/s40468-017-0033-4

[8] Jackson, R. R. (2018). *Never Work Harder Than Your Students and Other Principles of Great Teaching.* ASCD.

[9] Khamkhien, A. (2010). Teaching English speaking and English-speaking tests in the Thai context: A reflection from Thai perspectives. *English Language Journal*, *3*(1), 184-200. DOI:10.5539/ELT.V3N1P184

[10] McLaren, N., Fernández, M. D., & González, B. A. (2005). *TEFL in Secondary Education*. Granada: Universidad, 2005.

[11] Ming, S., & Wang, Q. (2017). Teaching large classes in Chinese high schools: What do teachers say and do? *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *40(*2), 145-166. https://doi:10.1515/cjal-2017-0009

[12] Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[13] Rao, S. P. (2018). Developing Speaking Skills in ESL or EFL Settings. *International Journal of English Language, Literature and Translation Studies*, *5*(2), Pp. 286-293. DOI Number: https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.52.286orhttp://www.ijelr.in

[14] Rao, S. P. (2019). The Role of Teachers in Developing Speaking Skills in English language classrooms. *Academician, SAARJ Publications*, *8*(12), 84-96. DOI Number: 10.5958/2249- 7137.2018.00068.X, www.saarj.com

[15] Richards, J. C., & Richards, J. C. (1990). *The Language Teaching Matrix.* Cambridge University Press.

[16] Robert, R., & Meenakshi, S. (2022). Rereading oral communication skills in English language acquisition: The unspoken spoken English. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(11), 2429-2435. doi: https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1211.25

[17] Rost, M. (2015). *Teaching and Researching Listening*. Routledge.

[18] Sato, T., & McNamara, T. (2019). What counts in second language acquisition? The perspective of linguistic laypersons. *Applied Linguistics, 40*(6), 894-916.

[19] Tsang, A. (2017). EFL/ESL teachers' general language proficiency and learners' engagement. *RELC Journal*, *48*(1), 99-113. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0033688217690060

[20] Wallace, C. Reading. R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.). (2010). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages.* Cambridge: Cambridge University.

[21] Wang, S. (2019). Student-centered teaching, deep learning and self-reported ability improvement in higher education: Evidence from mainland China. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, *56*(5), 581-593. https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2018.1490662

[22] Wolf, M., & Butler, Y. G. (2017). An overview of English language proficiency assessments for young learners. In M. K. Wolf & Y. G. Butler (Eds.), *English language proficiency assessments for young learners*, 3-21. Routledge. http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/9781315674391-1

Ruqayyah N. Moafa was born and raised in Saudi Arabia. She obtained a BA degree in English Language and Arts from Jazan University, Jazan, Saudi Arabia. Then, she moved to the United States of America to pursue her higher education. She was awarded an MA in English – TESOL in 2013 from Murray State University, Murray, KY, USA. In 2020, Dr. Moafa graduated with a Ph.D. degree from the University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, USA.

She is an Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics at the English Language Institute of Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. She works as an interpreter, translator, and editor in her free time. She has published several papers in cross-cultural communication, Critical Discourse Analysis, and English Language Teaching. Currently, she is working on a paper on artificial intelligence and language teaching.

Dr. Moafa is a member of the AAAL and TESOL communities. She was awarded the English Department Award in 2020 as an acknowledgment of her hard working during her studies at the University of Memphis.

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2657-2053

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 953-959, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.29

Category Shifts in the Chinese–English Translation of Animal Idioms in *Journey to the West*

Lulu Deng
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia;
Foreign Language College, Xiangnan University, Chenzhou, Hunan, China

Muhammad Alif Redzuan Abdullah
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, 43400, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia

***Abstract*—Idioms are important elements of language and culture, forming the essence of language and the core of vocabulary. Animal idioms naturally have different connotations in the Chinese and Western cultures, which can pose a tremendous challenge for translators. Thus, the reasons for translators' choices in this context are significant. To better understand this subject, this study investigates the cognitive category shifts in the translations of animal idioms in *Journey to the West*. Through the theory of cognitive category shifts, the paper finds that translators' choices are influenced by cognitive concepts derived from their living environments, cultural backgrounds, and knowledge reserves.**

***Index Terms*—Animal idioms, translation, cognitive category shifts**

I. Introduction

Idioms are fixed phrases and lexical units whose forms cannot be altered arbitrarily (Zhong, 1998). Animal idioms are idioms referring to animals or animal body parts and which have specific cultural connotations. Animal-idiom translation has great practical and theoretical significance (Nie, 2019). In view of this, many scholars (Fu, 2014, 2017, 2018; Yin, 2015; Zhang, 2017; Nie, 2019; Zhao & Han, 2019; Abudula, 2021) have studied animal idioms from various perspectives, but few have done so from the perspective of cognitive category shifts. Many scholars have studied the translation strategies employed with animal idioms (e.g., Nie, 2019; Zhang, 2017; Zhao, 2013), but few have analyzed the reasons for translators' choices.

There are 121 articles on animal-idiom translation in the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) from 1995 to 2023, but only 8 articles on Chinese–English animal-idiom translation. This study concerns animal-idiom translations from Chinese into English, and all the samples are taken from the translation of the classic novel, *Journey to the West*.

II. Theoretical Background

A. Category Shifts of Catford

The concept of category shifts in translation is influenced by "first-generation" and "second-generation" theories in the cognitive science. "First-generation" theories conceive of the mind as based on abstract, propositional representation, while "second-generation" pertains to a specific aspect within contemporary cognitive science, highlighting the embodiment of mental process and their expansion into the world via material artifacts and sociocultural practice (Karin & Marco, 2014). With "first-generation" theories, the founder of category shifts in translation is J. C. Catford, whose theory is greatly influenced by the discussion of generative grammar, first proposed by Avram Noam Chomsky. Chomsky writes that, "Originality is nothing more than the innate and insurmountable mental components stored in the brain in the form of unconsciousness..." (Tan, 2018). Catford put forward four types of category shifts in translation—namely, structure shift, class shift, unit shift, and intra-system shift. Many scholars—such as Liang (2020), Du (2020), He (2021), and Pan (2014)—have since used Catford's category shifts to analyze translated texts. However, Catford's theory focuses only on linguistic category shifts, with no examination of the macro levels of culture, psychology, and subject consciousness (Yu, 2020). The first to apply category theory to translation studies was Neubert (1985), who classified text-type with the help of prototypical analysis. Snell Hornby (1988) used this theory to explore the classification of target discourse. Halverson (2000) conducted empirical research to confirm that the prototype effect does indeed exist in translation—that is, there is no absolute translation equivalence or translation principles. Thelen

(2008) discussed the significant role of category in translation, noting the processes and modes of category shifts. In addition, many Chinese researchers (Li & Zhang, 2003; Wang & Zhang, 2004; Liu & Li, 2005; Zhang & Zhang, 2010; Long, 2011; Tan, 2011; He, 2016; cited in Yu, 2020) have begun to study translation between Chinese and other languages with the help of category theory. With "second-generation" theories, Wen and Xiao (2020) proposed cognitive category shifts, including linguistic and non-linguistic category shifts, which differ from Catford's theory. According to Catford (1965), translation is viewed as a linguistic transformation involving the substitution of linguistic materials and shifts in linguistic categories. On the other hand, Wen and Xiao (2020) assert that language is a cognitive product intricately linked to human cognition and thought. Therefore, they suggest that translation is essentially the transformation of cognitive categories.

B. Cognitive Category Shifts (Wen & Xiao, 2020)

According to Wen and Xiao, in the process of translation, one category is transformed into another. These transformations are shifts of cognitive categories. There are four types of category shifts in this theoretical framework:

1) Shifts between categories: In translation, the names of the animals in the idioms are different, but their referential meanings in English and Chinese cultures are the same. Therefore, Animal A in Chinese and Animal B in English belong to different categories and can replace each other.

2) Shifts between category members: In translation, the names of the animals in the idioms are different but the animals belong to the same categories, and their referential meanings in English and Chinese cultures are the same. Therefore, Animal A in Chinese and Animal B in English belong to the same category and can replace each other.

3) Shifts between category prototypes: In translation, the same animal has different referential meanings in the English and Chinese cultures, or an animal in one culture has no referential meaning in the other. Therefore, the Chinese prototype of Animal A is replaced by the English prototype of Animal B, or the Chinese prototype of Animal A is replaced by the English prototype of Animal A, with their different referential meanings.

4) Shifts between category levels: In translation, the names of the animals in idioms are different and the animals are in different category levels, but their referential meanings in the English and Chinese cultures are the same. Therefore, Animal A in Chinese as an upper or lower category is replaced by Animal B in English as a lower or upper category.

III. Research Project

A. Data Collection

The corpus of this study is the original work, *Journey to the West*, written by Wu Cheng'en (1368-1644 AD) in China's Ming Dynasty and two English translations. As one of the four most-famous novels in China, *Journey to the West* recounts a myth contains numerous animal idioms. Of the 64 English translations of *Journey to the West*, the two selected for this study are integral translations. One is the Chinese-English version by Chinese translator Anthony C. Yu, and the other is English version by English translator W. J. F. Jenner. These texts were chosen to ensure that the comparison would be representative. The Chinese original text referred in this study is also from Yu's version. Additionally, theses and articles from academic journals, such as CNKI and Scopus, will be consulted.

B. Research Questions and Methods

This study investigates the category shifts in the translations of animal idioms in these texts. The following questions will be posed:

QR 1: What are the cognitive category shifts?

QR 2: How are category shifts reflected in the translation of animal idioms?

QR 3: What are the factors that influence translators' choices in the translation of animal idioms?

This is a qualitative case study, involving content-analysis and comparative-analysis methodologies.

1. Content analysis. The animal idioms in this study have been classified into four categories: beast and four-footed animal, bird and fowl, insect, and arthropod. Each category has its own members shown below in Chart 1.

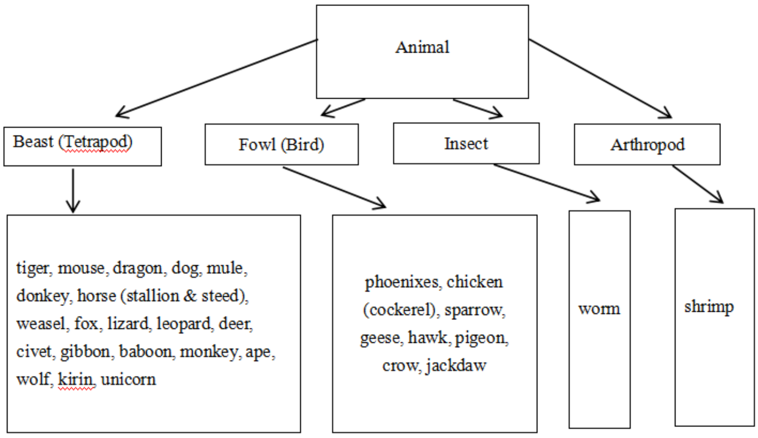


Chart 1. Classification of Animals in Different Categories
Note: Tetrapod is in the lower category of beast. Bird is in the lower category of fowl. Stallion and steed are in the lower categories of horses. Cockerel is in the lower category of chicken.

2. Comparative analysis. With its comparison and analysis of the original and translated texts, this study summarizes various cognitive differences between the Chinese and Western cultures and explores the factors that influence translators' choices in these areas.

C. Data Analysis

RQ 1 & 2: What are the types of cognitive category shifts, and how are these reflected in the translation of animal idioms?

If a translator tasked with translating animal idioms has the same cognition of the animals as the author, the category of the animals will remain the same by literal translation. What is more, if the image of the animals in the original text is difficult to transfer, the translator will use liberal translation without retaining the animals in the translation. However, animals do not always have the same cognition in one language as in another, thus category shifts are inevitable.

(a). Original Category Retained or Omitted in Animal-Idiom Translation

1. Literal Translation to Retain Original Category

Original Chinese version: 龙游浅水遭虾戏，虎落平原被犬欺。(Vol 2, p. 68)

Yu's translation: The dragon in shallow water teased by shrimps, the tiger on level ground mocked by dogs. (Vol 2, p. 69)

Jenner's translation: A dragon in shallows falls victim to shrimps; a tiger on the plain can be put upon by dogs (Vol 1, p. 519).

In this idiom, the animals "龙," "虾," "虎," and "犬" are translated as "dragon," "shrimp," "tiger," and "dog" by the two translators, thus retaining the original categories.

Original Chinese version: 真个有沉鱼落雁之容，闭月羞花之貌。(Vol 1, p. 210)

Yu's translation: Her features were striking enough to sink fish and drop wild geese, and her complexion would cause the moon to hide and put the flowers to shame. (Vol 1, p. 211)

Jenner's translation: Her charms would have made fish sink and wild geese fall from the sky, and her beauty put the moon and flowers to shame. (Vol 1, p. 153)

In the idiom "沉鱼落雁之容，闭月羞花之貌", the animals are "鱼" and "雁." In both translations, the categories remain "fish" and "wild geese".

2. Liberal Translation to Omit Category

Original Chinese version: 你贼头鼠脑的，一定有变作个甚么东西，跟着我听的。(Vol 2, p. 124)

Yu's translation: You are something of a crook and a shakedown artist! You must have changed into some kind of creature and followed me. (Vol 2, p. 125)

Jenner's translation: With the devilish head of yours, you must have changed yourself into something or other to listen to what I said. (Vol 1, p. 559)

In the original sentence, the animal idiom is "贼头鼠脑," which suggests that someone has a "sneaky" look and would like to steal something. The animal "鼠" (mouse) is very cunning and sneaky, with a desire to engage in mischief. Thus, both translators use liberal translation to omit the reference to this category.

Original Chinese version: 我家是清凉瓦屋，不像这个害黄病的房子，花狸狐哨的门扇！放我出去！放我出去！(Vol 1, p. 300)

Yu's translation: Ours is a clean, cool house of tiles, not like this one, yellow as if it had jaundice, and with such gaudy appointments! Let me out! Let me out! (Vol 1, p. 301)

Jenner's translation: My home is simple tiled house, not like this jaundiced, yellow place with its flashy doors. Let me out, let me out. (Vol 1, p. 559)

In the original text, the idiom "花狸狐哨" is used to describe colorful things. The animals in the idioms "狸" (yellow weasel) and "狐" (fox) are omitted in the liberal translation.

(b). Category Shift in Animal-Idiom Translation

1. Shift Between Categories

Original Chinese version: 与狼虫为伴，虎豹为群，獐鹿为友，猕猿为亲。(p. 6)

Yu's translation: He made his companions the tiger and the lizard, the wolf and the leopard; he befriended the civet and the deer, and he called the gibbon and the baboon his kin. (Vol 1, p. 7)

Jenner's translation: He made friends with the wolves, went around with the tigers and leopards, was on good terms with the deer, and had the other monkeys and apes for relations. (Vol 1, p. 2)

In Yu's translation of the idiom "狼虫为伴," "虫" (insects) is translated into "the lizard." As a lizard belongs to the category of animal, this is a category shift between categories. Furthermore, in the idiom "獐鹿为友," "獐" (roe deer) is translated into "the civet." As "roe deer" and "civet" belong to different species, this is also a category shift.

Original Chinese version: 精细鬼道："师父，我跟你去。" 伶俐虫道："师父，我跟你去"。(Vol 2, p. 192)

Yu's translation: Sly Devil said, "Master, I'll follow you," while Wily Worm also said, "Master, I'll follow you". (Vol 2, p. 193)

Jenner's translation: "I'll go with you, Master," said Dexterous Ghost. "Me, too," said Skillful Beast. (Vol 2, p. 29)

In the original text, "精细鬼" and "伶俐虫" are idioms referring to people who look intelligent but are actually very stupid. In Yu's translation, "伶俐虫" is translated as "Wily Worm," while in Jenner's translation, it is translated as "Skillful Beast." "虫" is "worm" in English, but in this context, the character "伶俐虫" is a beast, so Jenner's translation is also reasonable. However, "worm" and "beast" belong to different categories, so the translation of "虫" as "beast" is a shift between categories.

2. Shift Between Category Members

Original Chinese version: 骑着驴骡思骏马。(Vol 1, p. 20)

Yu's translation: Riding on mules, they long for noble steeds. (Vol 1, p. 21)

Jenner's translation: Those who ride donkeys long for stallions. (Vol 1, p. 13)

In the original idiom, "骏马" means a large, strong horse used for riding, while "stallion," in Jenner's translation, refers to a male horse used for breeding. "骏马" and "stallions" belong to the category of horse, so this is a shift between category members. Yu's translation of this idiom is thus different to that of Jenner.

Original Chinese version: 鸟鹊怎与凤凰争，鹁鸽敢和鹰鹞敌? (Vol 1, p. 530)

Yu's translation: How can sparrows quarrel with the phoenix? Dare pigeons oppose the eagles and hawks? (Vol 1, p. 531)

Jenner's translation: How can a crow or jackdaw fight a phoenix? What chance has a pigeon against a hawk? (Vol 1, p. 384)

In the original text, "鸟鹊" refers to a magpie, a small and weak animal. However, Yu and Jenner translate this as "sparrows" and "a crow or jackdaw," respectively. Though magpies, sparrows, crows, and jackdaws are all members of the category "bird," they are different species. Similarly, "鹰鹞" refers to "hawks and harriers," which are raptors, while Yu and Jenner use "eagles and hawks" and "a hawk," respectively, to translate the term. In short, the translators are using certain members of a category to refer to other members, thereby performing a shift between category members.

3. Shift Between Category Prototypes

Original Chinese version: 丹崖上，彩凤双鸣；削壁前，麒麟独卧。(Vol 1, p. 4)

Yu's translation: Atop the crimson ridge, phoenixes sing in pairs; before precipitous cliffs, the unicorn singly rests. (Vol 1, p. 5)

Jenner's translation: On the red cliffs, phoenixes sing in pairs; lone unicorns lie before the beetling crags. (Vol 1, p. 1)

In the animal idiom "彩凤双鸣," the image and referential meaning of "凤" in Chinese and the image of "Phoenixes" in English are quite different. In China, "凤" is a symbol of auspiciousness. In ancient times, the dragon was the symbol of the emperor, and the phoenix was the symbol of the queen. Ancient Chinese books do not describe the rebirth of the phoenix. In contrast, the Western phoenix comes from ancient Greek and Roman mythology. It is an immortal bird that can be reborn from nirvana. Similarly, the image and referential meaning of "麒麟" (Kirin) in Chinese and the image of the "unicorn" in English are also quite different. In Western mythology, unicorns are similar in appearance to white horses, albeit with horns on their foreheads, representing nobility, arrogance, and purity. A “shu” (疏), in *The Classic of Mountains and Rivers*, is a kind of oriental unicorn. “Kirin” is an auspicious beast in ancient Chinese mythology, born from the scattering of the stars of the year. It is one of the four auspicious beasts, together with the Chinese dragon, the Chinese phoenix and turtles.

According to the *Ruiying Picture*, the Kirin has a sheep’s head and wolves’ hooves. Its head is round and its body is multi-colored. It is approximately two meters tall. *Origin of Chinese Characters* records that the Kirin has a body like a musk deer, a tail like a dragon tail, dragon scales, and a horn. Therefore, the translation of “凤” as “phoenix” and “麒麟” as “unicorn” represent category prototype shifts. Yu’s translation of this idiom is the same as that of Jenner.

4. Shift Between Category Levels

Original Chinese version: 古云：“<u>禽有禽言，兽有兽语</u>”。(Vol 1, p. 9)

Yu’s translation: As the old saying goes, “<u>Fowls have their fowl speech, and beasts have their beast language</u>” . (Vol 1, p. 10)

Jenner’s translation: There is an old saying: “<u>Birds have bird language and animals have animal talk</u>” . (Vol 1, p. 1)

The range of fowl is larger than that of birds, as fowl include birds. Generally speaking, the main species of fowl are pheasants and poultry, such as chickens, ducks, and geese. There are also birds of other families, such as turkeys, pigeons, quails, and all kinds of songbirds. The main species of birds are divided into six categories: swimming birds, wading birds, climbing birds, land birds, raptors, and songbirds. These six categories are collectively referred to as “ecological groups.” Thus, Jenner’s translation is a shift between category levels. The upper category of the original text, “禽” (fowl), is translated into the lower category of “bird” in the translated version. Similarly, “兽” (beasts) is translated into its upper category, “animals.” Yu’s translation of the idiom is different from that of Jenner.

Similarly, the translation of “禽” and “兽” in the sentence “<u>禽有生而兽有死</u>，反复雌雄 (Vol 1, p. 78)” is another example of a shift between category levels.

Yu’s translation: <u>Fowls are born and animals die;</u> male and female, they multiply. (Vol 1, p. 79)

Jenner’s translation: <u>Birds and beast are born and die</u>; male and female alternate. (Vol 1, p. 55)

Original Chinese version: 常言 “<u>嫁鸡逐鸡，嫁犬逐犬</u>”。(Vol 4, p. 474)

Yu’s translation: There is a proverb which says, “<u>if you wed a chicken, you follow a chicken; if you marry a dog, you follow a dog</u>” . (Vol4, p. 475)

Jenner’s translation: As the saying goes, “<u>Marry a cockerel and follow a cockerel; marry a dog and follow a dog</u>”. (Vol 3, p. 492)

In feudal China, when a woman married a man, she was obliged to stay with him for the rest of her life. Thus, “鸡” and “犬” in the idiom refer to men. However, in literal terms, “鸡” (chicken) includes “hen” and “cockerel.” In Yu’s translation, “鸡” is translated as “chicken,” while Jenner translates “鸡” as “cockerel,” referring to the male. Thus, in Jenner’s translation, there is a shift between category levels.

IV. Findings

RQ3: What are the factors that influence translators’ choices in the translation of animal idioms?

A “category” is a mental process by which human beings classify things, and there are three factors that influence category classification.

A. Environment

According to Labov’s (1972) investigation, for Americans, the prototype of a bird is a robin; while for the Chinese, the prototype is a swallow. What causes this difference? The environment. Due to their environment, Americans see robins in their daily lives, while Chinese people see swallows more often. Over time, people’s sensory experiences influence their cognitive classifications.

B. Culture

National culture is inherited, and nationalities have their own cultures. For example, for Chinese people, the strongest animal is the buffalo because these were used to cultivate land during China’s agricultural history; while for Western people, the strongest animal is the horse because these were used to pull carts during occidental industrial history. Therefore, the animal idiom “力大如牛” (as strong as a buffalo) should be translated as “as strong as a horse.” As the Chinese word “buffalo” has the same connotative meaning as the English “horse,” the translation should exchange “buffalo” for “horse”.

C. Changes of Prototype

As mentioned above, a prototype category changes with a change in context and time. In ancient China, the prototype of the dog was a rural breed whose main function was to prevent theft and to be eaten by people as meat. Thus, the connotations of dog idioms are pejorative. Today, with more varieties of dog breeds and many being kept as pets, the prototype is no longer a rural dog, and the main function is often to be kept as a family member. What is more, the eating of dog meat would be offensive to dog owners.

V. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has analyzed the category shifts that occur in the translation of animal idioms, using examples from *Journey to the West*, translated by Anthony C. Yu and W. J. F. Jenner. When a translator has the same cognition of the animal in an idiom as the original author, the category of the animal need not be changed. However, if the translator has a different cognition, translation will result in a category shift. Moreover, differences between individual translators in terms of their cognitions of animals will also result in differences in their translations. In some cases, categories will remain the same in literal translation or be omitted in liberal translations, while in other cases, the categories will be shifted.

Categorization is a cognitive–psychological process, and a category is a cognitive concept preserved in the brain. As people originate in different living environments, have different cultural backgrounds, and possess different knowledge reserves, they also have different cognitive concepts; thus, category shifts are inevitable in translation. There are four general kinds of category shift: between categories, between category members, between prototypes, and between category levels. By analyzing the category shifts seen in the translation of animal idioms, the paper explains the substitution of animals in the translation of animal idioms. It also explains the factors that cause these category shifts—namely, living environment, cultural background, and knowledge reserves. Furthermore, it explains how these factors can influence translators' choices. In summary, this notion of category shifts offers a novel perspective for further studies on animal-idiom translation.

References

[1] Abudula, S. (2021). *A study on the translation of idioms in Journey to the West.* Published master's degree thesis, Northwest Minzu University, Lanzhou.
[2] Catford, J. C. (1965). *A linguistic theory of translation* (Vol. 31). London: Oxford University Press.
[3] Du, R. B. (2020). *Translation of English Subjects Under the Guidance of Translation Shift Theory—Take Translating Belgium: From the Roman Invasion to the Present Day as an Example.* Published master's degree thesis, Shanxi University, Shanxi.
[4] Fu, C. X. (2014). *A comparative study of the English translation of animal idioms in Hong Lou Meng from the perspective of Eco-translatology*. Published master's degree thesis, Guanxi Normal University, Guanxi.
[5] Fu, C. X. (2017). Study on the Translation of Animal Idioms in *Hong Lou Meng* from the Perspective of Eco-translatology. *Journal of Huaihai Institute of Technology(Humanities Social & Sciences Edition), 15*(11), 59-62.
[6] Fu, C. X. (2018). A Study on the Translation of Animal Idioms in *Hong Lou Meng* from the Perspective of Eco-Translatology. *Journal of Educational Institute of Jilin Province, 34*(3), 138-142.
[7] Halverson, S. L. (2000). *Concepts and categories in translation studies.* Published doctoral degree thesis, Universitetet i Bergen, Norway.
[8] He, W. D. (2021). *The application of Catford's Category Shifts Theory in the Translation of Prepositions and Prepositional Phrases in Popular Science Texts: A Case Study of A-Concise-History of Computers, Smart Phones and Internet*. Published master's degree thesis, Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology, Jiangsu.
[9] Jenner, W. J. F. (2020). *Journey to the West (volume 1-3).* Foreign Language Press, Beijing.
[10] Karin, K., & Marco C. (2014). Introduction: What is the "Second-Generation ?". *Style, 48*(3), 261-274.
[11] Labov, W. (1972). *Language in the inner city*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
[12] Li, M. (2021). *A study on the international publicity translation from the perspective of Catford translation shift theory--taking report in the work of the government 2020 as an example.* Published master's degree thesis, Beijing University of Post and Telecommunications, Beijing.
[13] Li, R. (2014). *Studies on Chinese-English translation of the proper name of Journey to the West from the perspective of text world theory.* Published doctoral dissertation, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai.
[14] Liang, D. X. (2020). *A Report on E-C Translation of Biographical Literature Guided by Category Shift Theory: A Case Study of Chapter Seventeen, The Queen Mother.* Unpublished master's degree thesis, Guangxi Normal University, Guangxi.
[15] Neubert, A. (1985). *Text and Translation*. Übersetzungswissenschaftliche Beiträge, 8. Leipzig: Enzyklopädie.
[16] Nie, B. (2019). *On English translation of animal idioms in the story of the stone from the perspective of Memetics.* Published master's degree thesis, Northwest A & F University, Shaanxi.
[17] Pan, Y. L. R. (2014). *Category Shift in Chinese Translation of Social Science Literature ——A Case Study on Early Learning and Development.* Published master's degree thesis, Hebei Normal University, Hebei.
[18] Snell-Hornby, M. (1988). *Translation studies: An integrated approach*. John Benjamins Publishing.
[19] Tan, Y. S. (2021). Re-forming Translation Studies from the Cognitive Translatology Perspective. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research, 18*(3), 79-87.
[20] Thelen, M. (2008). Translation quality assessment or quality management and quality control of translation. *Translation and meaning*, 8, 411-424.
[21] Wang, S. W., & Liu, H. (2014). Study on Yangs' English translation of animal idioms from the metaphor perspective. *Shaanxi Xueqian Normal University Journa*l, *30*(6), 62-65.
[22] Wang, W. Q. (2019). *A historical survey of Xi You Ji in English translation.* Published doctoral dissertation, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai.
[23] Wang, Y. (2017). A new view of translation process based on cognitive linguistics. *Chinese Translation*, *6*, 5-10.

[24] Wang, Z. (2017). *Translation and transformation: on the reception of Journey to the West in Britain and American.* Published doctoral dissertation, Nanjing Normal University, Jiangsu.
[25] Wen, X., & Xiao, K. R. (2020). *Cognitive Translatology*. Peking University Press, Beijing.
[26] Yin, D. D. (2015). *A study of cultural vacancy in translation of animal idioms from the perspective of translation Memetics—Taking English version of Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out by Goldblatt as an example.* Published master's degree thesis, Yunnan Normal University, Yunnan.
[27] Yu, Anthony. C. (2016). *The Journey to the West (volume 1-4).* University of Chicago Press, Chicago
[28] Yu, P. (2020). *A cognitive study of category shifts in translation.* Published doctoral dissertation, Southwest University, Chongqing.
[29] Zhang, Q. J. (2017). *A study on translation strategies of E-C animal idioms under the perspective of functional equivalence.* Published master's degree thesis, Hebei Normal University, Hebei.
[30] Zhao, Y. H., & Han, W. (2019). Similarities and differences of metaphors in English and Chinese animal idioms and translation strategies--Taking the Chinese Zodiac as an example. *Journal of Social Science of Harbin Normal University*, *4*, 106-108.
[31] Zhong, J. (1998). *Introduction to folklore*. Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, Shanghai.

Lulu Deng, MA, is currently a lecturer of Foreign Language College at Xiangnan University, Chenzhou, Hunan, China. She was born in Xinshao County, Hunan Province, China, in January 1986. In 2010, she obtained a master's degree in translation practice and theory from the Sichuan International Studies University, Chongqing, China. Her bachelor's degree in English language and literature was obtained from Huaihua College, Hunan, China, in 2007.

Between 2010 and 2012, she taught Chinese at South Warren High School in Kentucky, U.S.A. Since September 2012, she has been teaching in Foreign Language College at Xiangnan University. She primarily teaches courses in English–Chinese translation and Chinese–English translation, as well as translation workshops. She has published more than 10 articles related to translation studies for the Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure and was chief editor of the book, *A New Course Book on Translation*. Since 2021, she has been working on a PhD in translation and interpretation at Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Malaysia. Her research interests are translation theory and practice.

Muhammad Alif Redzuan Abdullah (corresponding author), PhD, is currently a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. He has published articles in research journals in the area of his studies. His research interests include Translation, Interpretation, and Applied Comparative Linguistics (E-mail: muhammadalif@upm.edu.my). ORCHID ID: 0000-0002-8684-0769

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 960-971, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.30

Preservation of Tolaki Mekongga Language Through Merdeka Curriculum-Based Local Subject Teaching Modules

Nur Ihsan Halil
Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

Burhanuddin Arafah
Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University of Indonesia, Indonesia

I Gede Purwana Edi Saputra
Physics Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

Ray Suryadi Hasyim
English Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

Sarmadan
Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

Takwa
Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

Rudi Karma
Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Universitas Sembilanbelas November, Kolaka, Indonesia

***Abstract*—To expedite the implementation of the "Merdeka Curriculum," the government of North Kolaka District has established a policy regarding the subject of local language to show the identity of the Tolaki Mekongga community. However, this policy has not yet been realized in the form of teaching modules, particularly at the elementary school level. This research aims to create a teaching module based on the "Merdeka Curriculum" that accommodates the learning of the Tolaki Mekongga language at the elementary school level in North Kolaka District, Province of Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. This study employs a developmental research approach using the ASSURE model. This study's trial subjects (users) are teachers and students from SDN 3 Lambai, SDN 5 Kodeoha, and SDN 8 Kodeoha in North Kolaka District. Data were collected through expert validation and user trial questionnaires (teachers and students). The data of the research were processed and analyzed descriptively. The validation test results scored 83%, meeting the validity and suitability criteria. The user trial results (teachers and students) gained a score of 85%, meeting the practicality criteria. Therefore, the module resulting from this research is considered appropriate and practical for use in teaching the local subject of the Tolaki Mekongga language at the elementary school level in North Kolaka District.**

***Index Terms*—teaching modules, local subject, Merdeka Curriculum, Tolaki Mekongga**

I. Introduction

The Tolaki Mekongga tribe is one of the indigenous tribes on the mainland of Southeast Sulawesi. Around the 10th century, the mainland of Southeast Sulawesi had two significant kingdoms, namely the Konawe Kingdom (in the Konawe Regency area) and the Mekongga Kingdom (in the Kolaka Regency area). These two kingdoms were closely related and collectively known as the Tolaki tribe (Sultan et al., 2018).

The cultural domain of Tolaki Mekongga is a term used to refer to the territory formerly under the rule of the Konawe and Mekongga Kingdoms, the areas of authority of the leaders and traditional leaders of Tolaki Mekongga in the past (Husba, 2015). The boundaries of this territory are considered to have historical narratives regarding the formation of the areas of authority, both in terms of geography and as customary regions. The Tolaki Mekongga community engages in traditional storytelling activities as a communication system in their interactions (Mattulada, 1985, p. 152; Taridala, 2005). On the same note, the Tolaki community, as cultural practitioners, tends to lack a sense of personal responsibility as heirs to tradition.

Recently, speakers of the Tolaki Mekongga language have become increasingly integrated with immigrant communities, and inter-ethnic marriages (amalgamation) have become more prevalent. A child born from a marriage within the Tolaki Mekongga ethnic group may not necessarily be proficient in the Tolaki Mekongga language. This is influenced by the social environment and interactions with other ethnic groups now inhabiting the region, leading to a gradual reduction in Tolaki Mekongga language speakers. Generally, active speakers of the Tolaki Mekongga language in Kolaka are, on average, forty years old or older. This situation marks the early signs of the decline of the Tolaki Mekongga language.

Meanwhile, the future speakers (children) of the Tolaki Mekongga ethnic group are increasingly unable to master the Tolaki Mekongga language proficiently. It aligns with the phenomenon of the lexicon shift in Konawe District due to modernization (Takwa et al., 2022). The Tolaki Mekongga ethnic group has many rituals, with language as an element of culture (Takwa et al., 2022). It also works with all ethnicities, such as Toraja, where the rituals are full of symbols with valuable meanings (Hasyim et al., 2020; Hasyim et al., 2023). In this context, every ritual aspect refers to valuable meanings (Arafah et al., 2020).

The advancement of information technology has changed the way of thinking (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). As we live in a digital age, the internet has become a new communication medium (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a). The young generation tends to use the internet in a significant portion of their daily activities, as simple as just one click away from their gadgets (Arafah et al., 2023; Purwaningsih et al., 2020). Technology can still be helpful depending on how users utilize it (Suhadi et al., 2022). People can also learn and find online materials (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). The important thing is to keep modernity from eroding the cultural heritage and natural resources (Arifin et al., 2022; Manugeren et al., 2023).

The researcher acknowledges the importance of preserving the Tolaki Mekongga language, manifested through developing a local subject module. This research, when connected to the existence of the Merdeka Curriculum, represents a step toward safeguarding regional assets, which constitute a facet of the national curriculum. The aspects referred to include the national unity aspect that encompasses the national unit and the local aspect that encompasses the linguistic characteristics of the region. Therefore, preserving the Tolaki Mekongga language as a local subject must incorporate elements of local wisdom that will nurture the connection between schools and their environments. The Tolaki language is one of the components of local subjects aimed at maintaining the integrity of schools with their surroundings. Based on this explanation, this research examines the nature of the curriculum-based teaching module content that can be included in local learning content at schools within the context of the Merdeka Curriculum.

The development of the Merdeka Curriculum has significantly impacted school learning preparedness, as highlighted by Nurwiatin (2022). The transition to the Merdeka Curriculum also influences students' learning interests, as Rahmadhani et al. (2022) noted. The challenges and difficulties of teaching in different dimensions are experienced by teachers and students that demand rapid adaption (Arafah et al., 2023; Sunardi et al., 2018). Both teachers and students require appropriate methods to adjust to the curriculum quickly (Kuswanty et al., 2023). Issues related to the impact of the transition to the Merdeka Curriculum pose challenges in several regions of Indonesia (Cholily et al., 2022), such as in North Kolaka District. The urgency lies in the need for dynamic changes in mindset among teachers, the lack of suitable teaching materials and learning tools for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, and the necessity to enhance the competency of human resources in education. Due to the difficulties and limitations, these may be overcome by introducing and implementing the curriculum more often so that as time goes by, a positive impact will always be the result (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023; Arafah et al., 2020).

Consequently, if all the teachers and students are severely affected during the implementation, they will achieve the goal (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022; Kaharuddin et al., 2023). Furthermore, teachers sometimes need to adjust to the curriculum, making them complain about the system (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Sometimes, the time given needs to be increased, making teachers and students need more time to adapt (Mardiana et al., 2023).

In an ideal context, Suryaman (2020) emphasizes the importance of dynamic and periodic studies and evaluations of the education curriculum in line with the developments in time, knowledge, and technology. Prasetyo and Hamami (2020) state that the shift towards curriculum development should be carefully planned. It needs to be appropriately examined to determine whether its effectiveness is applicable to use (Anggrawan et al., 2019). Since Indonesia's independence, the curriculum has undergone eleven changes, the most recent change being from the 2013 Curriculum to the Merdeka Curriculum. Ritonga (2018) demonstrates that the dynamics of curriculum changes also impact the learning environment, highlighting the significance of considering student factors, education, society, and the role of curriculum developers, particularly teachers (Ahmad, 2014). The current Merdeka Curriculum is regarded as an improvement over the 2013 Curriculum, aiming to produce a future generation ready to face the challenges of societal development (Firdaus et al., 2022).

Several essential objectives of the Merdeka Curriculum that educators and teachers need to understand include creating an enjoyable education experience for students and teachers by emphasizing the development of skills and character aspects in line with Indonesian values; addressing the learning setbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic by giving students the freedom to choose their interests in learning; nurturing the potential of students through a simple, flexible curriculum that focuses on essential content and competency development at specific stages; and providing an advantage in terms of students' freedom (Inayati, 2022).

The research is grounded in several recent research findings and relevant methodologies, including Ardiansyah's (2022, p. 73) research, “Cultivating the Use of Javanese Krama Language to Preserve Local Culture at MI Al-Islah Kandalrejo”, reveals that the practice of using Javanese Krama is a form of cultural preservation at MI AL - Islah Kendalrejo. Javanis Day has emerged due to concerns among the teaching staff about the impact of globalization in Indonesia, leading to a decline in the mastery of Javanese Krama, particularly among the younger generation. Factors hindering Javanis Day include the environment and students’ habits. Supportive factors include posters, extra-curricular programs, and parental support. Secondly, Salamet et al.’s (2022) study, “Development of Local Subject Learning Models in Schools Based on Sapeken's Unique Cultural Excellence in Sumenep Regency,” emphasizes that the development of the Bajo language local subject education should be supported by qualified human resources, especially local cultural teachers. Teachers need cultural knowledge, especially in language, the ability to develop effective lesson plans, and competence in implementing the teaching and learning process. The Bajo language local subject learning model aims to guide local cultural teachers at all school levels and as a reference for preserving language diversity in Sapeken Island by establishing four important languages to be studied in local subject materials.

Further, Handayani et al.’s (2022) research, “Integration of Local Wisdom in the Merdeka Curriculum to Realize Pancasila Students”, concludes that a Merdeka Curriculum integrated with local cultural wisdom has the potential to contribute to shaping the profile of Pancasila students. The implementation of this curriculum should be carefully and comprehensively prepared so that stakeholders in schools can collaborate synergistically to achieve the goal of shaping students' profiles under Pancasila values, as Bungai et al.’s (2022) study, “Development of Teaching Materials Based on Local Wisdom in Palangkaraya,” explains that training and guidance in developing learning modules based on local wisdom have a significant positive impact on facing the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the academic year 2022-2023. Despite the need for local government training related to the Merdeka Curriculum, researchers' guidance adds to the partners' knowledge. It is relevant to Santika’s (2022) research, “Strengthening Balinese Local Wisdom Values in Shaping Pancasila Student Profiles,” suggests that learning integrated with Balinese local wisdom values can be easily understood by students in Bali and simultaneously strengthen the national character of students. Then the last Hak's (2019) research, “Ethnopedagogy in the Muna, Tolaki, and Bajo Communities in Southeast Sulawesi (Strategies for Integrating Local Wisdom into History Learning for Student Character Strengthening),” explains that local values such as the Samaturu concept for the Tolaki ethnic group contain cooperative or collaborative values that can be integrated and modified in cooperation to achieve learning knowledge in the classroom.

From the overall research related to the urgency of developing and integrating teaching materials based on local wisdom in the Merdeka Curriculum, it can be observed that the development to be undertaken in the current study is highly relevant in supporting the preservation of local culture, particularly the Tolaki Mekongga language, through learning. In addition to the six relevant studies mentioned, the researcher has also examined local wisdom in Southeast Sulawesi in a previous study on the Development of Teaching Materials Based on the Local Wisdom of the Bajo Tribe conducted by Halil et al. in 2020. This research explains that an alternative to maintaining and enhancing the values of local wisdom in society can be achieved through instructional material (Halil, 2020).

Based on the previous research, a limited amount of specific research focuses on developing regional languages into local subjects of teaching materials based on the Merdeka Curriculum. Furthermore, the development in previous research has yet to be specifically centred on achieving learning outcomes according to the Merdeka Curriculum and efforts to regenerate the use of language in preserving local culture among students. These aspects serve as the basis for innovation in the development of this research.

One must adhere to several characteristics in developing the learning modules on the local subject of Tolaki Mekongga language based on the Merdeka Curriculum. According to Idi (2016), the characteristics that must be fulfilled in local subjects include: 1) Local subjects must be organized sequentially, logically, and planned, consisting of various components that support and influence each other. These components include goals, materials, methods, media, learning resources, and assessment systems, with their development progressing through specific stages, starting from planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. 2) Local subject materials contain locally relevant teaching materials. These are linked to the conditions, potentials, characteristics, advantages, and needs of the region and its environment (natural, social, cultural), presented as subjects with their own allocated time. 3) Local subject materials are developed based on the regulations of educational units and are not limited to skills subjects. 4) Local subject is developed following content standards, processes, and assessment standards determined by the government. 5) It is tailored to learners' interests, talents, abilities, and needs, as well as their environment and region. To achieve this goal, the local government of North Kolaka Regency collaborates with Nineteen November University Kolaka to develop the design of the Merdeka Curriculum device, mainly focusing on the Tolaki Mekongga Cultural Curriculum. This step is taken in preparation for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in 2023.

The development of this module stems from the on-the-ground reality in North Kolaka Regency, where the education sector is experiencing a lag in learning, a situation that is widespread in various regions, including remote areas in Indonesia (Adi et al., 2021). The state of learning at the elementary education level in North Kolaka Regency requires attention, particularly concerning limited internet access, a lack of technological competence and skills in the learning process, and insufficient technological facilities and infrastructure support.

Furthermore, it is revealed that North Kolaka has districts rich in culture and language, influencing varied language use in learning. It shows that culture and language are interdependent and affect each other (Arafah et al., 2023). In the context of language, figurative language is usually used to convey someone's idea aesthetically (Baa et al., 2023). It means that some cultural aspects are portrayed in a beautiful language even though some people understand based on what they understood and need help understanding words with multiple meanings (Hasjim et al., 2020). Therefore, communication must be done based on agreed logical principles from speaker to listener to avoid errors (Yulianti et al., 2022; Iksora et al., 2022; Asri et al., 2023). This cultural diversity also affects the implementation of culture in family, school, and community environments, which tends to fade. Field facts show that children are more interested in Western culture than their own local culture, a phenomenon acknowledged by Rohimah et al. (2019) as the impact of a lack of awareness and affection for their own culture or influenced by global trends without discretion.

In order to solve this issue and enhance a sense of belonging to local culture, the education mechanism is considered a solution (Maryamah, 2017), aligning with the national education goal emphasizing the formation of graduates with character and noble morals (Sisdiknas, 2006). Concerning culture, language is the best communication tool to preserve the cultural heritage. One way to portray culture and social reality in an academic field is to involve literary works in the lessons (Arafah et al., 2023). Literary work is an art that portrays human life with all the values related to the standard of behaviour in everyday life (Afiah et al., 2022; Mutmainnah et al., 2022). It can also help students to be open-minded by finding different personalities of characters (Fadillah et al., 2022). Other than that, literary work can also portray different issues, such as environmental issues (Arafah et al., 2021; Siwi et al., 2022), human relations (Asriyanti et al., 2022; Sunyoto et al., 2022), or animal issues (Yudith et al., 2023). Unfortunately, the cultural wealth in Kolaka Utara has not been fully integrated into the learning context, with a more dominant focus on local subject learning in English. Therefore, to provide a solution, there is a need to form a grand design of a culture-based curriculum with local subjects, referring to the Merdeka Curriculum framework, to be in line with the uniqueness of each region (Bashori & Ardinini, 2021; Mubarok et al., 2021). The primary goal of this research is to produce a cultural curriculum device design following the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum.

II. METHOD

The type of this research is Research and Development (R&D), which adopts the ASSURE model as proposed by Smaldino (2019). Smaldino elucidates that this model is an instructional design involving the following stages: (a) Analyzing learners, (b) Stating objectives and goals, (c) Selecting methods, media, and materials, (d) Utilizing methods, media, and materials, (e) Requiring learner participation, and (f) Evaluating and revising. All these stages are implemented, considering the urgency and potential for the intended outcomes.

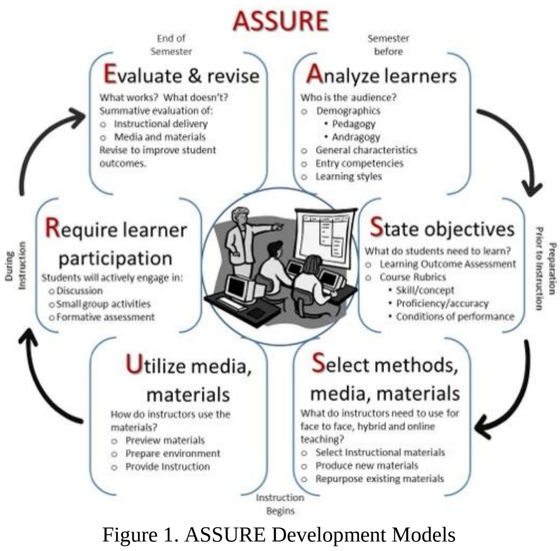


Figure 1. ASSURE Development Models

The subjects of this research consist of teachers and students from SDN 3 Lambai, SDN 5 Kodeoha, and SDN 8 Kodeoha in Kolaka Utara. Data were collected through user response questionnaires and expert validation questionnaires. After collecting the data, descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the curriculum design's validity and practicality. The level of feasibility/validity of the product was evaluated through expert validation using a questionnaire instrument (Akbar & Sriwiyana, 2011, p. 286) with the following formula:

$$V = \frac{\text{Number of TSEV}}{\text{Number of } T - Smax} \times 100\%$$

Details:
V = Percentage of validity
TSEV = Total number of validator empirical scores
T-Smax = Total expected maximum score
100% = Constant

In general, the stages of development in this study can be seen below.

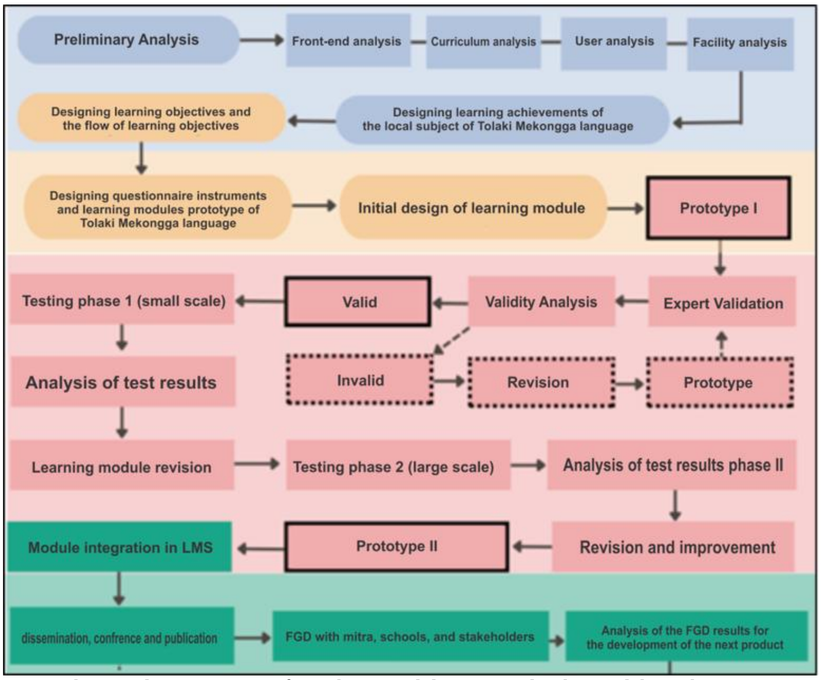


Figure 2. The Development Stage of Teaching Modules on Local Subjet Tolaki Mekongga Language

III. Result and Discussion

The development of the module design was carried out based on the procedural steps outlined in the ASSURE model, which are:

a. Analyzing learners

This step involves analyzing the learning object's (students') conditions, focusing on knowledge and skills in understanding local subjects. Analyzing the student situation related to this learning is a key to achieving learning objectives (Alfin, 2014). Findings from field research indicate that more than 80% of students need more basic knowledge about local subjects, have a limited understanding of local culture, and face limitations in learning resources, both directly and indirectly. Students are more interested in foreign cultures and millennial languages, making them less enthusiastic about their regional language. These findings align with Artisna's (2022) research, which demonstrates that these habits and lifestyles continue to erode the original culture and local wisdom that are the archipelago's heritage. Interview results also reveal that more than 77% of elementary school students in grades IV, V, and VI have not memorized or are not accustomed to using their region's distinctive local language.

b. Formulating standards and objectives

Formulating objectives had to align with the expected outcomes from students in cognitive, attitudinal, and skill aspects, as suggested by Hughes and Yarbrough (2022). Formulating objectives includes defining concepts, establishing values/characteristics to be taught, and detailing activities that could enhance students' skills and creativity during and after the learning process.

c. Selecting methods, media, and materials

The selection of appropriate teaching methods, media, and materials was expected to be optimal in achieving student learning outcomes and meeting learning objectives. To develop the cultural curriculum design, relevant resources or materials were needed. The presentation of each element was adjusted to the elements referring to the scope found in the Merdeka Curriculum, namely: 1) local language and literature, 2) regional arts, 3) regional handicrafts, 4) local food, 5) customs and traditions, 6) regional tourism, and 7) history. Each presented element was then expanded into a description of the material that matched the phase level in each elementary school class. For example, phase A is for grades I and II, phase B is for grades III and IV, and phase C is for grades V and VI. The breakdown of the scope of this material was then developed into learning objectives that corresponded to phases A, B, and C. The following is an overview of the North Kolaka cultural curriculum design on the cover, as shown in Figure 3.

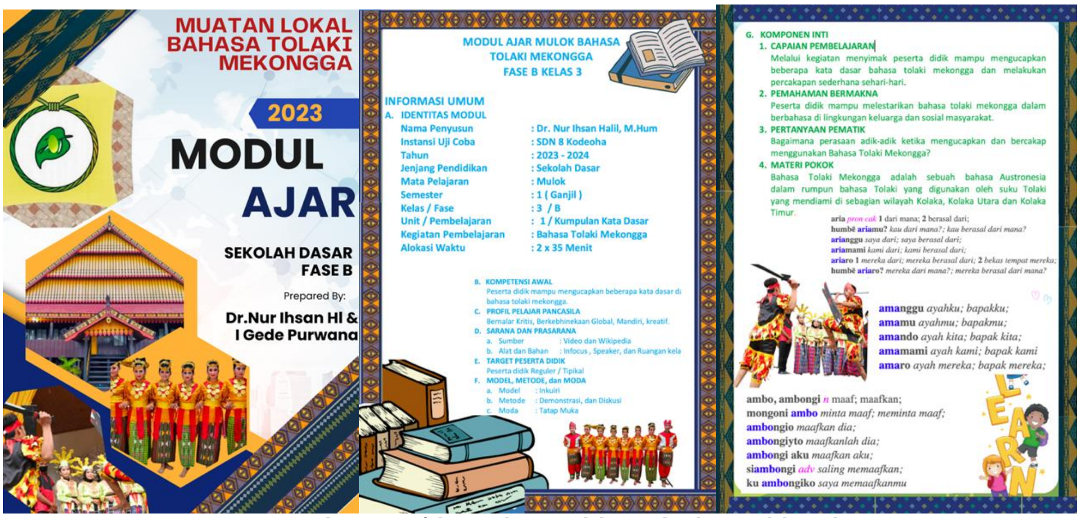


Figure 3. Cover Design and Content of the Teaching Module Local Subject Tolaki Mekongga Language

d. Utilize methods, media, and materials

This step involves evaluating the technological capacity, media availability, and materials used. Each supporting element is the foundation for developing various curriculum components, such as learning modules, media, teaching materials, and authentic assessment tools. In this phase, the completed product is then validated by curriculum experts and language experts. The validation process before field testing is considered crucial to ensure that the product is theoretically and conceptually valid before it is expanded to the community (Adams & Wieman, 2011). Content validation is performed to evaluate the feasibility of the curriculum content, both theoretically and practically. Meanwhile, language validation aims to ensure the accuracy of the Indonesian language. The results of each expert validation include critiques, corrections, and suggestions for improvement on the developed product.

TABLE 1
MODULES EXPERT VALIDATION RESULTS

Assessment Aspect	Score	Criteria
The urgency of the importance of implementing Merdeka Curriculum (local subject)	4	Highly Appropriate
Legal Basis Suitability in the development of local subject teaching module	3	Appropriate
Rational conformity of integrated learning outcomes of local subject	3	Appropriate
Suitability of local object-integrated learning outcomes objectives	4	Highly Appropriate
Clarity Characteristics of integrated elementary level subjects of local wisdom	4	Highly Appropriate
Clarity of the Scope of Elementary Learning Outcomes	4	Highly Appropriate
Clarity of description of each element of the subject of local load	4	Highly Appropriate
Completeness of presentation of each element in local subjects by the scope of local wisdom	3	Appropriate
The formulation of learning outcomes is described in full in each phase	4	Highly Appropriate
Total Score	33	
Percentage of Validity	91,6 %	Highly Valid

TABLE 2
LINGUIST VALIDATION RESULTS

Assessment Aspect	Score	Criteria
Word/diction selection	3	Appropriate
Correct spelling usage	3	Appropriate
Accuracy of Punctuation Use	4	Highly Appropriate
Not much use of the term	3	Appropriate
Minimum typos	3	Appropriate
Accuracy of capital letter	3	Appropriate
Using good, formal Indonesian	3	Appropriate
Easy to understand term selection	3	Appropriate
Does not cause double meaning/ambiguity	4	Highly Appropriate
Total Score	29	
Percentage of Validity	80 %	Valid

Based on the information presented in Table 1, the expert evaluation results of the curriculum components indicate a score of 91.6%, signifying a high level of validity for the curriculum. Despite this favourable assessment, the validators provided valuable suggestions and feedback. Specifically, they recommended including proficiency criteria for learning achievements in each class phase.

Moving forward to Table 2, the evaluation conducted by language experts yielded a score of 80%, meeting the criteria for validity. The validators advised paying more attention to terms that might not be widely recognized and recommended selecting terms from various languages (English/Latin). This ensures that readers can comprehend the intended meaning of the cultural curriculum draft.

e. Requires learner participation

This phase involves the product's trial with users, engaging teachers and students. The testing process aims to elicit user responses to the developed curriculum design. The trial is conducted on a limited scale, specifically in the fourth-grade class at Elementary School in SDN 3 Lambai, SDN 5 Kodeoha, and SDN 8 Kodeoha, involving 57 students in Phase B. The outcomes of the user trial serve as a foundation for the evaluation and reflection on the product, enabling necessary adjustments. User feedback serves as a guide to ensure the product is suitable for limited use and applicable on a broader scale. The following is a summary of the results from the product trial with users (teachers and students).

TABLE 3
RECAPITULATION TRIAL RESULTS OF THE LOCAL SUBJECT TEACHING MODULE OF TOLAKI MEKONGGA LANGUAGE

Assessment Aspect	Score	Criteria
Learning outcomes are described in sequence following Class level/phase	3	Eligible
The learning stages used in the curriculum are easily understood	4	Highly Eligible
The teaching module can be integrated with the Pancasila Student Profile Component	3	Eligible
The teaching module presentation is contextual to the area of Kolaka Utara and Tolaki Mekongga Language	3	Eligible
The aching module presentation, in general, is easy to implement	3	Eligible
Minimum class hours: 2 hours per week	4	Highly Eligible
Total Score	20	
Percentage of Eligibility	83%	Eligible

According to the explanations provided in Table 3, the outcomes of the user trial for the curriculum product indicate a score of 83%, with an assessment that the product is Eligible for testing on a larger scale. This finding aligns with the perspective that Kuncahyono (2018) presented, asserting the importance of testing the practicality of a product for comprehensive field application. However, in the context of this research, a large-scale trial was not conducted due to the need for refinement in the culturally based curriculum design and the addition of Teaching Modules for all grade levels, from Grade IV to Grade VI.

f. Evaluate and revise

In this step, efforts are made to assess the learning impact after the trial of the curriculum design product. Evaluation becomes a crucial aspect as an indicator of the success of the learning process (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992; Cappel & Hayen, 2004). This evaluation phase encompasses assessments during and after the implementation of the learning process. Subsequently, the developers clarify the data obtained from the questionnaires, which include responses from teachers and students after participating in the learning process using the curriculum Merdeka based on the local wisdom of North Kolaka District. Overall, we can show the result of data interpretation in three categories of assessment for teaching modules in this research, as in the diagram below.

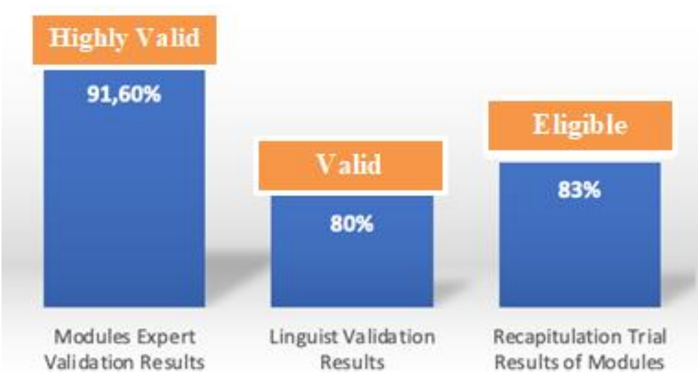


Figure 4. Diagram of Analysis Validation and Trial Result of Teaching Modules

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research, several key points can be concluded: First, the local subject module for the Tolaki Mekongga language, based on the Merdeka Curriculum, has proven to be valid and eligible to be effectively used in local subject learning at the elementary school level. This is a concrete effort to preserve the Tolaki Mekongga language. Second, the data interpretation results indicate the need to improve the variety of learning media integrated into the Tolaki Mekongga language module. This ensures the module can be implemented widely across the Southeast Sulawesi region. Third, the developed curriculum follows the Merdeka Curriculum's principles at each elementary school phase. This involves learning outcomes integrated with various cultures in North Kolaka District, Southeast Sulawesi.

For further research, it is kindly suggested that: First, it is crucial for teachers and students to consistently implement local subject learning for at least 2 hours per week. Schools are expected to develop local subject learning in intra-curricular and extra-curricular contexts and Merdeka. Second, the implications of implementing a local wisdom-based curriculum in North Kolaka suggest that teachers can implement learning and develop learning tools by the applicable curriculum standards. Further research is needed to explore the impact of Merdeka Curriculum implementation on other variables. Third, methods, media, and materials must be applied judiciously in the learning process, in line with the concept of "utilize methods, media, and materials” to enhance learning effectiveness.

REFERENCES

[1] Adams, W. K., & Wieman, C. E. (2011). Development and validation of instruments to measure learning of expert-like thinking. *International Journal of Science Education*, *33*(9), 1289–1312.

[2] Afiah, N., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). Burmese Women Portrait under the British Imperialism in Orwell’s *Burmese Days. Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 213-219.

[3] Alfin, J. (2014). Analisis Karakteristik Siswa pada Tingkat Sekolah Dasar [Analysis of Student Characteristics at the Elementary School Level]. *Prosiding Halaqah Nasional dan Seminar Internasional Pendidikan Islam*. Retrieved from http://digilib.uinsa.ac.id/6485/ on 2 December 2023.

[4] Akbar, S. & Sriwiyana, H. (2011). *Pengembangan Kurikulum dan Pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial* [Curriculum Development and Social Science Learning]. Yogyakarta: Cipta Media.

[5] Adi, P.W., Martono, T., & Sudarno, S. (2021). Triggers of Failure in School Learning During the Pandemic in Indonesia (A Literature Review). *Research and Development Journal of Education*, *7*(2), 464–473.

[6] Ahmad, S. (2014). Issues of the 2013 Curriculum and Instructional Leadership of School Principals. *Jurnal Pencerahan*, *8*(2), 98-108.

[7] Anggrawan, A., Yassi, A.H., Satria, C., Arafah, B., & Makka, H.M. (2019). Comparison of Online Learning versus Face-to-Face Learning in English Grammar Learning. *5th International Conference on Computing Engineering and Design (ICCED)*, 1-4.

[8] Arafah, B., Abbas, H., & Hikmah, N. (2021). Saving the Environmental Lessons in Colin Thiele’s *February Dragon. Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *12*(6), 935-941.

[9] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2019). Linguistic Functions of Emoji in Social Media Communication. *Opción*, *35*(24), 558-574.

[10] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2023a). Digital Literacy: The Right Solution to Overcome the Various Problems of Meaning and Communication on Social Media. *Studies in Media and Communication*, *11*(4), 19-30.

[11] Arafah, B. & Hasyim, M. (2023b). Digital Literacy on Current Issues in Social Media: Social Media as a Source of Information. *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology*, *101*(10), 3943-3951.

[12] Arafah, B., Hasyim, M., Khaerana, A.S.A., Soraya, A.I., Ramadhani, R., Ismail, A., & Takwa. (2023). The Digital Culture Literacy of Generation Z Netizens as Readers, Producers and Publishers of Text on Social Media. *International Journal of Intelligent Systems and Applications in Engineering*, *11*(3), 112-123.

[13] Arafah, B., & Kaharuddin. (2019). The Representation of Complaints in English and Indonesian Discourses. *Opción*, *35*(24), 501-517.

[14] Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Hasjim, M., Arafah, A.N.B., Takwa, & Karimuddin. (2023). Cultural Relations among Speakers of South Halmahera Languages. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(1), 168-174.

[15] Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Kaharuddin, A., Room, F., Takwa, & Purwarno, P. (2023). Evaluating the Suitability of Printed Materials in the Context of Online Learning. *XLinguae*, *16*(2), 16-32.

[16] Arafah, B., Sirajuddin, J., Thayyib, M., Room, F., Takwa, & Anayati, W. (2023). Emotional Management of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*'s Main Character. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *14*(5), 1414-1421.

[17] Arafah, B., Thayyib, M., Kaharuddin, & Sahib, H. (2020). An Anthropological Linguistic Study on Maccera’ Bulung Ritual, *Opción*, *36*(27), 1592-1606.

[18] Arafah, K., Arafah, A.N.B., & Arafah, B. (2020). Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy’s Role in Achievement Motivation and Physics Learning Outcomes. *Opción*, *36*(27), 1607-1623.

[19] Ardiansyah, M.F. & Yulya, N.M. (2022). Preservation of Local Culture Through the Cultivation of Javanese Krama Language in Islamic Elementary Schools (Madrasah Ibtidaiyah). *Al-Mihnah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam dan Keguruan*, *1*(1), 68-88.

[20] Arifin, M. B., Arafah, B., & Kuncara, S.D. (2022). Dayak’s Sociocultural Situation through Locality in Lumholtz’s Through Central Borneo Travel Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(12), 2695-2703.

[21] Arnawa, I. G. N. E. V. & Arafah, B. (2023). Students’ Self-Regulated Strategies in Approaching Second Language Writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(3), 690-696.

[22] Artisna, P., Naswa, F., & Rohmah, M. (2022). Response of the Indonesian Millennial Generation Amid the Influx of Foreign Cultures. *Seminar Nasional Ilmu Ilmu Sosial (SNIIS)*, *1*, 695-705.

[23] Asri, D., Arafah, B., Sahib, H., & Abbas, H. (2023). Male Domination in Helen Garner’s *Monkey Grip. Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(7), 1651-1658.

[24] Asriyanti, S., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). The Representation of Women’s Dependence on Men in *Little Women. Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(4), 790-796.

[25] Baa, S., Wardani, S. B., Iskandar, Weda, S., & Arafah, B. (2023). Lexical Metaphors in Westlife's Selected Song Lyrics. *XLinguae*, *16*(1), 132-154.

[26] Bashori, B. & Ardinini, A.M. (2021). Curriculum Policy on Local Language and Literature of Minangkabau in Elementary and Junior High Schools in the City of Pariaman as an Effort in Cultural Preservation. *Hikmah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *10*(1), 91–105.

[27] Bungai J., Rachmawati L., & Nugroho, W. (2023). Assistance to Primary School Teachers in Palangka Raya as Catalysts in Creating Teaching Materials for the Independent Curriculum Based on Local Wisdom in Peatland Areas. *Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, *4*(2), 1274-80.

[28] Cappel, J. J., & Hayen, R. L. (2004). Evaluating e-Learning: A Case Study. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, *44*(4), 49–56.

[29] Cholily, Y.M., Baiduri, B., Restian, A., Suwandayani, B.I., Deviana, T., Kuncahyono, & Herviani, V.K. (2022). Instructional Design: Urgensi Kurikulum Budaya Berbasis Muatan Lokal Kabupaten Lembata Nusa Tenggara Timur [Instructional Design: The Urgency of a Local Cultural Curriculum Based on the Content of Lembata District, East Nusa Tenggara]. *Taman Cendekia: Jurnal Pendidikan Ke-SD-an*, *6*(2), 70–79.

[30] Duffy, T.M. & Jonassen, D.H. Eds. (1992). *Constructivism and the Technology of Instruction: A Conversation*. London: Routledge.

[31] Fadillah, N., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2022). The Act of Slavery in the 20th Century as Reflected in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot. Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 66–72.

[32] Firdaus, H., Laensadi, A.M., Matvayodha, G., Siagian, F.N., & Hasanah, I.A. (2022). Analisis Evaluasi Program Kurikulum 2013 dan Kurikulum Merdeka [Analysis of the Evaluation of the 2013 Curriculum Program and the Merdeka Curriculum]. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling*, *4*(4), 686–692.

[33] Hak, P. (2019). Etnopedagogik pada Masyarakat Suku Muna, Tolaki, dan Bajo di Sulawesi Tenggara: Strategi Pengintegrasian Kearifan Lokal dalam Pembelajaran Sejarah untuk Penguatan Karakter Siswa. [Ethnopedagogy in the Communities of Muna, Tolaki, and Bajo in Southeast Sulawesi: Strategies for Integrating Local Wisdom into History Education for Strengthening Students' Character]. *The 4th National Seminar Sejarak*, Jurusan Pendidikan Sejarah Universitas Negeri Padang, 279-296.

[34] Halil, N.I., Saputra, I.G., & Syarifuddin, A.S. (2020). Developing Teaching Material Bajo's Local Wisdom Sea Preservation Thomson-Brooks/Cole Model. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia (JPI*), *9*(3), 355-367.

[35] Handayani, S.D., Irawan A., Febriyanti, C., & Kencanawaty, G. (2022). Mewujudan Pelajar Pancasila dengan Mengintegrasikan Kearifan Budaya Lokal dalam Kurikulum Merdeka [Realizing Pancasila Students by Integrating Local Cultural Wisdom in the Independent Curriculum]. *Ilma Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, *1*(1), 76-81.

[36] Hasjim, M., Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Verlin, S., & Genisa, R.A.A. (2020). Principles behind Semantic Relation between Common Abbreviations and their Expansions on Instagram. *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, *9*, 2270-2276.

[37] Hasyim, M. & Arafah, B. (2023a). Semiotic Multimodality Communication in the Age of New Media. *Studies in Media and Communication*, *11*(1), 96-103.

[38] Hasyim M. & Arafah, B. (2023b). Social Media Text Meaning: Cultural Information Consumption. *Wseas Transactions on Information Science and Applications*, *20*(2023), 220-227.

[39] Hasyim, M., Arafah, B., & Kuswarini, P. (2020). The New Toraja Destination: Adding Value 'Toraja Coffee' of the Sustainable Tourism Development. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, *575*(1), 1-10.

[40] Hasyim, M., Arafah, B., Kuswarini, P., Masdiana, Saleh, F., Lisani, M., & Sukmal, A.F. (2023). Humane Coffee: Meaning Symbolic Interaction of a Cup of Coffee. *Migration Letters*, *20*(S5), 1095-1105.

[41] Hughes, P. & Yarbrough, J. Eds. (2022). *Self-Directed Learning and the Academic Evolution from Pedagogy to Andragogy*. Hershey, USA: IGI Global.

[42] Husba, Z.M. (2015). Tuturan Mekuku: Sistem Penanda Etnis dalam Interaksi Sosial Suku Tolaki Mekongga di Sulawesi Tenggara (Mekuku Discourse: Ethnic Marker System in Social Interactions of the Tolaki Mekongga Tribe in Southeast Sulawesi). *Patanjala: Jurnal Penelitian Sejarah dan Budaya*, *7*(2), 327-344.

[43] Idi, A. (2016). *Pengembangan Kurikulum: Teori dan Praktik* [Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice]. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada.

[44] Iksora, Arafah, B., Syafruddin, S., Muchtar, J., & Lestari, P.A. (2022). Typos' Effects on Web-Based Programming Code Output: A Computational Linguistics Study. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(11), 2460-2469.

[45] Inayati, U. (2022). Konsep dan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka pada Pembelajaran Abad-21 di SD/MI [Concept and Implementation of the Independent Curriculum in 21st Century Learning at Elementary Schools]. *ICIE: International Conference on Islamic Education*, *2*, 293–304.

[46] Kaharuddin, Arafah, B., Nurpahmi, S., Sukmawaty, Rahman, I.F., & Juniardi, Y. (2023). Exploring How Reading Aloud and Vocabulary Enrichment Shape English Speaking Skills Among Indonesian Learners of English. *World Journal of English Language*, *13*(8), 436-445.

[47] Kuncahyono, K. (2018). Pengembangan E-Modul (Modul Digital) dalam Pembelajaran Tematik di Sekolah Dasar [Development of E-Modules (Digital Modules) in Thematic Learning at Elementary Schools]. *Journal of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Education*, *2*(2), 219–231.

[48] Kuswanty, W.H., Arafah, B., Budiman, A.N.A., Ali, T., Fatsah, H., & Room, F. (2023). Students' Perception of Explicit and Implicit Methods in Learning Tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(6), 1473-1482.

[49] Manugeren, M., Arafah, B., Purwarno, P., Siwi, P., Ekalestari, S., & Wulan, S. (2023). An Ecoliterature Approach to Environmental Conservation: Take Four Selected Literary Works as Examples. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(5), 1318-1327.

[50] Mardiana, Arafah, B., Ahmad, D., Kaharuddin, Room, F., & Barus, E. (2023). Time Allocation Effect on Test Scores for Academic Writing of Indonesian English Learners. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *14*(6), 1628-1636.

[51] Maryamah, E. (2017). Pengembangan Budaya Sekolah [School Culture Development]. *Tarbawi: Jurnal Keilmuan Manajemen Pendidikan*, *2*(02), 86–96.

[52] Mattulada L. (1985). *Latoa: Satu Lukisan Analitis terhadap Antropologi Politik Orang Bugis* [Latoa: An Analytical Portrait of Political Anthropology among the Bugis People]. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
[53] Mokoginta, K. & Arafah, B. (2022). Negotiation in Indonesian Culture: A Cultural Linguistic Analysis of Bahasa Indonesia Textbooks. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(4), 691-701.
[54] Mubarok, A.A., Aminah, S., Sukamto, S., Suherman, D., & Berlian, U.C. (2021). Landasan Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan di Indonesia [The Foundation of Curriculum Development in Education in Indonesia]. *Jurnal Dirosah Islamiyah*, *3*(1), 103–125.
[55] Mutmainnah, Arafah, B., & Pattu, A. (2022). Racial Discrimination Experienced by Black People as Reflected in Langston Hughes's Poems. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(2), 350-356.
[56] Nurwiatin, N. (2022). Pengaruh Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar dan Kesiapan Kepala Sekolah terhadap Penyesuaian Pembelajaran di Sekolah [The Influence of Independent Learning Curriculum Development and School Principal Readiness on Learning Adjustment in Schools]. *Edusaintek: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains dan Teknologi*, *9*(2), 472–487.
[57] Prasetyo, A.R. & Hamami, T. (2020). Prinsip-prinsip dalam Pengembangan Kurikulum [Principles in Curriculum Development]. *Palapa*, *8*(1), 42–55.
[58] Purwaningsih, Y. R., Arafah, B., & Abbas, H. (2020). An ambition of infidelity “Emma Bovary” as wife: Sexuality problems. *Medicina Clínica Práctica*, *3*(S1), 100108. 1-3.
[59] Rahmadhani, P., Widya, D., & Setiawati, M. (2022). Dampak Transisi Kurikulum 2013 ke Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar terhadap Minat Belajar Siswa [The Impact of the Transition from the 2013 Curriculum to the Independent Learning Curriculum on Students' Learning Interest]. *JUPEIS: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Ilmu Sosial*, *1*(4), 41–49.
[60] Ritonga, M. (2018). Politik dan Dinamika Kebijakan Perubahan Kurikulum Pendidikan di Indonesia Hingga Masa Reformasi [Politics and Dynamics of Policy Changes in the Education Curriculum in Indonesia Until the Reform Era]. *Bina Gogik: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, *5*(2), 1-15.
[61] Rohimah, I.S., Hufad, A., & Wilodati, W. (2019). Analisa Penyebab Hilangnya Tradisi Rarangkén: Studi Fenomenologi pada Masyarakat Kampung Cikantrieun Desa Wangunjaya [Analysis of the Causes of the Disappearance of the Rarangkén Tradition: Phenomenological Study in the Community of Cikantrieun Village, Wangunjaya]. *Indonesian Journal of Sociology, Education, and Development*, *1*(1), 17–26.
[62] Salamet S., Asmoni A., Jamilah, J., Mulyadi, M., Matroni, M., Sukitman T., & Yazid A. (2022). Pengembangan Model Pembelajaran Muatan Lokal di Sekolah Berbasis Keuggulan Budaya Khas Sapeken di Kabupaten Sumenep [Development of Local Content Learning Models in Schools Based on the Cultural Excellence of Sapeken in Sumenep Regency]. *Karaton: Jurnal Pembangunan Sumenep*, *2*(1), 96-112.
[63] Santika, I.W. (2022). Penguatan Nilai-nilai Kearifan Lokal Bali dalam Membentuk Profil Pelajar Pancasila [Development of Local Subject Learning Models in Schools Based on the Cultural Excellence of Sapeken in Sumenep Regency]. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling*, *4*(4), 6182-6195.
[64] Sisdiknas. (2006). *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional* [Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System]. Jakarta: Ministry of State Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia.
[65] Siwi, P., Arafah, B., Wulan, S., Purwarno, P., Ekalestari, S., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Treatment of Nature: An Ecocriticism Approach in ‘Komat Kamit’ of Tejo and Kamba’s Tuhan Maha Asik. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(7), 1278-1285.
[66] Smaldino, S.E., Russell, J.D., Heinich, R. & Molenda, M. (2019). *Instructional Technology and Media for Learning*. 12th Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Merril Prentice Hall inc.
[67] Suhadi, J., Arafah, B., Makatita, F.P., Abbas, H., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Science and Society: The Impact of Science Abuse on Social Life in Well’s *The Invisible Man*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(6), 1214-1219.
[68] Sultan, S., Maknun, T., & Said, M.I. (2018). Tuturan Tolea dalam Ritual Pesta Adat Mosehe Wonua Suku Tolaki Mekongga di Kabupaten Kolaka: Tinjauan Semiotika [Tolea Discourse in the Ritual of Mosehe Wonua Cultural Festival of the Tolaki Mekongga Tribe in Kolaka Regency: A Semiotic Review]. *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya*, *6*(2), 251-257.
[69] Sunardi, Akil, M., Arafah, B., & Salija, K. (2018). Looking at the Shared Conception of Teaching Literature in an Indonesian ELT Setting. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *9*(2), 316-327.
[70] Sunyoto, F.G., Arafah, B., Yudith, M., Mokodompit, G.P., & Asnawi, A. E. F. (2022). The Native American Father’s Parenting Style in John Ernst Steinbeck’s *The Pearl*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(12), 2551-2558.
[71] Suryaman, M. (2020). Orientasi Pengembangan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar [Development Orientation of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum]. *Proceedings of the National Online Seminar: Development of the Independent Learning Curriculum, Master’s Program in Indonesian Language Education, Bengkulu University.* Bengkulu: October 21, 2020, 13–28.
[72] Takwa, Arafah, B., Sopiandy, D., Taqfiah, S. J., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Humanistic Values in Metaphoric Expressions of Traditional Marriage in Tolaki Mekongga Kolaka. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(8), 1602-1608.
[73] Takwa, Arafah, B., Kaharuddin, Putra, E., Masrur, & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). The Shift of Lexicon in Traditional Technology System in Tolaki Community at Konawe District of Southeast Sulawesi. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *12*(5), 980-989.
[74] Taridala, Y. (2005). *Perubahan Sosial pada Masyarakat Tolaki Mekongga: Sketsa Antropo-Sosial di Ranah Budaya Tolaki Mekongga* [Social Changes in the Tolaki Mekongga Community: Anthropo-Social Sketch in the Cultural Realm of Tolaki Mekongga]. Kendari: Yayasan Hijau Sejahtera.
[75] Yudith, M., Arafah, B., Sunyoto, F.G., Fitriani, Rostan, R.B., & Nurdin, F.E. (2023). The Representation of Animalism Issue in Sewell’s *Black Beauty*. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(1), 108-116.
[76] Yulianti, S., Arafah, B., Rofikah, U., Idris, A.M.S., Samsur, N., & Arafah, A.N.B. (2022). Conversational Implicatures on Saturday Night Live Talk Show. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *13*(1), 189-197.

Nur Ihsan Halil was born in Bulukumba on February 11, 1968, and is a lecturer in Indonesian Language and Literature Education at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Nineteen November University Kolaka (USN Kolaka). The author completed his undergraduate studies at Halu Oleo University Kendari in the Indonesian Language program and continued his postgraduate studies at Hasanuddin University (Unhas) for a Master's degree and at Jakarta State University (UNU) for a doctoral degree in Linguistics. In addition to being a lecturer, the author is currently serving as the Rector of Nineteen November University Kolaka and has previously held the position of Dean of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at US Kolaka. The author is also actively involved as a researcher in linguistics, Indonesian language education, and educational technology, with publications in accredited international and national journals. The author participates in various scientific forums to disseminate research results obtained from external grants from the Ministry and internal research grants from the institution.

Burhanuddin Arafah obtained his PhD in English literature at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in 2003. He earned his Master's degree in American literature at Gadjah Mada University (UGM) Yogyakarta of Indonesia in 1995 and his Bachelor's degree in English literature at Hasanuddin University (UNHAS) in 1988. He is currently a full Professor in English literature at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS, Indonesia. He has published eight books in English and literature and more than 70 research articles ranked in international journals published in English. He also has received 26 Intellectual Property Right Certificates from the Indonesian government.

His areas of interest are English literature, language education, and cultural studies. He was the Dean of the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of UNHAS from 2009-2017. He is actively involved at the National Accreditation Board-Higher Education, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia in his position as Assessor.

Gede Purwana Edi Saputra was born in Lamoare on March 30, 1991, is a Physics Education lecturer at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Nineteen November University Kolaka. The author completed his undergraduate studies at Halu Oleo University Kendari in the Physics Education program and continued his postgraduate studies at Makassar State University (UNM) in the Physics Education program. In addition to being an active lecturer, the author also serves as an Associate Assessor for BAN-S/M in the Southeast Sulawesi Province, an expert trainer for the 1st Generation Movement, and a facilitator for the 2nd Generation School Movement. The author is also actively involved in Physics Education and Learning Technology research, with publications in accredited international and national journals. The author participates in various scientific forums to disseminate research results obtained from external grants from the Ministry and internal research grants from the institution.

Ray Suryadi teaches at the English Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sembilanbelas November University Kolaka (USN). He completed his Bachelor's degree in English Education at Makassar State University in 2008 and his Master's degree in 2013. In 2023, he published some articles in national journals, such as The Impact of Kadatua Dialect on Students' English Pronunciation, Lingual 2023 15(1), and Student’s Perception on Learning Media Augmented Reality based at English for Specific Purpose Subject, Epigram 2023 20(1). He has also written books such as English for Physical Education and Sport, Skill of Speaking, Travel Around the World in English, and Learning Physics and Chemistry in English. He is also involved in the School Empowerment Program as a facilitator.

Sarmadan is a lecturer in the Bachelor's Program of Indonesian Language Education at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Sembilanbelas November Kolaka (USN Kolaka), Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. Furthermore, he is also active as an Assessor for the National Accreditation Board - Schools/Madrasahs, an Interviewer for LPDP Scholarships, an Expert in Cultural Heritage Preservation, and a Facilitator for the School Empowerment Program.

He completed his Bachelor’s degree in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Program at Universitas Halu Oleo (UHO) Kendari in 2011, followed by a Master’s degree in the Indonesian Language Education Program at the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) Bandung in 2013. His Doctorate in Applied Linguistics was obtained from the Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ) in 2022. He participated in leadership education at the Indonesian National Resilience Institute (Lemhannas of the Republic of Indonesia) through the Lemhannas Fellowship Program (LFP) Batch 1 in 2015, which took place in Jakarta and Singapore for an entire month. He specializes in applied linguistics and Indonesian language education, evident in his numerous publications, such as journals, books, proceedings, opinions in print and electronic media, and Intellectual Property Rights (HKI).

Takwa completed his Master's degree in humanities at Hasanuddin University (Unhas) Makassar in 2014 and a bachelor's degree at Universitas Sembilanbelas November Kolaka (USN-Kolaka), Southeast Sulawesi in the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program in 2007. He is a permanent lecturer at the Indonesian Language Education Study Program, the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education USN- Kolaka. His activities as a lecturer in the field of linguistics have brought interest in the fields of linguistics and culture with several kinds of research and publications that have been carried out.

Among others of his publications is Romanticism in W.S. Rendra's *Surat Cinta*, published in Psychology and Education 58 (1) in 2021; *Humanistic Values in Metaphoric Expressions of Traditional Marriage in Tolaki Mekongga Kolaka*, published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 12 (8) in 2022; *The Shift of Lexicon in Traditional Technology System in Tolaki Community at Konawe District of Southeast Sulawesi published in Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 12 (5) in 2022; and *Evaluating the Suitability of Printed Materials in the Context of Online Learning* published in *XLinguae* 6 (2) in 2023; and *Students' Perception of Explicit and Implicit Methods in Learning Tenses in SMP DDI Mangkoso* published in *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 13 (6) in 2023. He is currently a student in the Linguistics Doctoral Program at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Hasanuddin University.

Rudi Karma has been a lecturer at the Indonesian Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Sembilanbelas November Kolaka University (USN Kolaka) since 2019. Before moving to USN Kolaka, from 2011 to 2019, he was a Permanent Lecturer at the College of Teacher Training and Education of Puangrimaggalatung Sengkang at the Indonesian Language Education Study Program. The last education achieved was a Master's (S2) at the Indonesian Language and Literature Education Study Program, Muhammadiyah University of Makassar. Apart from carrying out his primary duties as a lecturer in implementing the Tri Dharma of Higher Education, he also has additional duties as Head of the USN Kolaka Learning Development Center, one of the centres under the LPPM. Now, he is a GTK Assessor for the Ministry of Education and Culture in selecting Pre-Service PPGs and Prospective Teacher Teachers. The focus of the studies carried out so far is language and literature education in the scientific fields that have been consistently pursued since his undergraduate level.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 972-983, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.31

Designing a Needs-Based English Syllabus for Tour Guides in Saudi Arabia

Abuelgasim S. Mohammed*
Department of English Language, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, 11942, Saudi Arabia

Abdulaziz B. Sanosi
Department of English Language, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, 11942, Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—English for Specific Purposes (ESP) syllabuses based on students' needs are assumed to be interesting and motivating to students as they maximise language learning. This is because they contribute to preparing students for specific targets in their prospective profession or academic study. This study aimed at revealing Saudi tour guides target needs for English language, determining whether an existing ESP syllabus taught to tourism students in a public Saudi university meets these needs, and proposing an English for Tour Guides (ETG) to address those needs. The study adopted the qualitative approach by using an interview with four tourism companies' managers and document analysis. It draws on the results of the needs analysis (NA) reported by Aldosari et al. (2023) who investigated the target needs of about 50 Saudi tour guides for English. Results showed that the tour guides need speaking, listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. Introducing oneself and others, greeting, giving directions/instructions, and informing are the most recurrent language functions. In addition, we found that the syllabus that is taught to tour guides in a Saudi university does not meet their needs for English language. The study concluded by proposing an ETG syllabus based on the reported needs.**

***Index Terms*—ESP, English for tourism, needs analysis, ESP syllabus design**

I. Introduction

Teaching ESP at the tertiary level should aim at preparing students to be members of their future professional community. Thus, ESP courses at universities need to consider these students' future professional needs to be motivated to learn the language. An example of these is ETG or English for tourism (ET), a field in business English (Nguyen & Modehiran, 2023; Abdel Ghany & Abdel Latif, 2012). Ideally, these courses aim at preparing students by addressing their target workplace needs; they teach the language required in communication between individuals of various cultural backgrounds in varied situations and contexts (Al- Malki, 2023; Al- Malki et al., 2022a; Chamorro et al., 2021; Zahedpisheh & Saffari, 2017; Abdel Ghany & Abel Latif, 2012).

ETG or ET courses are taught at tertiary level worldwide due to the importance of the English language as a lingua franca. Abd Ghany and Adel Latif (2012) propose that good proficiency in English language is an essential factor in tour guides recruitment while weak competence prohibits appealing to tourists and maintaining their comfort. Nevertheless, there is evidence that undergraduate ETG/ET courses offered do not contribute to equipping students with the necessary skills required in their future target workplace (Al-Malki, 2023; Al- Malki et al., 2022a, 2022b; Chamorro et al., 2012; Al-Tarawneh & Osam, 2019; Abdel Ghany & Abdel Latif, 2012). Thus, ETG/ET courses currently offered to university students worldwide, including Saudi Arabia, do not cater for students' target needs.

In addition, several studies such as Aysu and Ozcan, 2021; Masyhud and Khioriyah, 2021; Montano and Corria, 2021; Dinamika and Siregar, 2016 allege to design an ETG syllabus, but they end only with reporting their needs analysis results. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to address Saudi tour guides' target needs for the English language as revealed by Aldosari et al. (2023) through realising those needs in an ETG syllabus. The study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are Saudi tour guides' target needs for the English language?
2. To what extent does the current syllabus taught to prospective Saudi tour guides at a public Saudi university meet their reported needs?
3. How can those tour guides' needs be fulfilled?

II. Literature Review

A. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

* Corresponding Author. Email: ab.ibrahim@psau.edu.sa

Language for specific purposes (LSP) is known as the instruction and research of a language based on the "communicative needs" of foreign language learners to meet certain work, academic, or professional requirements in which the language is used for a restricted rate of communicative events (Basturkmen & Elder, 2004). Similarly, Anthony (2018) defines ESP as an approach to teaching the language aiming at addressing recent academic and/ or professional needs of learners, emphasising the essential language; genres; and skills to meet these needs, and supporting learners in meeting these needs by utilizing general and/or specialization- related teaching materials and methods.

B. ESP Syllabus

A syllabus is a list of what is to be instructed (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) and what to be attained from the instruction and learning processes (Breen, 2001). Jordan (1997) proposes several factors that are essential for ESP syllabus design. These include needs, aims, means (staff, materials, equipment, facilities, time, and finance), and variables and constraints (limitations of the means). The syllabus's purpose is to break down material in teachable blocks. In this respect, Jordan (1997) points out that three elements are needed the first of which is content or product, skills and methods or processes to achieve the targets, and the content or syllabus type that is classified by Jordan (1997) to include content-based, skill-based, and method-based syllabus. Similarly, Richards (2017, 2001), Brown (1995), Nunan (1988), and Krahnke (1987) classified a syllabus into grammatical, functional, situational, notional, functional, lexical, task-based, topic-base, skill-based, and multi-layer syllabus.

An ESP syllabus has several aims (Fareen, 2018). It aims at enhancing students' demands and efficiencies in present and target situations. It also contributes to design learning experiences focusing on the learner. In addition, it familiarizes students with the English language needed in the present and target situations. Finally, ESP syllabus enables students to exercise profession-oriented tasks and skills appropriate to prepare them for employment.

C. Syllabus Design

Various models and steps for syllabus design have been proposed by curriculum design specialists such as Basturkmen (2010), Richards (2001, 2017), Dudley-Evans and St John (1998), Brown (1995), Graves (1996, 2000), Nunan (1988), and Hutchinson and Waters (1987). They provide design models or frameworks, which divide the process of syllabus design into components and some sub-processes. For instance, Brown (1995) suggests that designing a syllabus starts with needs analysis, formulation of objectives, testing, selection of materials, teaching, and evaluation.

D. Needs Analysis

NA is defined as an organized accumulation and analysis of all data important to define and validate a defensible curriculum (Brown, 2016, 1995). NA is considered the most crucial step in syllabus design (Richards, 2017, 2001; Brown, 2016). NA has several approaches such as present situation analysis (PSA) and target situation analysis (TSA). The former seeks to reveal students' current language proficiency level that Hutchinson and Waters (1987) call *lacks*, while the latter discloses the tasks for which students need the language (Brown, 2016) in future (*target needs or necessities*) depending on their importance and/ or usability. More importantly, Fareen (2018) points out that NA helps syllabus designers set their syllabus objectives leading to course content and specifications. Consequently, this contributes to planning target aspects of language, methodologies, content, genres, skills, and tasks required for language teaching.

E. Previous Studies

Previous studies have investigated tour guides' needs for English focusing on the importance of English to the job, target needs, and whether current ETG courses address students' needs. Regarding English language importance to tour guides, Al-Malki et al. (2023, 2022b), Chamorro et al. (2021) and Correa (2019) found that English is important to tour guides. As for tour guides present situation, Al-Malki et al. (2023) imparted that Saudi tour guides were weak in all language skills with speaking and listening in the first place. In terms of skills importance, Al-Malki et al. (2022b) and Masyhud and Khoiriyah (2021) agreed that the four skills are important to tour guides with speaking first followed by listening, reading, and writing in addition to vocabulary and grammar. Some language functions have been found to be important for tour guides. For example, Al-Malki et al. (2022b), Masyhud and Khoiriyah (2021) stated that introducing oneself and others, informing, apologising, and giving directions/instructions were the most important functions to tour guides. Al-Malki et al. (2023), Chamorro et al. (2021), Al-Tarawneh and Osam (2019), and Abdel Ghany and Abdel Latif (2012) agreed that ETG courses in KSA, Spain, Jordan, and Egypt do not meet students target needs.

Correa (2019) designed a syllabus for students of hotel and tourism management in Colombia based on NA results. Communicative competence was prioritised in the syllabus containing speaking, listening, technical vocabulary, and grammar. The syllabus also pays attention to listening, reading, and writing.

Previous studies primarily concentrated on the significance of language skills and their varying functions to ESP students. The logic aim of this research was anticipated to develop frameworks for creating syllabuses that cater to students' needs, but this goal is often not realized as most studies settle for providing a list of students' needs. Building on this, the present study will follow the path of earlier research by investigating the needs of tourism students in Saudi

Arabia and attempt to propose an ETG syllabus based on these findings.

III. Methodology

A. Design and Instruments

The current study adopted the qualitative design as it relies on three major sources of data the first of which is a previous NA study results i.e., (Aldosari et al., 2023), an interview with four tourism companies' managers, and document analysis.

(a). Aldosari et al. (2023) NA

Aldosari et al. (2023) study was a graduation project presented at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU). It was supervised by the co-author of the current study, while the first author was a member of the discussion panel. The generated article from the project is under consideration for publication in an indexed peer-reviewed journal. Aldosari et al. (2023) administered a questionnaire to 47 Saudi tour guides to explore the language skills needed by Saudi tour guides, the common language functions needed, and the linguistic obstacles facing them in performing their jobs well.

(b). The interview

We developed a structured interview to be conducted with employers at tourism companies in Saudi Arabia. It was divided into two sections the first of which aimed at collecting background information about the participants. It asked about the type of the company (public or private), interviewees' job title, and the total number of years of the company experience in the market. Section two covered the frequency of employees' use of English in their job, order of language skills importance, importance of some linguistic aspects, and some language functions frequency of use by tour guides. The last question focused on the interviewees' level of satisfaction regarding their tour guides' performance in these language functions.

B. Participants

We interviewed four randomly selected respondents from four tourism companies that are private ones. Three of the respondents were managers and the fourth was employees' affairs manager. Two of the companies were in the market for four years while the other two were ten years.

C. The Current Tour-Guide Syllabus

The tour guide syllabus in point is offered by the English Language Centre (ELC) in a Saudi public university. The course is taught to the students at the department of tourism and hotel management, College of Business Administration. The department aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for their future jobs and prepare nationally efficient tourism and hotel supervisors. One of the prospective jobs for the students is tour guides.

The students in this department study five English language courses, including the course "*ELCE 2211 English for Tourism*". This course is a four-hour credit one aiming at "provid[ing] students with the specific English including terminology, linguistic knowledge and communicative skills in tourism" (ELCE2211 Course Specifications (CS), 2022, p. 3). The textbook used in this course is Mol's *"English for Tourism and Hospitality in Higher Education Studies"* (2008), which is published by Garnet. The textbook contains 12 units covered in 136 pages. Its content is organised into three main sections, focusing on vocabulary, language skills, and academic skills. Each unit is centred on a title related to either tourism (units 1, 2, 5, and 9) or hotel management (units 3 and 8), as well as other topics such as computers, management, and business. The topics are primarily academic and offer strategies such as note-taking and academic writing. Listening and speaking skills are covered in six units, while the remaining six units are dedicated to reading and writing, ensuring an equal distribution of skills across the syllabus. Vocabulary development is a key feature across all 12 units, presented under different titles to enhance students' vocabulary. Additionally, pronunciation is addressed in three units, but there are no specific lessons devoted to direct grammar instruction, although some grammatical aspects are covered from a semantic perspective.

D. Data Analysis

Content analysis was used to analyse the interview data. The focus was to determine the order of the most significant language skills and functions based on their importance and reported extent of use. The resulting data will be compared to Aldosari's (2023) findings to identify the specific needs of tour guides. Results were then used to evaluate the current syllabus that is taught to tour guide students at this University.

E. The model for Syllabus Design

The proposed syllabus will be designed following Brown's (1995) model. Brown proposed six steps to design a syllabus that is relevant, achievable, and effective in meeting the needs of learners and stakeholders. These steps are (1) needs analysis; (2) setting goals and objectives; (3) language testing; (4) materials development; (5) language teaching planning; and (6) evaluation, Figure 1.

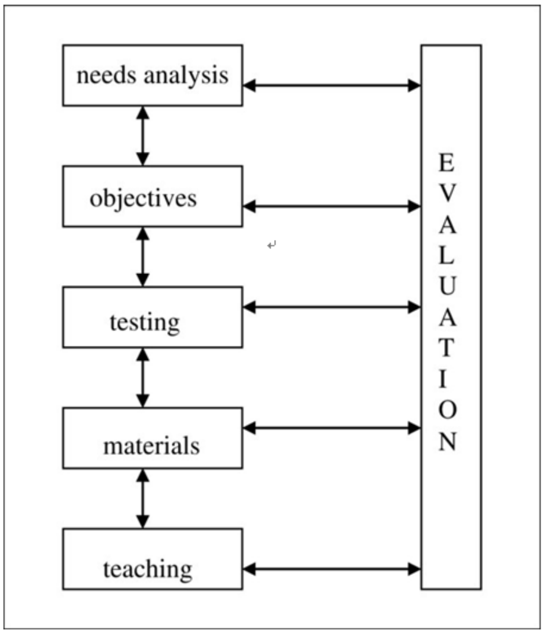


Figure 1. Syllabus Design Model (Brown, 1995, p. 20)

We selected Brown's model for several reasons. The first one is that the model is adaptable in syllabus design. The second reason is that it is widely used in syllabus design (Yassi & Hum, 2018). Third, Brown (1995) asserts that the model is based on foundational studies in the field authored by influential authors such as Strevens (1964, 1977), Taba (1991), and Richards and Rodgers (1982). Fourth, the model does not only assist teachers and administrators to make choices regarding the proposed steps, but it also guides them to implement these choices in a viable and flexible curriculum. The fifth reason refers to its effectiveness in helping teachers achieve any amalgamation of teaching activities appropriate for specific context. Finally, it helps students to learn consciously and attentively.

IV. RESULTS

This study seeks to analyse the English language needs of Saudi tour guides, compare them to the existing syllabus, and suggest an ESP syllabus based on these needs. This section presents the study's findings for each research question based on the data collection method used.

A. RQ1. What Are Saudi Tour Guides Target Needs for the English Language?

The answer to this question has been derived from two sources: Aldosari et al. (2023) and the interview conducted in the present study. The study revealed that the Saudi tour guides and their employers reported their needs for language skills, functions, and aspects as presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON BETWEEN THE NEEDS OF TOUR GUIDES AS REPORTED BY THE TOUR GUIDES AND THE EMPLOYERS (ORDERED BY IMPORTANCE)

Needs	**Tour Guides order**	**Employers order**
Required Tasks	Introducing oneself/ others Giving Directions Giving Information Offering Help	Greeting Introducing Oneself Giving Directions/instructions Informing
Needed Skills	Speaking Listening Writing Reading	Listening Speaking Reading Writing
Needed Aspects	Vocabulary Pronunciation Grammar Spelling	Vocabulary Pronunciation Grammar Spelling

The results revealed that the two participant groups ranked the required tasks and needed skills differently. The distinction lies in the fact that employers consider greeting to be important, while tour guides do not mention it. Conversely, tour guides consider offering help to be important, while employers neglect it. However, both groups agreed on the remaining tasks.

When it comes to the ranking of necessary skills, the order is completely different. However, both groups ranked listening and speaking as the first two, while reading and writing were ranked as the last two. Additionally, the two groups also agreed on the order of linguistic aspects, with both considering vocabulary to be the most important and spelling to be the least.

B. RQ2. To What Extent Does the Current Syllabus Taught to Prospective Saudi Tour Guides at a Public Saudi University Meet Their Reported Needs?

The second question is answered by comparing the above results with ELCE2211 English for Tourism syllabus which is currently taught in a Saudi university. Upon analysing the syllabus manually, the results show a huge discrepancy between the needs as reported above by the two participant groups and how they are currently addressed by the syllabus. To clarify this discrepancy, Table 2 demonstrates the distribution of the investigated items in the syllabus.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON BETWEEN THE REPORTED NEEDS AND THE ELCE2211 SYLLABUS

Category	Items	Including units	Activities
Language Skills	Listening and speaking	1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11	26 (15 Listening, 11 speaking)
	Reading and writing	2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12	27 (14 reading, 13 writing)
Language Aspects	Vocabulary	All units	38
	Pronunciation	2, 3, 5, 11	4
	Grammar	Not included	Not included
	Spelling	Not included	Not included
Required Tasks	Greeting	Not included	Not included
	Introducing oneself/ others	Not included	Not included
	Giving Directions	Not included	Not included
	Giving Information	Not included	Not included
	Offering Help	Not included	Not included

C. RQ3. How Can Those Tour Guides' Needs Be Fulfilled?

Based on the previous literature and the findings of this study concerning the first two RQs, we propose an ETG syllabus to meet the target group reported needs. As mentioned earlier, the syllabus is planned following Brown's (1995) model. It is worth mentioning that the syllabus is entitled "English for Tour for Tour Guides (ETG)", and the target group is tourism students in KSA. The syllabus is multi-layered one providing room for functional, skill-based, lexical, and structural strands to appear to fulfil the target group needs for English. The proposed syllabus is structured as follows.

(a). Step 1 Needs Analysis

The syllabus draws on the Al-Dosari et al. (2023) NA, our interview, and ELCE2211 analysis results regarding Saudi tour guides needs for English language in their career. Table 3 below presents results.

TABLE 3
SAUDI TOUR GUIDES TARGET NEEDS (ORDERED BY IMPORTANCE)

Language Skills	Linguistic aspects	Language functions
Speaking	vocabulary	Introducing oneself/others/ Greeting
Listening	Pronunciation	Giving directions/instructions
Writing	Grammar	Informing
Reading	Spelling	Offering help
		Making suggestions
		Apologizing
		Asking for permission

(b). Step 2 Goals and Objectives

Goals refer to broad declarations on what subject matter or skills that students must acquire to realize a certain aim. Brown (1995) states that "[goals] focus on what the syllabus hopes to achieve" (p. 71). Objectives refer to statements that specify knowledge, skills, and/or behaviour that students are expected to know or do at the end of an educational programme. Brown (1995) prefers to call instructional objectives learning outcomes as they indicate what we expect learners to be able to do after learning specific items.

Primarily, this proposed syllabus aims at developing tourism students' English language communication skills. Emphasis is on speaking, listening, writing, reading, vocabulary, and grammar as essential components that enable tourism students' to effectively communicate in their future work. The goals of the syllabus are to:

1. Develop students speaking and listening skills in tourism-related context.
2. Introduce students to the language functions such as introducing oneself and giving directions required in the tourism field.
3. Present some linguistic aspects such as vocabulary and grammar in tourism- oriented context.
4. Equip students with the communicative skills such as presentation required in their filed.
5. Assist students write and read in the context of tourism.

Table 4 shows the proposed LOs on the domain of Knowledge, Skills, and Values.

TABLE 4
SYLLABUS LEARNING OUTCOMES

1	Knowledge: Students will be able to:
1.1.	Recall vocabulary related to tourism.
1.2	Recognize fundamental grammar necessary for constructing accurate sentences and expressions within the tourism industry.
2	Skills: Students will be able to:
2.1.	Communicate in English language orally and in writing using appropriate language functions required by tour guides applying correct grammar, and vocabulary.
2.2.	Listen actively to spoken English in tourism specific situations.
2.3.	Use tourism-related vocabulary and communicative skills while speaking and writing.
2.4.	Produce various spoken and written structures related to tourism.
2.5.	Interpret and respond to touristic texts through active reading.
3	Values: Students will be able to:
3.1.	Show self-dependency when learning.
3.2	Demonstrate effective communicative skills, particularly in listening and speaking.

(c). Step 3 Language Testing /Assessment

Two types of testing can generally be mentioned. The first is norm-referenced test aiming at contrasting students' performance in a specific course to each other. This type is formative assessment targets improving students' performance in the course. The second type is criterion-referenced tests that measure the quality of course content that students have acquired; they aim at assessing students' achievement of learning outcomes (Brown, 1995). Testing is beneficial as it informs about NA, goals, and learning outcomes achievement. To assess students, the following tools are recommended:

- Role plays
- Presentations
- Quizzes
- Assignments
- Midterms
- Final Exam

TABLE 5
ALIGNMENT OF LOS WITH ASSESSMENT METHODS

Domain	LO	Assessment method					
1.Knowledge		Role plays	Presentation	Quizzes	Assignment	Midterms	Final exam
	1.1	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	1.2			✓	✓	✓	✓
2.Skills	2.1	✓		✓	✓		✓
	2.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.4	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	2.5			✓	✓	✓	✓
3.Values	3.1.	✓	✓		✓		
	3.2	✓	✓				

(d). Step 4 Syllabus

Based on the NA results, the proposed syllabus scope and sequence are displayed in Table 6 (Appendix A). The syllabus sequence is based on items/topic importance and relevance.

(e). Step 5 Language Teaching

The syllabus recommends employing the communicative approach with focus on learners' engagement. Various activities prioritizing oral communication will be used to assist students develop their language skills while acquiring new tourism-related vocabulary. Accurate language production is also emphasised. Furthermore, students are encouraged to indulge in critical analysis of the language to be able to decide on their language learning. They are also encouraged to be responsible for their own learning to maximise language acquisition. Through this approach, emphasis is also on building students' self-confidence in speaking, listening, and vocabulary acquisition and usage, and thus attains the desired level of English proficiency. This approach calls for adopting a variety of teaching strategies promoting cooperative learning. By integrating these practices, students are better equipped to navigate real-world communication situations and excel in their language development, and consequently their future job.

(f). Step 6 Evaluation

Evaluation refers to the collection and analysis of appropriate data to enhance the syllabus and to judge its efficiency. It is a type of ongoing NA relying on more accurate data (Brown, 1995). Evaluation may use all NA methods to appraise the syllabus efficacy, but it can also use data collected during objectives formation, writing, and using tests, developing, or adapting materials, and teaching (Brown, 1995). Through continuous collection, analysis, and synthesis of data, evaluation aims at enhancing syllabus elements, assuring its quality, and conserving the syllabus (Brown, 1995).

To evaluate the current syllabus, students' results in the various types of proposed assessment methods, students after course survey, instructors' feedback, and peer observations will be used. The results will be cross-checked against NA results and syllabus learning outcomes. Then improvement plans will be proposed based on the evaluation results.

V. Discussion

A. Saudi Tour Guides Target Needs for English Language

(a). Language Functions

The current study revealed that the language functions in Aldosari et al.'s (2023) and in our interview are all frequently used by Saudi tour guides in their job but in diverse ranking. For example, introducing oneself and others was ranked the first by the tour guides in Aldosari et al.'s (2023) study and it was ranked second by our interviewees, giving directions/instructions was the second by the tour guides and third by the employers. As for the other functions, the two groups of participants agreed on their frequency of use. Ultimately, these functions appear to be necessary for the Saudi tour guides despite the obvious variation in ranking them. Marin (2022), Chamorro et al. (2021), and Al-Tarawneh and Osam (2019) point out that language functions are crucial for tour guides as the job involves direct communication with tourists who speak English. This inconsistency in ranking the functions seems natural due to the respondents' concern. The tour guides are concerned about making themselves more efficient in their job, and the employers think of making their customers more comfortable and welcomed. The interviewees agreed that greeting is the most common function. Overall, the findings imply the respondents' engagement, consideration, and awareness of their profession requirements. Thus, Saudi tour guides frequently use the following functions in their job: *greeting, introducing oneself and others, giving directions/instructions, informing, offering help, making suggestions, apologising, and asking for permission*.

The results are compatible with those of Al-Malki et al. (2022b) who found that introducing oneself, informing, and apologising were common among their respondents, Chomorro et al. (2021) who revealed that greeting, introducing oneself, giving directions/instructions, and apologising were the most reiterated language functions , and Masyhud and Khoriyah (2021) who disclosed that the most constant language functions among their tour guides were introducing oneself, giving information, and giving directions/instructions.

(b). Language Skills Importance

The most important skill is listening followed by speaking, reading, and writing on the one hand. On the other hand, Aldosari et al. (2023) revealed that speaking is the most important skill followed by listening, writing, and reading. Again, conflicting needs appear in this result. It is possible that various NA information sources articulate different needs (Dudley-Evans & St Johns, 1998; Sardi, 1997) as in our case here. This could be attributed to the respondents' views and experience. The tour guides may feel that it is necessary to be able to speak to the tourists they serve as they always describe places and sites to tourists, but the employers believe that listening to tourists is more important than speaking to them as they seek to make their customers feel that their voice is important. Nonetheless, the two groups agreed on the importance of these skills, so they must be covered in any syllabus targeting tour guides.

As for reading and writing/writing and reading, they appear to be less important than speaking and listening. Once more needs conflict is obvious. But it is worth noting that this conflict does not call for excluding certain needs from being encompassed in the ESP syllabus that we intend to propose. This is because the two teams of participants agreed on the use of these skills and the language functions, as stated in the previous section, but they reported various ranking and frequency of use. Unlike Sardi (1997) who excluded a set of needs due to conflict with another, our results do not encourage us to rule out any needs. Obviously, speaking is mostly needed as the tour guide's main task is to use various language functions orally. Additionally, since tour guides need to communicate face-to-face with tourists, they need to listen to their clients and respond immediately. So, there is a sort of continuous interaction to the extent that it is difficult to prioritise speaking to listening or vice versa; this can only be determined by the situation. Reading and writing are also necessary for tour guides (Marin, 2022) to perform some administrative tasks, obtaining information about their clients and sites, or communicating with tourists in writing. These findings accord with what Al-Malki et al. (2022b) and Masyhud and Khoiriyah (2021) found. They announced that speaking and listening were more important than writing and reading, and listening, and speaking seconded by reading and writing, respectively.

(c). Linguistic Aspects

Regarding the importance of the linguistic aspects, the results of our NA agree with the outcomes of Aldosari et al. (2023). We found that vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and spelling are important in this order. The results suggest the respondents' awareness of the role that these aspects play in language learning and proficiency. Dudley-Evans and St Johns (1998) suggest that any NA is required to pay attention to specific field vocabulary, grammar and discourse feature needed to perform target tasks. According to Marin (2022), Anthony (2018), Richards (2017), and Brown (2016), these linguistic aspects, particularly vocabulary and grammar, act as core for any ESP syllabus, and EFL learners feel comfortable when they learn them. Thus, they will be preferred in any NA and consequently ESP syllabus. Moreover, the results imply the deep-rooted impact of structural/grammatical and lexical syllabuses on EFL learners who are more familiar to these aspects than any other since they began studying the English language. Our findings match those of Al-Malki et al. (2022b) who found that vocabulary and grammar were important to their respondents.

(d). Frequency of English Language Use in Tour Guide Profession

The current study showed that English language is always used by tour guides in KSA. English is considered the language of science and international business due to its status as a global language after the Second World War (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Tourism involves travelling from one country to another, this lends more importance to the English language to the extent that it acts as a Lingua Franca. This highlights the benefit of English to tourism to the extent that Al-Tarawneh and Osam (2019) suggest that tour guides who are proficient in English language are considered a key in attracting tourists who visit a country. Al-Malki (2022b), Chamorro et al. (2021), and Correa (2019) findings agree on the importance of English language to tour guides' profession, and this is compatible to ours.

(e). Employers' Satisfaction With Their Employees' Performance in the Language Functions

Our results imparted that the interviewees were *somewhat satisfied* with their employees' performance in the language functions. This implies a need to note that this is not only about the mentioned language functions, but it also entails their general proficiency in English language. The result also indicates weakness in the previous courses that the tour guides had studied during their tertiary level. It seems that these courses were not effective in preparing the students for their future careers. This may be because these courses are not based on any sort of NA. Consequently, students might not be motivated to learn the language. Anthony (2018), Richards (2017) and Brown (2016) agree that for any course to be effective and motivating, it needs to meet students' needs.

B. To What Extent does the Current Syllabus (ELCE2211) Taught to Prospective Saudi Tour Guides at a Public Saudi University Meet Their Reported Needs?

The textbook "*English for Tourism and Hospitality in Higher Education Studies*" used by ELCE2211 contains 12 units each of which covers a specific topic. It covers speaking and listening skills in six units and reading and writing in six units as well. Additionally, it covers vocabulary and language focus. In the vocabulary section, there are items related to vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. The activities in the language focus deal with the four skills and they are academically oriented, however, some of them are common core, and they can be useful in any context. There are a few active listening and presentation activities.

Thus, the textbook is beneficial for academic purposes, and it does contribute little to preparing students for future profession. Moreover, almost all the language functions revealed in the NA are absent from the textbook; pronunciation and grammar are not well covered in terms of quantity and items. In summary, the textbook taught to prospective tour guides does not meet their needs for English language. This is because it adopts English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) approach, an area of EAP focusing on certain fields to prepare students for their academic studies. The aim is to equip them with the skills necessary for academic study; it contributes nothing to future careers (Bastrukmen, 2010).

In our case, the aim is preparing students for their prospective profession, tour guides. The results imply that selecting commercial coursebooks without being informed with solid NA results may lead to choosing an inappropriate textbook. Furthermore, the result strongly suggests that universities must incline to design ESP syllabuses that are consistent with their students' needs although this is time-consuming and expensive in terms of training staff in this area. More importantly, the result calls for proposing an ESP syllabus that meets the reported needs. Thus, the ESP syllabus taught to tour guides sample does not meet their target needs for English. It seems that this case is not confined to the Saudi context, but it is common Worldwide. In Jordan, Al-Tarweneh and Osam (2019), in Egypt, Abdel Ghany and Abdel Latif (2012), and Chamorro et al. (2021) in Spain found that ESP courses taught to tour guides do not prepare students for their career.

C. How Can Those Needs Be Fulfilled?

Our study revealed employers' dissatisfaction regarding their tour guides' performance in English language reflecting that the ESP course taught to tour guides during their undergraduate study did not prepare them for their future career. In addition, we also found that the ELCE2211 does not meet prospective tour guides needs for English language. This finding suggests a necessity to propose an ESP syllabus, English for Tour Guides (EGT), to match the reported needs.

Adopting the ESP approach in designing syllabuses is common and in most cases, and it is recommended, particularly for specialised students (Anthony, 2018). ESP syllabuses have several features the first of which is that they address students' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Accordingly, this makes them learner-centred, thus, they attract learners' attention and interest. Furthermore, Carter (1983) states that ESP syllabuses impel communicative tasks through authentic materials and activities relating to the field it serves. In addition, they are beneficial as they promote self-direction by enabling students to be free in deciding what, when, and how to learn and consequently they create autonomous language learners (Carter, 1983). Moreover, an ESP syllabus accelerates learning of required linguistic aspects because they are demanded by the learners. Also, it results in efficient learning as they maximise use of learning resources which are oriented toward previously specified linguistic aspects and language skills. Ultimately, this results in appropriate use of the language in professional future tasks identified in the NA.

Considering ESP syllabus benefits, this study proposes a syllabus that meets Saudi tour guides' needs. This outcome is similar to Correa's (2019) initiative by proposing an ESP syllabus for Colombian tour guides. The syllabus contains topics related to tourism, grammar that is related to the tasks and activities, lexicon/ technical vocabulary, and communicative tasks. Correa (2019) also provides the learning objectives, methodology, materials, and assessment plan.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

The current study attempted to discover Saudi tour guides target needs represented in importance of English language in their job, language skills; linguistic aspects, the language functions they need, and employers' satisfaction level from their tour guides performance in English language. The study also tried to reveal the extent to which the current ESP syllabus taught to prospective tour guides in a Saudi public university meet their actual needs for English and how we can address those needs.

Based on the results, we can conclude that English language is frequently required by Saudi tour guides in their job. Moreover, they need speaking and listening followed by reading and writing. The linguistic aspects that our tour guides need are vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and spelling. Our data analysis showed that the current syllabus, *ELCE2211* is not consistent with the tour guides' needs. Finally, to bridge this gap, the study recommends an ESP syllabus for prospective Saudi tour guides.

This study suffers from some limitations. It relied only on verbal data collection tools, an interview and document analysis, which may not be sufficient to provide insightful data. Adopting a questionnaire could have offered data from a larger number of participants who can provide varied data. Another limitation is that the study confined itself to one English for tourism syllabus. Investigating more than one English for tourism syllabus may present more comprehensive information about the status of English for tourism in Saudi universities.

The study recommends that tourism programme should conduct NA among their students to meet them. It is also recommended that Saudi universities must tend to tailor ESP course based on their students' needs. If it is preferred to use commercial materials, universities should choose the textbook that addresses students' needs. Finally, the study recommends that the proposed ETG syllabus for Saudi tour guides to be taught to tourism students Saudi universities.

Appendix A

Table 6
The Proposed Syllabus

Unit	Topic	Listening	Function	Grammar	Reading	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Speaking	Writing
1	Tour Guide Career	Tour Guides Qualities	Introducing yourself and others Welcoming/ Greeting tourists	Verb to be Pronouns (my, his) This/That	What does a tour guide do?	Job related vocabulary. Suffixes and prefixes	Phonetic alphabet/symbols	Tour guide job skills Describing a job	
2	About KSA	Saudi Arabia	Giving instructions	Imperative Modal verbs 1: Will, shall, may Past simple		History, geography vocabulary Noun-forming suffixes	English short vowels	Presentation 1: getting started Talking about history	Writing a CV
3	Religion in KSA	The Great Mosque of Mecca	Giving information	There is/are Question forms Adjectives	Religion in Saudi: A guide to Islam	Religious places Adjectives Adjective-forming suffixes	English long vowels	Informing about Islamic places Presentation 2: the main part	
4	Tourism 1 Attractions	Places to visit in KSA	Offering help	Comparative/ Superlative adjectives 1		Tourist destinations Sightseeing Verb-forming suffixes	Transcription Syllables	Describing a place Comparing places	Emails 1: Starting the message Attachments Word combinations with 'email' Requests
5	Tourism Attractions 2	Riyadh Attractions	Making suggestions	Present simple tense 1 Passive voice	al-Masmak Palace	History vocabulary Prefixes and their meaning	Diphthongs	Justifying suggestions Answering questions Presentation 3: Charts and graphs	
6	Tourism Attractions 3	Museums in KSA	Apologizing Dealing with complaints	Modal verbs 2: can, could, must, have to Comparative/ superlative adjectives 2		Noun- forming suffixes Museums vocabulary	Word stress 1 Online dictionaries	Explaining safety procedures Arranging appointments Presentation 4: Comparing trends	Emails 2: Good and bad news Ending emails Email and text language
7	Festivals	Riyadh Season	Asking for permission	Expressing future actions	Riyadh season: An overview	Festival and celebrations Noun-forming Suffixes	Word stress 2	Giving Programme information Answering questions	
8	Future of Tourism in KSA	Tourism and Vision 2030	Saying goodbye Asking for opinions	Expressing Future actions		Tourism terms	Connected speech	Talking about future plans	Writing tourism information leaflet

APPENDIX B MATERIAL SOURCES

WEBSITES

Unit	Section	Source
1	Listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5MeQc70xNs
	Reading	https://www.careerexplorer.com/careers/tour-guide/
2	Listening	https://www.britannica.com/place/Saudi-Arabia
	Writing CV	https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/business-english/business-magazine/writing-good-cv
3	listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4pymQ3WPnI
4	listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XCI_gP6m2E
5	listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ht6pLR3vcY
	Reading	https://www.visitsaudi.com/en/see-do/destinations/riyadh/al-masmak-palace-in-riyadh
6	Listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PtM6VLkKvKQ
	Vocabulary	https://www.kaplaninternational.com/blog/learning-languages/eng/museum-vocabulary-list-english-student-tips
7	Listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jLWojYmb5s
	Reading	https://blog.wego.com/riyadh-season/
	Vocabulary	https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/344242-festivals-vocabulary-activities-document.pdf
8	Listening	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_4_lNO_RK2c
	Vocabulary	https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms

BOOKS

Language functions

Leo. S. (2016). *English for professional tour guides*. Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama

Van Ek, J., A., & J., L., M., Trim. (1998). Threshold 1990. CUP.

Yates, J. (2012). *Practice makes perfect: English conversation*. MC Graw Hill.

Grammar

Murphy, R., (n.d). *Basic grammar in use* (4th edition). CUP.

Pronunciation

Roach, Peter. (2004). *English phonetics and phonology*. CUP.

Presentation & Email writing

Mascull, B., (2010). *Business vocabulary in use elementary to pre-intermediate*. CUP

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors extend their appreciation to Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University for funding this research work through the project number (2023/02/25177).

REFERENCES

[1] Abdel Ghany, S., Y., M., & M. Abdel Latif. (2012). English language preparation of tourism and hospitality undergraduates in Egypt: Does it meet their future workplace requirements? *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *11*(2), 93 – 100. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2012.05.001

[2] Aldosari, A., Aldosari, B., Aldosari, M., Alenezi, M., Alajmi, R, Alsamaeel, R & Sanosi, A. (2023). *English language for tourism sector in the light of Saudi Vision 2030: A needs analysis approach*. [Graduation project], Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj.

[3] Al-Malki, E. A. (2023). English language and communicative proficiency of Saudi tourism and hospitality students: A present situation analysis. *Arab World English Journal*, *14*(1), 458 - 475. https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol14no1.29

[4] Al-Malki, E. A., Al-Harth, A. A., Javid, C. Z., Farooq, M. U., & Algethami, G. F. (2022a). Comparative determination of communicative competence of Saudi students of English for tourism and hospitality (SSETH) to develop ESP course content. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(4), 46 - 62. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.4.3

[5] Al-Malki, E. A., Javid, C. Z., Farooq, M. U., Algethami, G. F., & Al-Harthi, A. A. (2022b). Analysis of the English language needs of the Saudi tourism workforce: A first step into designing ESP teaching materials. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, *21*(2), 72 - 88. https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.21.2.5

[6] Al-Tarawneh, M., Q., & U., V., Osam. (2019). Tourism English training at the tertiary level in Jordan: Reality and expectations from a university context. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, *24*, 155 – 167. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2019.02.005

[7] Anthony, L. (2018). *Introducing English for Specific Purposes*. Routledge.

[8] Aysu, S., & H., F., Özcan. (2021). Needs analysis in curriculum design: Language needs of tourism students. *Sakarya University Journal of Education*, *11*(2), 305 - 326. https://doi.org/10.19126/suje.854993

[9] Basturkmen, H. & C. Elder. (2004). The practice of LSP. In A. Davis, & C. Elder (Eds.), *The handbook of applied linguistics* (pp. 672 – 694). Blackwell.

[10] Basturkmen, H. (2010). *Developing courses in English for Specific Purposes*. Palgrave Macmillan.

[11] Breen, M. P. (2001). Syllabus design. In R. Carter and D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 151 -159). Cambridge University Press.

[12] Brown, J. D. (2016). *Introducing needs analysis and English for Specific Purposes*. Routledge.

[13] Brown, J. D. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum: A systematic approach to programme development*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
[14] Carter, D. (1983). Some propositions about ESP. *The ESP Journal*, *2*(2), 131–137. https://doi.org/10.1016/0272-2380(93)90003-P
[15] Chamorro, G., Vázquez-Amador, M., & Garrido-Hornos, M. D. (2021). ESP for tourism: Does it meet employers' needs and prepare students for the workplace. In L. Escobar, & A. I. Moreno (Eds.), *Mediating specialized knowledge, and L2 abilities* (pp. 153 -190). Springer.
[16] Correa, J., S., A. (2019). *Guidelines and syllabus proposal for the hotel and tourism management programme at Fundación Universitario Para El Desarrollo Humano – UNINPAHU* (Publication No. 10554/40837) [Graduation Thesis, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana]. Institutional Repository - Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. https://repository.javeriana.edu.co/handle/10554/40837
[17] Course Specifications. (2022). ELCE2211 English for Tourism. English Language Centre, Umm Al-Qura University. Retrieved August 8, 2023, from https://uqu.edu.sa/elc/130971
[18] Dinamika, S. G., & E., B., Siregar. (2016). Developing English syllabus for tourism management students. *Proceedings of the Fourth International Seminar on English Language and Teaching (ISELT-4)*. *4*, pp. 323 - 327. Padang, Indonesia: English Department, Universitas Negeri Padang.
[19] Dudley-Evans, T., & M. J. St John. (1998). *English for Specific Purposes: A multi- disciplinary approach*. CPU.
[20] Fareen, J., A. (2018). Decision making in designing a needs-based syllabus for specific purposes. *Language Forum*, *44*(1-2), 8 – 21.
[21] Graves, C. (1996). Teachers as course developers. In C. Graves (Ed.), *Teachers as course developers* (pp. 1 – 11). Cambridge University Press.
[22] Graves, C. (2000). *Designing language courses: A guide for teachers*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
[23] Hutchinson, T., & A. Waters. (1987). *English for specific purposes: A learning- centred approach.* Cambridge University Press.
[24] Jordan, R. R. (1997). *English for Academic Purposes: A guide and resources book for teachers.* CUP.
[25] Krahnke, K. (1987). *Approaches to syllabus design for foreign language teaching.* Prentice- Hall Inc.
[26] Marin, C. G. (2022). English for tourism: Course structure and methodology. *Seria Ştiinţe Filologice. Limbi Străine Aplicate*, 1, 182 - 186. https://doi.org/10.52744/AUCSFLSA.2022.01.19
[27] Masyhud, M., & K., Khoiryah. (2021). Developing ESP materials for tourism industry in Malang. *Professional Journal of English Education*, *4*(3), 446 - 456. https://doi.org/10.22460/project.v4i3.p446-456
[28] Montaño, E. D., & Corrá, R. N. (2021). A theme- based syllabus to teach an ESP course to tourism workers. *Journal for Research Scholars and Professionals of English Language Teaching*, *5*(26), 1 - 14.
[29] Nguyen, D., T., & P., Modehiran. (2023). English for tour operators and tour guides: Learning needs from stakeholders' voices. *The Scholar: Human Science*, *15*(2), 207 – 217. https://doi.org/10.14456/shserj.2023.47
[30] Nunan, D. (1988). *Syllabus design*. Oxford University Press.
[31] Richards, J. (2017). *Curriculum design in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
[32] Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
[33] Sadri, C. (1997). Needs-based syllabus design for students of English in Hungarian technical universities. *ASP la revue du GERAS*, *15*(18), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.3168
[34] Yassi, A. & K., S., IP., Hum. (2018). *Syllabus design of English language teaching*. Prenadamedia Gro
[35] Zahedpisheh, N., Z., B., & N., Saffari. (2017). English for tourism and hospitality purposes (ETP). *English Language Teaching*, *10*(9), 86 - 94. http://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v10n9p86

Abuelgasim S. Mohammed was born in Sudan. He got his BA in English language from the Department of English Language, Faculty of Education, University of Khartoum (U of K). He was appointed as a teaching assistant at the Department of English Language, U of K where he taught general English and ESP courses. He was the secretary of the department for several years in 2001, he was awarded his MA in English language and promoted to lecturer. In 2001, he was one the main contributors to establishing the English Language Institute (ELI) at U of K and worked as head of the postgraduate unit. He initiated the CTEFL, MATEFL, and ELS Diploma at ELI. He got his PhD in 2016 and was promoted to assistant professor.

Currently, he is a staff member at the Department of English Language, College of Science & Humanities, Hawtat Bani Tamim. He is the male section coordinator, and a member of the department board, curriculum committee, academic accreditation committee, and students affairs committee.

Dr. Mohammed has published several research articles such as "Applied Linguistics Research in Saudi Arabia: A Content Analysis", "The Impact of Metalanguage in the EFL Learners Grammar Recognition", "Saudi EFL University Students Readiness for Autonomous Language Learning", and "Needs Analysis Research in the Arab World (2000 – 2019): Contexts and Data Collection Instruments and Sources Triangulation". Additionally, he attended several training sessions and workshops.

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9791-0905

Abdulaziz B. Sanosi was born in Sudan and studied English and linguistics at the University of Khartoum, then he got his PhD in English applied linguistics from Omdurman Islamic University, Sudan. He also studied several courses and attended several workshops and training sessions, on corpus linguistics, NLP, and language analysis.

Currently, he is a lecturer at the Department of English Language at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. He teaches applied and theoretical linguistics courses plus doing other administrative tasks related to quality assurance, academic advising, and field training. He is also a certified eLearning trainer and frequently provides training on eLearning applications and tools. His research interests include corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and CALL. He is a compiler and cofounder of several learner and specialized corpora designed to explore the English language applications in different registers, such as academic writing and social media.

Dr. Sanosi published several articles on corpus linguistics, CALL, and Applied linguistics. His most cited research is on topics such as the effect of eLearning tools on language acquisition, the use of Arab academic writers of specific linguistics features, and discursive strategies by EFL learners and speakers. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3447-2818

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 984-993, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.32

On the Pragmatic Functions of the Idiomatic Expression ‘*Tamam*’ in Jordanian Arabic

Isra'a Al- Hanaktah
The University of Jordan, Jordan

Jihad M. Hamdan
The University of Jordan, Jordan

***Abstract*—This study investigates the pragmatic functions of the idiomatic expression *Tamam* (lit. ‘complete’) as used by university students who speak Jordanian Arabic (JA). To this end, the researchers developed an electronic questionnaire that contained 14 different situations/contexts, each illustrating one pragmatic function as identified and determined by the researchers. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via the WhatsApp application to 164 BA Jordanian students at The University of Jordan. The students were requested to pass intuitive judgements on the acceptability of these situations and related functions. The results showed that nine of the proposed functions were accepted by 70 per cent or more of the subjects, while five were accepted by 51-68 per cent. The former set of functions included expressing approval, seeking confirmation, showing understanding, expressing appreciation, showing joy and pleasure, showing tolerance, expressing sadness and submission, reassuring, and checking the attention of the addressee. The latter included expressing dissatisfaction, ending a conversation and expressing impatience, ridiculing/mocking, threatening, and expressing shock and disappointment. The study recommends that future research may examine the acceptability of such scenarios and functions among older generations (45+) with the aim of comparing the two aforementioned groups. Future research may also investigate the pragmatic functions of other idiomatic expressions in JA and other Arabic dialects.**

***Index Terms*—context, discourse markers, Jordanian Arabic (JA), pragmatics, the idiomatic expression ‘*Tamam*’**

I. INTRODUCTION

The current study investigates the pragmatic functions of a widely used discourse marker (DM) in Jordanian Arabic (JA), namely *Tamam* (lit. ‘complete’). Through reviewing previous literature in this research area, it has been observed that the word *Tamam* is also used in Turkish. For example, Ruhi (2013) presented a corpus-driven, qualitative investigation of the interactional marker *Tamam* in Spoken Turkish. It was found that *Tamam* has many pragmatic functions or meanings in the Turkish language. Three of these functions are to express approval, to show understanding, and to check the attention of the addressee. These functions are also attested in JA, as will be discussed later.

It is worth noting that Arabic discourse markers have been the focus of a number of studies (e.g. Al Harahsheh & Kanakri, 2013; Al Azzawi, 2015; Al Khalidy, 2017; Al Rousan et al., 2020; Hamdan & Abu Rumman, 2020; Hamdan, 2021, 2022; Hamdan & Hammouri, 2022). As far as the authors of the current study are aware, the word *Tamam* as used in Jordanian Arabic, has not been examined either partially or fully in earlier literature, and thus the current paper aims to fill in this research gap.

Pragmatics deals with utterances that reflect specific events. It indicates the intentional acts of speakers at certain times and places, typically involving language (Davis, 1991, p. 37). Pragmatics also analyzes language in use as well as examining the purposes and functions of linguistic forms (Brown & Yule, 1983). Moreover, it focuses on the study of language in both spoken and written modes (Yule, 2010). Yule (1996) defined pragmatics as “the study of meaning communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a listener or reader” (p. 3). Therefore, its focus lies on what people mean by their utterances, rather than on what words and phrases mean by themselves. Additionally, Newmark (1988) argues that pragmatic research does not only try to understand written and spoken forms of words, but it also intends to help people grasp the intended meaning of the writer and speaker because users do not always tend to say what they mean in a direct and explicit way. Therefore, there are different interpretations in different contexts for the same message. Speakers of a certain language sometimes imply something beyond the words they use in their daily conversation, and what determines the real meaning of a word is the context itself (Lieber, 2009). In an early article, Fraser (1990) distinguished between two types of sentence meaning; pragmatic meaning which relates to speaker’s intention (illocutionary meaning), and content meaning which highlights that every sentence conveys a single message. In the same vein, Hamdan and Abu Rumman (2020) reiterated that context plays a key role in determining and identifying the meaning of both spoken and written discourse.

Discourse markers are a clear example of pragmatic devices that are often used in conversation interaction. The functional component of discourse markers includes implicit and explicit pragmatic roles in both written and spoken discourse, and the pragmatic meaning of discourse markers can be attained from the conceptual context (Moore, 2007). Therefore, discourse markers do not only carry semantic content, but they also have pragmatic, expressive, and textual functions (Schifrin, 1987).

Al-Harahsheh and Kanakri (2013) studied the pragmatic functions of the Jordanian spoken Arabic DM *ṯayyib* ‘okay’, ‘fine’, ‘good’ and its cognate *ṯabb*. They state that these two linguistic terms convey many different pragmatic functions such as, to mark backchannel with what precedes it, to mean ‘stop’ or ‘let us try to understand the matter’, and to show an objection to what has been said.

In a related study, Al Azzawi (2015) examined the use of *ʕa:di*. He concluded that this DM conveys a large number of functions such as support and sympathy, consolation, mitigation and encouragement, acceptance of a proposal, disapproval, reprimand and indignation, politeness and courtesy, mild criticism and sarcasm.

Using a YouTube series, Al Khalidy (2017) investigated the pragmatic functions of the word *ta:lʕ* in Jordanian Spoken Arabic. He concluded that this discourse marker has eight different functions, such as ‘going’, ‘going out’, ‘hearable’, and ‘appear’.

Three years later, Al Rousan et al. (2020) investigated the pragmatic functions of *bas* in JA. The findings indicated that *bas* has 16 pragmatic functions. These include initiating a topic, signaling topic change, closing a turn, ending a conversation, and indicating speaker’s hesitancy.

In a closely related study, Hamdan and Abu Rumman (2020) explored the pragmatic functions of the DM *yahummalali* in Jordanian Arabic. The researchers found that this idiomatic expression has 19 pragmatic functions which include expressing dismay and disapproval, mitigating exaggerated claims, wishing, ridiculing, expressing anger, and expressing sadness.

A year later, Hamdan (2021) examined the pragmatic functions of the *like* button used to interact with status-updates on Facebook. He found that the *like* button, a graphic pragmatic marker, has eight functions which include, showing unreserved approval and admiration, showing courtesy and maintaining contact, notifying users that the post has been seen and followed, and inviting friends to see a public post, etc.

More recently, Hamdan (2022) explored the pragmatic functions of the most common five emojis used by Jordanian Facebook users. The findings indicated that the most frequently utilized emojis by Jordanians on Facebook were the face with tears of joy, the red heart, the slightly smiling face, the face blowing a kiss, and the face winking. The findings also showed that these emojis have 19 pragmatic functions, including showing courtesy, ending a conversation, indicating a threat, and showing agreement.

Another recent study by Hamdan and Hammouri (2022) investigated the pragmatic functions of *yalla* (lit. ‘let us’) in Jordanian Arabic. The study found that *yalla* has twenty-three pragmatic functions. These functions include showing approval/acceptance, signaling the start of an action, spreading enthusiasm, suggesting, commanding/ordering someone, expediting/urging, expressing surrender or submission, announcing the onset of a new action or activity, requesting approval, assuring, and prompting someone to act in line with an established routine, among others.

The current study seeks to answer the following question:

What are the pragmatic functions of *Tamam* as used in Jordanian Arabic?

II. Method

The researchers, who are native speakers of JA, compiled a preliminary list of 16 scenarios that included *Tamam* in JA on the basis of their exposure to this idiomatic expression and their knowledge of its contexts in Jordanian society. They also identified the pragmatic functions of *Tamam* in each scenario. The scenarios and related pragmatic functions were subjected to a validation process by a panel of three linguists whose native language is JA - one of whom is from the University of Jordan and the other two of whom are from Tafila Technical University. They were asked to review the scenarios and related functions of *Tamam.* Only minor amendments to the scenarios were made in response to the feedback suggested by the jurors as most of their judgements were compatible with those of the researchers. Two scenarios that suggested the function apology and the function expressing disagreement coupled with displeasure, however, were advised by two of the panel to be eliminated, positing that *Tamam* in these scenarios hardly conveyed these functions. As a result, these two scenarios and their related functions were removed.

The acceptability of 14 pragmatic functions was tested against the intuition of 164 native speakers of JA who were BA students at the University of Jordan from different specialisms. One of the researchers joined six WhatsApp groups of two compulsory university courses, namely ‘National Culture’ and ‘Communication Skills’. These six groups comprised of more than 250 BA students. The researcher sent a WhatsApp message to all groups clarifying the aim of the questionnaire and what was expected of them to do, and then the link to the online questionnaire was also sent. Only 164 of the recipients completed the whole task. The completion of the task was an online Google form questionnaire, with no expiration time.

The informants included 110 females and 54 males with a mean age of 20. They all gave their informed consent to participate in the study by signing a short form prepared for this purpose. The task, which was conducted in Arabic, took the form of a table with four columns. The first column provided the scenarios/situations in which *Tamam* occurred. The second displayed the suggested pragmatic functions of *Tamam*. The third presented the five-point Likert scale: ‘strongly agree’, ‘agree’, ‘uncertain’, ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree’. The fourth was left blank for participants to possibly suggest functions other than those offered in the task.

The participants were asked to read each of the 14 scenarios with its proposed pragmatic function and make a choice. In fact, only two of the participants provided some alternative functions of *Tamam* while responding to the questionnaire; the other participants only expressed their agreement, disagreement, or uncertainty of the given functions. The alternative functions were checked by the researchers, but they were not found appropriate, and thus were not considered. However, all the included functions in the tool were entertained by the researchers because they were judged acceptable by more than 50 percent of the participants. These functions were assumed to be the ones that fairly described the use of *Tamam* at this point in time in JA.

III. Results and Discussions

Analysis of the data showed that *Tamam* is used to express 14 pragmatic functions. The table below presents the pragmatic functions of *Tamam* and the number and percentage of participants who agreed with each one.

Table 1
Number and Percentage of Participants Who Accepted Each of the Proposed Pragmatic Functions of Tamam

Scenario No.	Function	No.	Acceptability judgement [%]
1	Expressing approval	156	95.12
2	Seeking confirmation	150	91.46
3	Showing understanding	148	90.24
4	Expressing appreciation	142	86.58
5	Expressing joy and pleasure	134	81.70
6	Showing tolerance	132	80.48
7	Expressing sadness and submission	130	79.26
8	Reassuring	128	78.04
9	Checking attention	115	70.12
10	Expressing dissatisfaction	111	67.68
11	Ending a conversation and expressing impatience	99	60.36
12	Ridiculing/ Mocking	96	58.53
13	Threatening	95	57.92
14	Expressing shock and disappointment	85	51.82

Below is a presentation of each pragmatic function in its context followed by an illustrative example. For the reader’s convenience, each example begins with the context (originally in Arabic) in which *Tamam* occurred. The conversational turns are represented in JA, transliteration, and an English gloss.

(1) Expressing approval

[Context] During a phone call, the following conversation took place between Ameera and Rasha:

أميرة: تيجي نروح بكرة أنا وياكي على السوق؟
ti:dʒi nru:ħ bukra: ʔana wi jja:ki ʕala ʔissu:g
Ameera: “Do you fancy going shopping with me tomorrow?”

رشا: تمام
tama:m
Rasha: “Sounds good.”

أميرة: منيح عالتسعة؟
mni:ħ ʕa ttisʕa:
Ameera: “How does 9 am sound?”

رشا: بستناكِ
bastana:ki
Rasha: “I’ll be there!”.

Approval may occur when someone accepts a suggestion made by another person. Thus, *Tamam* in this context is used by Rasha to give approval to a certain suggestion.

(2) Seeking confirmation

[Context] Saleem got a low mark in his science exam. His father was really shocked. The following conversation took place between them:

والد سليم : سليم ليش جايب العلامة هاي بامتحان العلوم؟ شكلك ما درست منيح، صح؟
Saleem's father: sali:m le:ʃ dʒa:jib ʔil ʕala:mi ha:j bimtiħa:n ʔil ʕulu:m? ʃiklak ma: darasit mni:ħ, saħ ?
"Saleem, may I ask why you got such a low mark in your exam? It seems you didn't study enough; Am I right?"

سليم: صح، ما كان معي وقت كافي أدرس
Saleem: saħ ma: ka:n maʕi wagit ka:fi ʔadrus
"Yeah … I didn't have enough time to study."
والد سليم: المرة الجاي لازم تدرس منيح، تمام؟
Saleem's father: ʔil ma:rra ʔil dʒaj la:zim tudrus mni:ħ, tama:m?
"Next time you have to study harder, okay?"
سليم: حاضر
Saleem: ħa:<u>d</u>ir
"OK."

Saleem's father uses *Tamam* here as a tag question in hope of eliciting confirmation from his son that he will study harder next time to get a higher mark. As it happened, Saleem immediately confirmed. Apparently, Saleem, who was under pressure, had no chance but to confirm his father's request even if the latter had not used *Tamam.* However, the use of the DM here has intensified Saleem's father's pressure for confirmation.

(3) Showing understanding

[Context] Ahmad was attending a lecture with Professor Malik. Ahmad suddenly got a severe headache. The following dialogue took place between them:

أحمد: دكتور بعد إذنك أنا كثير تعبان وراسي بوجعني
dokto:r baʕid i ðnak ʔana kθi:r taʕba:n w ra:si biwadʒdʒiʕni:
Ahmad: "Sorry to interrupt Professor. I'm not feeling very well; I've got a severe headache."

بروفيسور مالك: تمام! بتقدر تغادر المحاضرة
tama:m bitgdar tɣadir ʔilmuħa:<u>d</u>ara
Professor Malik: "Sure! You can leave."

The use of *Tamam* is meant to show understanding; it is another way of saying 'I understand'.

(4) Expressing appreciation

[Context] Marwa is a student in the sixth grade. The following conversation took place between herself and her art teacher:

أستاذ الفن: فرجيني اللوحة إللي رسمتيها
fardʒini: ʔil lawħa ʔilli rasmti:ha
Marwa's art teacher: "Show me the painting you've already painted."

مروى: تفضل هيها أستاذ
tfa<u>d</u>al ha:jha usta: ð
Marwa: "Here it is Sir."

أستاذ الفن: (مبتسما) تمام
tama:m
Marwa's art teacher (Smiling): "Nice!"

As is clear, the teacher responded with *Tamam*, but his response was really accompanied with a smile, hence his body language complemented his verbal response. It is not easy to tell which one of them contributes more to achieving the function of appreciation but it could well be a combination of both. In other words, *Tamam* and the teacher's smile occurred in tandem to achieve this function. Bavelas and Chovil (2017) stated that most facial expressions and gestures serve pragmatic '(meta-communicative)' functions. All facial gestures serve a pragmatic function in a certain context when they also coexist with other words (ibid).

(5) Expressing joy and pleasure

[Context] Laith is at hospital due to a health problem. His friend Basil goes to the hospital to check on Laith's health. The following conversation took place between them:

باسل: طمني عنك ليث كيف صحتك هسا؟
t̲ammini: ʕa:nnak lajiθ ke:f siħta:k hassa
Basil: "How you doin' Laith? Hope you're feeling better mate."

ليث: الحمد لله الآن وضعي الصحي منيح ومستقر
ʔil ħamdulila:h ʔil a:n wa:d̲ʕi ʔis̲s̲iħi mni:ħ w mustaqir
Laith: "Thank God; I'm doing much better."

باسل: تماااام (مع إطالة الصائت قبل الأخير). هاي أخبار كويْسِة
t̲ama:a:m. ha:j ʔaxba:r kwajsi
Basil: "Greeeeat! That's really good news."

Basil used *Tamam* here to show joy and pleasure when he found out that his friend Laith was getting better. Note that the elongation of the prefinal front low vowel has contributed to intensifying joy and pleasure which *Tamam* has conveyed.

(6) Showing tolerance

[Context] Manal and Mazin are married. Manal did something to upset Mazin. She apologized by saying:

منال: آسفة جدا على إللي صار حقك علي
ʔa:sfi dʒidda:n ʕla ʔilli s̲a:r ħagga:k ʕa:laji
Manal: "I'm so sorry for upsetting you. I apologize."

مازن: تمام (متحاشياً النظر في عينيها) بسّ ما كان لازم تسرّعتِ
tama:m bas ma: ka:n la:zim ʔitsara:ʕti:
Mazin: 'It's alright I guess (evading looking her in the eye); but you shouldn't have gotten mad at me".
Mazin used *Tamam* to show tolerance to the way his wife behaved. The gesture he used intensified the pragmatic function of *Tamam* in this context. Evading looking at Manal in the eye while responding to her apology, Mazin indirectly implied that he would let it go, though reluctantly.

(7) Expressing sadness and submission

[Context] Rami has been looking for a job for a long time. Yesterday he applied for a job at a company. The Human Resources Manager phoned him yesterday and told him that he was not selected.

مدير الموارد البشرية: آسف إني بحكيلك إنه ما رح نقبلك بالوظيفة لأنه وضفنا شخص قبل يومين، وما في شاغر.
ʔa:sif ʔinni: baħkila:k ʔinnu ma: raħ nigbala:k bilwa:ð̲i:fi li ʔannu: wa:ð̲ð̲fna: ʃa:xis̲ gabil jo:me:n w ma: fi ʃa:ɣir hassa wrong symbol
The Human Resources Manager: "I am sorry to tell you that we cannot give you the job because someone was hired two days ago, and there is no vacancy now."
رامي: تمام (مع تنهيدة) خيرها بغيرها
tama:m xe:rha biɣe:rha
Rami: "Oh okay (with a sigh), maybe I'm better off."

It seems that *Tamam* is used here to express sadness and submission. It appears that Rami felt sad and uncomfortable because he did not get the job. The function of sighing here strengthens the functional meaning of *Tamam*[1].

(8) Reassuring

[Context] Rana was trying to get her car out of the garage by putting it in reverse. Her mother stepped in to instruct and guide her[2]. The following conversation took place between them:

[1] Hamdan and Hammouri (2022, p. 149) suggested that the idiomatic expression *Yalla* conveys a similar communicative function when it is accompanied with a sigh.
[2] The context of this function was adapted from Hamdan and Hammouri (2022, p. 150).

والدة رنا: ارجعي ارجعي هلأ اكسري شمال شمال، عدلي وارجعي، تمام طالعة
ʔirdʒaʕi ʔirdʒaʕi hallaʔ iksiri ʃma:l ʃma:l ʕadli wirdʒaʕi tama:m ṯa:lʕa
Rana's mother: "Back, back. Now move to the left – left. Now scoot on over and back up. Okay, you're good to go now".

رنا: شكرا ماما
ʃukran ma:ma:
Rana: "Thanks, Mum!"

The discourse marker *Tamam* is employed to express reassurance. As can be noted in this scenario, Rana's mother used *Tamam* to comfort and reassure her daughter Rana while trying to get the car out of the garage.

(9) Checking attention

[Context] Mousa and his friend Ameen were having a chat.

موسى: شو صار معاك لما رحت اليوم على المصنع؟
ʃu: s̱a:r maʕa:k lamma: ruħit ʔil jo:m ʕal mas̱naʕ?
Musa: "What happened when you went to the factory today?"
أمين: رحت أشوف المدير. تمام؟ وطلبت منه مساعدة تمام؟ وقلتله بدّي تساعدني أشتغل
ruħit ʔaʃu:f ʔil mudi:r. tama:m? w ṯalabit minnu musa:ʕa:di. tama:m? w gultillu biddi_tsa:ʕidni ʔaʃtaɣil.
Ameen: 'I went there to meet the Manager, right. Then I asked him for help, you get me? "I wanted him to give me a job."

موسى: آه وبعدين؟
ʔa: w baʕde:n
Musa: "Ok. So, what happened then?"

أمين: ما ساعدني
ma: sa:ʕadni
Ameen: "He didn't help."
In this context, one observes a repetitive use of *Tamam* as a sentence final marker to check the addressee's attention and make sure that he is still in the conversation.

(10) Expressing dissatisfaction

[Context] Sameer and Kamil are close friends. They agree to meet and go to the mechanic to fix Sameer's car. Kamil did not show up. The following conversation took place between them:

سمير: وينك يا زلمة؟ ليش ما إجيت منشان نروح نصلح السيارة؟
we:nak ja: za:lami le:ʃ ma: idʒi:t minʃa:n nru:ħ ns̱aliẖ ʔissijja:ra
Sameer: "Where are you man? Why didn't you come to fix the car?"

كامل: متأسف جدا؛ أنا طالع هسا وصعب نلتقي اليوم.
mitʔassif dʒiddan. nsi:t ʔana ṯa:liʕ hassa w saʕib niltagi ʔil jo:m
Kamil: "Sorry man. I completely forgot; I'm busy now and can't make it today."
سمير: تمام وأنا شو أعمل هسا
tama:m w ʔana ʃu: aʕmal hassa
Sameer: "Great! (sarcastically). What am I supposed to do now?"

كامل: بكرة بروح أنا وياك
bukra: baru:ħ ʔana wijja:k
Kamil: "No worries. We'll sort it out tomorrow."

Expressing dissatisfaction here is indicated by *Tamam*. Sameer used *Tamam* to show his unease and to express his dissatisfaction regarding Kamil's inability to show up.

(11) Ending a conversation and expressing impatience
[Context] Rula was fighting with her fiancé Amer, and she reminded him of the way he had behaved throughout their engagement. The following conversation took place between them:

رولا: مش ناسية كل غلطة غلطتها معي، بتتزكر لما نسيت تحكيلي كل عام وإنتِ بخير وبتتزكر لما...... ولما ...... ولما......؟
miʃ na:sji kul ɣa:lṯa ɣliṯitha ma:ʕi. btitzakkar lamma nsi:t tiħki:li kul ʕa:m winti bixe:r wibititzakar lamma: w lamma: w lamma.
Rula: "I'll never forget how you've treated me. Do you remember when you forgot my birthday? Do you remember when…, and when…, and when...?"

عامر: تمام فهمنا
tama:m ʔifhimna
Amer: "Enough already. I get it, I get it."

Rula, in the above example, shows anger when her fiancé has frequently behaved badly towards her. She did this by reminding him of what she views as all his faults. Her fiancé used the expression *Tamam* to shut her up, and to show his impatience. The idiomatic expression *Tamam* here also means 'enough is enough'.

(12) Ridiculing/ Mocking

[Context] Sami and Rami are employees at a private company. The following conversation took place between them:

سامي: سمعت إنه الشركة رح اتجَمّد الزيادة السنوية
ʔismiʕit innu iʔʃirki raħ tdʒammid ʔizzija:di ʔissanawjji
Sami: "I heard that the company isn't giving annual raises anymore."

رامي: تمام هاظا إللي ناقص
tama:m ha:ð̠a ʔilli na:gis
Rami: "Oooh! (sarcastically) You know, that's all I've ever wanted! (sarcastically)."

'Tamam' is used to ridicule/mock somebody for something. In the above scenario, Rami utilized *Tamam* to ridicule/mock the company's decision to stop giving annual raises to its employees. In other words, Rami responded with *Tamam* to strengthen the function of ridiculing or mocking.

(13) Threatening

[Context] Fadi called Samir many times to get back the money that Samer owes him. The following conversation took place between them:

فادي: مرحبا سامر وين الفلوس إللي داينتك ياهم، إلي أكثر من شهرين بطلبهم منك.
marħaba sa:mir we:n liflu:s ʔilli da:jantak ja:hum ʔili a:kθar min ʃa:hre:n baṯlubhum minna:k
Fadi: "Hey Samir. I want the money you owe me. I've been asking you to pay it back for ages now."

سامر: ما رح أرجعلك ياهم واعمل إللي بدك ياه.
ma: raħ ardʒiʕla:k ja:hum wiʕmal ʔilli biddak ja:h
Samir: "I'm not gonna pay it back, so you can do whatever you want to me. I don't care."

فادي: تمام بس ما تزعل مني ها
tama:m bas ma tizʕal minni ha
Fadi: "Sure mate. But don't get mad when I do. You're gonna be sorry."

In this context, *Tamam* seems to have been employed to express a threat; Fadi used *Tamam* to threaten Samir for not paying the money back that he owed him. This is clear when *Tamam* was followed by the sentence "But don't get mad when I do. You're gonna be sorry." This sentence strengthens the threatening function of *Tamam* in such a context.

(14) Expressing shock and disappointment

[Context] Maram and Rasha live in the same building. Rasha is used to playing very loud music in the middle of the night which bothers her neighbor Maram. Maram decides to go to Rasha's flat to ask her to turn down the music a little bit to let her sleep. The following dialogue took place between them:
مرام: ممكن توطي صوت الموسيقى شوي مش عارفة أنام
mumkin twaṯṯi s̠o:t ʔilmusi:qa ʃwajji miʃ ʕa:rfi ʔana:m
Maram: "Could you please turn down the music a bit? I can't sleep."

رشا: مش شغلك بضن بدي أسمع أغاني عالعالي سكري آدانك ونامي
miʃ ʃuɣlik ba<u>d</u>un bidi asmaʕ ʔa:ɣa:ni ʕal ʕa:li sakri ada:nik w na:mi
Rasha replies: “It’s none of your business, I guess, if I want to listen to loud music. Put some earplugs in and go to sleep.”

مرام: تحملق مرام في وجه رشا. تمام. (صمت) هادا إللي طلع معك
tama:m ha:da ʔilli <u>t</u>iliʕ ma:ʕik
Maram: “Wow! (said sarcastically while staring at Rasha) (pause) Is that all you could come up with?!”

In this context, *Tamam* was supported by both a facial expression (staring) and a pause to show Maram’s shock and disappointment of Rasha’s reaction and behavior. Maram utilized *Tamam* here to express how shocked she was when Rasha did not respond to her request and refused to turn down the music.

IV. Discussions

Following on from the work of Hamdan and Abu Rumman (2020), the pragmatic functions of *Tamam* are divided into two categories. The first comprises of functions which were accepted by 70 per cent (and above) of the participants; it seems that the subjects are well aware of these functions which are probably part of their everyday communicative interactions. Such a finding may justify labeling them as ‘well-established’. In contrast, the functions in the second category are viewed as emerging functions, i.e., not yet deeply entrenched among the Jordanian youth. The acceptability judgments for these functions ranged between 51and 68 per cent.

Additionally, analysis of the data reveals that the idiomatic expression *Tamam* is pragmatically multifunctional in JA since it conveys 14 different pragmatic functions. The three most frequent pragmatic functions of *Tamam* were expressing approval, seeking confirmation, and showing understanding. These three functions were associated with various situations in daily life. For example, the first situation was a conversation during a phone call in which Rasha used *Tamam* to show her approval to go shopping with her friend Ameera. The second was a conversation between Saleem and his father in which Saleem’s father used *Tamam* to seek confirmation from his son to study harder next time. The third was during a university lecture in which Professor Malik used *Tamam* to show his understanding of Ahmad’s request. On the other hand, the three least frequent pragmatic functions of *Tamam* were ridiculing or mocking, threatening, and expressing shock and disappointment. These functions were also associated with other different situations which occur in daily life. The first was in a private company in which Sami and Rami were talking about freezing the annual increment. Rami used *Tamam* to ridicule and mock this decision. The second was through a phone call in which Fadi used *Tamam* to threaten Samir for not paying the money back. The third was in Rasha’s flat where Marwa used *Tamam* to express her shock and disappointment when her neighbor refused to turn the music down. Thus, frequency of occurrence is unlikely to be associated with specific social contexts. The relatively low acceptability rate of such pragmatic functions might be due to the fact that these functions are not currently internalized by university students. Further research on older generations (i.e., 45 years and above) may show that the use of this idiomatic expression could be affected by both age and experience.

Moreover, the findings show that the idiomatic expression *Tamam* tends to express rather positive pragmatic functions such as approval, confirming information, appreciation, showing understanding, encouragement and reinforcement, expressing joy and pleasure, checking attention, and expressing tolerance. The analysis also demonstrates that the use of *Tamam* tends to intensify the meaning of certain adjacent linguistic texts. For example, in situation 13, *Tamam* is used by Fadi to threaten Samir for not paying back the money he owes him. In this context, *Tamam* is associated with the adjacent text “Don’t get mad when I do”’ to reinforce the threatening connotations of *Tamam*. Moreover, in situation 12 when Rami mocked the company policy for cancelling annual raises, he used *Tamam* to intensify the meaning of the adjacent linguistic text “Oooh! (sarcastically) You know, that’s all I’ve ever wanted!”. In relation, Hamdan and Abu Rumman (2020) suggested that “the use of discourse markers intensifies the meaning conveyed by an adjacent linguistic text” (p. 13).

However, the findings reveal that *Tamam* is also used alone to convey the functional meaning of a certain context or situation. For example, in situation 1, *Tamam* is used without being associated with any adjacent text to express Rasha’s approval of Ameera’s suggestion that they go shopping together. Another example is in situation 4 when the art teacher used *Tamam* to express his appreciation toward Marwa’s painting. The idiomatic expression *Tamam* sometimes appears alone without any post-text or pretext. In this case, it is important to examine whether this independent occurrence of *Tamam* can be interpreted differently or not. It seems that *Tamam* here had a post-text, but this post-text is implicit, or invisible, so *Tamam* is used to enforce a given text. This may mean that the text can be invisible or absorbed as in previous examples i.e., situation 1, and situation 4.

In many situations, *Tamam* is associated with and supported by nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions, body language, sighs, and pauses. These are used to convey the exact pragmatic functions of *Tamam* in such situations. Such nonverbal cues strengthen the meaning of *Tamam* in certain contexts. For example, in situation 4, the art teacher uses *Tamam* with a smile on his face to show his appreciation for Marwa’s drawing. Smiling, here, helps to convey the pragmatic function of *Tamam* in this situation in a clear way. Body language is another nonverbal cue that is used with

Tamam. For example, in situation 6, the husband tilted his head forward whilst saying *Tamam*, to show his tolerance for his wife's behavior.

Another nonverbal cue is the use of a sigh with *Tamam* to reflect sadness or disappointment, for example, in situation 7, when Rami discovered that the job vacancy he had applied for had been filled. In this context, Rami used *Tamam* with both a sigh and an adjacent text to express his sadness regarding what he heard. Additionally, pauses and facial expressions are nonverbal cues which are used by interlocutors to reflect their feelings. In situation 14, Maram used *Tamam* to express her shock and disappointment when her neighbor refused to turn the music down. Maram stared at Rasha then uttered *Tamam*. Furthermore, she paused for a while and said "Is that all you could come up with?!".

Using *Tamam* here serves the function of expressing shock and disappointment. Such a function of *Tamam* is supported by a facial expression, as well as a pause.

It is worth noting that *Tamam* in JA has some similar functions to that in Turkish. Ruhi (2013) stated that *Tamam* in Turkish can be used to convey a number of pragmatic functions. For example, it can be used in Turkish to display agreement or approval to a certain action, to check the addressee's attention, and to show understanding. It appears that the examination of DMs may show lexical and pragmatic affinities between culturally related languages such as Arabic and Turkish. Yaqoob (2021) asserted that there is a remarkable influence of Arabic on Turkish which is due to many factors, such as the religion of Islam, and the obvious traces of Arabic on Ottoman Turkish.

However, further research may reveal additional pragmatic functions associated with other factors, not examined in the current study.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study has provided a detailed analysis of the pragmatic functions of the JA idiomatic expression *Tamam*. Analysis reveals that *Tamam* has the following 14 pragmatic functions: expressing approval, confirming information, showing understanding, expressing appreciation, showing joy and pleasure, showing tolerance, expressing sadness and submission, encouraging and reinforcing, checking the addressee's attention, expressing dissatisfaction, ending a conversation and expressing impatience, ridiculing/mocking, threatening, and expressing shock and disappointment. The present study concludes that context plays an essential role in determining the functions of *Tamam*. However, since *Tamam* is not only used in Jordanian Arabic, further research may examine the functions of *Tamam* in other spoken Arabic dialects. Thus, one could measure the extent to which such pragmatic functions possibly vary from one regional dialect to another.

The study also recommends that future research may examine the acceptability of such scenarios and functions among older generations (speakers over the age of 45) in comparison to the participants of the current study with the aim of examining whether age plays a role in the use and understanding of *Tamam.*

Moreover, it is recommended that future studies investigate the pragmatic functions of other idiomatic expressions in JA and in other Arabic dialects.

References

[1] Al Azzawi, Abdulkhaliq. (2015). ʕadi as a discourse analysis marker in Spoken Iraqi Arabic. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(7), 1352-1360.
[2] Al Harahsheh, Ahmad and Mahmoud Kanakri. (2013). The pragmatic functions and the translatability of "tayib" in Jordanian spoken Arabic. *US-China Foreign Language*, *11*(3), 196-202.
[3] Al Khalidy, Hatmal. (2017). The discourse analysis and pragmatic meanings of *ta:lʕ* in Jordanian spoken Arabic. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *7*(4), 22-27.
[4] Al Rousan, Rafat, Ahmad Al Harahsheh and Fadia Huwari. (2020). The pragmatic functions of the discourse marker bas in Jordanian Spoken Arabic: Evidence from a corpus. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, *10*(1), 130-142.
[5] Bavelas, Janet and Nicole Chovil. (2017). Some pragmatic functions of conversational facial gestures. *Pragmatics of Conversational Facial Gestures*, *17*(1), 1-47.
[6] Brown, Gillian and George Yule. (1983). *Discourse Analysis.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[7] Davis, Steven. (1991). *Pragmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
[8] Fraser, Bruce. (1990). An approach to discourse markers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *14*, 383-395.
[9] Hamdan, Hady J. (2021). The pragmatic functions of Facebook likes on status updates: evidence from User Perceptions. *Jordan Journal of Modern Languages and Literatures*, *13*(3), 665-679.
[10] Hamdan, Hady J. (2022). The communicative functions of emojis: Evidence from Jordanian Arabic-Speaking facebookers. *Psycholinguistics*, *31*(1), 141–172.
[11] Hamdan, Jihad and Dina Hammouri. (2022). The pragmatic functions of the idiomatic expression Yalla in Jordanian Spoken Arabic. *Psycholinguistics*, *31*(2), 137-160.
[12] Hamdan, Jihad and Ronza Abu Rumman. (2020). The pragmatic functions of Yahummalali in Jordanian Spoken Arabic. *Jordan Journal of Modern Language and Literature*, *2*(3), 327-345.
[13] Lieber, Rochelle. (2009). *Introducing Morphology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[14] Moore, Erin. (2007). *Yeah-no: A discourse marker in Australian English. Honour Thesis.* The University of Melbourne, Australia.
[15] Newmark, Peter. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[16] Ruhi, Şükriye. (2013). The interactional functions of tamam in Spoken Turkish. *Journal of Linguistics and Literature*, *10*(2), 9-32.
[17] Schifrin, Deborah. (1987). *Discourse Markers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[18] Yaqoob, Luay H. (2021). Interaction between languages: The case of Arabic and Turkish. *Karadeniz Uluslararası Bilimsel Dergi*, *51*, 296-310.
[19] Yule, George. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[20] Yule, George. (2010). *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Isra'a Al-Hanaktah is a PhD student of Linguistics at the University of Jordan. Her academic research focuses on Psycholinguistics, Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis. She published a paper in Discourse Analysis that appeared in International Journal of English and Education. In addition to her academic pursuits, she is currently an English supervisor at the Ministry of Education, Jordan.

Jihad M. Hamdan is a professor of linguistics and translation at the University of Jordan. He obtained his PhD from the University of Reading, UK in 1994. He has published extensively in the areas of language acquisition, lexicography, discourse analysis, contrastive linguistics and translation. Many of his papers appeared in international and leading journals such as World Englishes, Babel, International Journal of Lexicography, Poznan Studies of Contemporary Linguistics, Journal of Language Teaching and Research, and Journal of Psycholinguistic Research. He was the President of Zarqa University (Jordan) for two years. Currently, he is the President of the Association of Professors of English and Translation at Arab Universities. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of International Journal of Arabic-English Studies.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 994-1000, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.33

Applying Genre-Based Approach to Enhance Vocational Students' Achievement in Writing Procedure Text

Sri Hardiningsih*
Politeknik Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Rika Wahyuni Tambunan
Akademi Komunitas Negeri Putra Sang Fajar, Blitar, Indonesia

Muhammad Yusuf
Universitas Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

Nur Rini
Politeknik Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Pandiya
Politeknik Negeri Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

***Abstract*—This research aimed to investigate the enhancement of students' achievement in writing procedure text by implementing a genre-based approach. The research design of this research was action research. The location of the research is at Akademi Komunitas Negeri Putra Sang Fajar Blitar (AKNPSFB). The research instruments were writing sheet, interviews, observation checklists, and tests. This research analyzed 150 essays by applying descriptive analysis of statistics and essay content. One hundred and fifty students from English Course classes at AKNPSFB submitted their assignment which required them to write a procedure text for 60 minutes in 3 weeks for an English course with credit for 14 weeks. From the analysis, the students' average score continued to increase gradually from 65.60 in the pre-test to 72.15 in Cycle I and to 76.25 in Cycle II. This increase in scores proves that the application of the genre-based approach (GBA) is able to increase students' writing skills in procedure text.**

***Index Terms*—procedure text, action research, genre-based approach**

I. Introduction

One of the crucial skills in language courses is writing. Writing can help students express ideas, notions, senses, and opinions and communicate with others (Aswani et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2021; Yusuf et al., 2024). According to Raimes (1985), an effective way for students to produce sentences and pieces of discourse and communicate them in a new language is by writing. In addition, Harmer (2004) states that of the four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), writing has always been part of the syllabus in teaching English at schools and universities. Therefore, writing is a process of expressing thoughts or ideas in our own words which must be practiced in our free time. Writing can be a lot of fun as long as we have the ideas to achieve it. Brown (2004) also states that several important components in writing must be considered as a measure of the final product: content, organization, use of vocabulary, use of grammar, and mechanical considerations such as punctuation and spelling. Therefore, quite a few students tend to express the same thought that writing skills are the most difficult among other skills. This is also relevant to students at *Akademi Komunitas Negeri Sang Fajar Blitar* (AKNPSFB) who also face difficulties with writing. In addition, AKB is a vocational college whose students are non-English majors. This can be seen from the students' scores in completing writing assignments so far before being given a special approach.

* Corresponding Author. Email: sri.hardiningsih@polines.ac.id

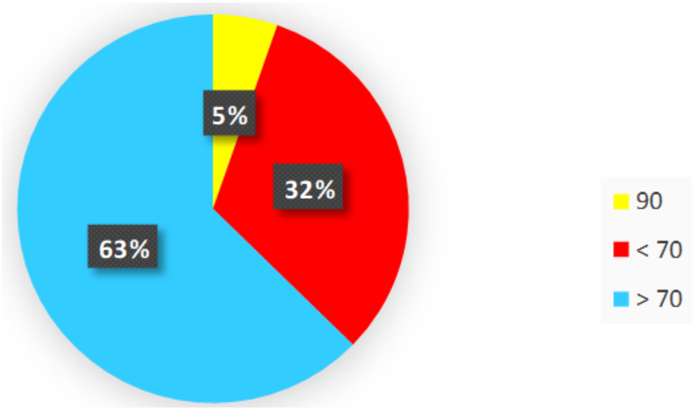


Figure 1. Students' Score

Out of a total of 150 students, only 30% percent of students met the minimum criteria and 5% met the above average. This is motivated by the many errors in the use of grammar, incommensurability in constructing a text, and inability to create cohesion and coherence in the text. As a general course, English is taken with a limited number of semester credits or less than other required courses. With this limited time, English lecturers must apply significant methods to students understanding the material presented easily, especially for writing skills. For this reason, a significant method is needed to improve students' writing skills. Students of AKNPSFB need to improve their writing skills to write papers, daily assignments, and even final assignments as one of the requirements to meet graduation requirements. Later, they are introduced to several types of text. In particular, the vocational higher education English curriculum states that students must be able to understand and produce functional texts. Therefore, writing should be considered as one of the main subjects that must be practiced by students.

There are several texts that students must master in audio and video editing (multimedia) and the server and computer network administration (informatics engineering) departments at AKNPSFB. Currently, the equipment given to vocational students tends to be in general English, so that students quickly get bored because it does not suit their field. Based on the syllabus, one of the genres that must be mastered is procedure text, which will later be adapted to student needs. English language related to computers will be implemented into text procedures. Text procedures are an important genre for students to master, where they are able to explain, for example, the operation of software or hardware on a computer. However, in reality, students experience several obstacles in writing, such as the shorter number of paragraphs; the number of insufficient sentences to support the main idea in each paragraph of their writing; difficulty in unifying the relevance of each paragraph with the title; and lots of grammatical errors. Referring to the obstacles that occur above, it is necessary to implement a GBA as one of the right steps to improve students' writing skills. According to Byrne (1984), GBA is a language teaching framework based on examples of particular genres. This approach is also often called text-based teaching.

The GBA puts forward the explicit teaching of genre linguistic conventions to L2 students, such as in vocational colleges. Referring to the history of AKNPSFB, professional English teaching has just taken place in less than a year because a permanent English lecturer has only been there for this year. So far, English courses have been taught alternately by non-permanent lecturers. For this reason, no method has ever been implemented to improve students' abilities in language. So, according to the existing conditions, students cannot produce certain types of text successfully. Therefore, the researchers introduce this convention to students, especially at the first stage of instructional modules of certain types of texts, which is a very important task in teaching English. In improving writing skills, GBA is also something that has been implemented relatively recently in English language learning. In writing, genre is part of the genre in language use. Genres in writing include types of writing that have a distinctive style, a particular target audience, and a particular purpose which includes writing style, audience, and purpose or goal-oriented (Thoreau, 2006). This is in line with Scott and Avery (2001) who state that style in writing is the words or expressions used to write writing and how language patterns are expressed. Paltridge (2001) describes in detail the activities in the GBA. The term 'cyclic strategy' is used to define and demonstrate the learning and teaching of writing through GBA with four stages. When the teaching and learning process takes place, these four stages must be followed and implemented, namely Building Knowledge of the Field (BKoF), Modeling of Text (MoT), Joint Construction of Text (JCoT), and Independent Construction of Text (ICoT).

Several related studies done by Hidayat et al. (2018), Almacıoğlua and Okan (2018), and Basori and Maharany (2021) shows that this approach can improve students' skills. Another research done by Kamaliah and Apsari (2022) investigated the seventh grade students of junior high school's descriptive text assignments in Bandung by implementing GBA. From the research data, students' writing skills are slowly developing with the treatment of GBA, which is carried out in accordance with the learning plan. Implementation begins with the opening. Then, at the knowledge building stage, the teacher begins to stimulate students' memories by asking questions about the material. Then, at the modeling stage, the teacher continues to explain the meaning of descriptive text with the help of pictures. The third stage, namely Join Construction, is carried out by grouping students to discuss the material that was given earlier. Finally, in the Independent Construction stage, students are allowed to creatively construct their own text. Referring to the background and comparison to the related studies, this research aimed at investigating the enhancement of students' achievement in writing procedure text by implementing GBA at AKNPSFB.

II. Method

This research used action research. The location of the research is at AKNPSFB, Blitar, Indonesia. Action research combines substantive action with disciplined research procedures through inquiry and personal efforts to understand while also engaging in processes of improvement and reform (Hopkins, 1985). To calculate the result, this research used Microsoft Excel. This research analyzed 150 essays by applying descriptive analysis of statistics and essay content. One hundred and fifty students from English course classes at AKNPSFB submitted their assignment which required them to write a procedure text for 60 minutes in 3 weeks. Each student's essay was marked with the letter P, namely essay and numbers. For example, the first student's essay is written as P1, and so on until P150. Then, they were categorized based on the move-step structure analysis. Microsoft Excel calculates the percentages and provides the tables presented in the findings and discussion section. Along with the percentage of findings, a descriptive analysis of the 150 essays was presented and analyzed to answer the research problem.

A. Subjects of Research

The subjects of this research were second-semester students of the Audio and Video Editing (Multimedia) and Server and Computer Network Administration (Informatics Engineering) departments. Participants in this research were 150 students from the multimedia and informatics engineering department. Students were asked to write procedure text. Students from these two departments were chosen because the English course they took that semester was the "English" course, which involved studying several texts, including procedure text. Meanwhile, in other departments, English courses are different, where there are "English for Business" and "English for Communication". This English course focuses on business and speaking, which is different from this research.

B. Technique of Collecting Data

This research was conducted at AKNPSFB. The subjects of the research were chosen because they were identified as non-English major students who did not yet have in-depth knowledge and experience in applying the GBA in writing. The research used three instruments, namely observation checklists, interviews, and tests. Observation checklists were used to obtain factual information such as what happened in the class. Researchers observed students during the teaching and learning process. Interviews were used to support data from observations. Researchers used interviews by asking students questions, and they answered them orally. Interviews were used to obtain more information about the implementation of the GBA in English class.

C. Research Procedure

Field factual data was taken from the Pre-test to find out students' problems in the process of writing English texts. From here, the researcher designed an appropriate action plan to overcome the obstacles students face in writing. The pre-test was carried out on 15th February 2023 by doing interviews with students and their pre-test score. Based on the results of the pre-test, the researchers found that there were several problems faced by students in the writing process, namely having difficulties in starting, organizing ideas, differentiating parts of speech, having a limited vocabulary, using wrong grammatical structures, and lacking motivation in writing. From the pre-test results, the students' average score was below the standard, which is 55.60. Meanwhile, the researchers' planned target is 75, which corresponds to the standard.

Cycle I

In this cycle, the researcher developed a lesson plan for instruction. Planning was determined by three meetings. The topic is *How to Submit a Job Application to the Post Office* in the form of a procedure text. The meeting was held on March 22nd, 23rd, 24th 2023. The teaching stages followed the GBA approach consisting of BKoF, MoT, JCoT, and ICoT. To enter a new topic, researchers prepared students by asking them for information they knew about submitting job applications at the BKoF stage. Then, students identified topics related to sending job applications based on the pictures provided by the researcher and then are given vocabulary. Then, the researcher provided a text model and explains its organization, structural patterns, and linguistic characteristics of the procedural text to students at the Modeling Stage. In addition, researchers provide several exercises to further deepen students' understanding. In JCoT, the researcher shows a series of pictures to students. This aims to help them create an outline. Then, students were asked to write procedure texts based on the pictures they observed in groups. They are required to edit and proofread their writing before collectively submitting it to researchers. In the final stage of ICoT, students were asked to independently write procedure texts. They created outlines and drafted procedural texts. They were also asked to correct their writing before submitting it back to the researchers.

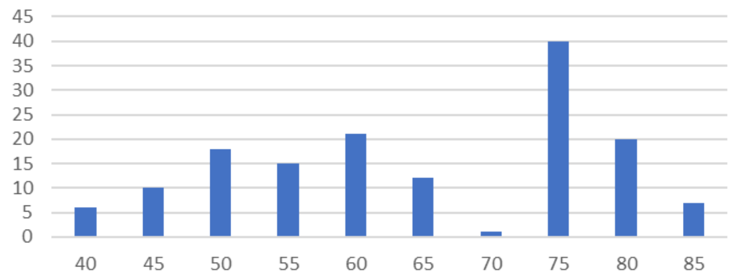
Cycle II

In cycle 2, the topic used was still the same as cycle I. Cycle II was held on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of March 2023. The learning stages still followed the GBA approach (BKoF, MoT, JCoT, and ICoT stages). To overcome the problems in cycle I, the researchers found a solution by revising the MoT (modelling stage). The researchers provided some easy examples for students to understand how to develop a framework into a complete procedural text to make them aware of how to develop an outline with a clear idea. Second, the researcher revised the JCoT stage. Another revision was that students worked in pairs. It aimed to avoid dependency and make them more active in writing. In addition, the students were given some vocabulary before they start writing. Then, at the ICoT stage, students were given worksheets to check together. Columns on the worksheet were filled by writing outlines that helped students organize ideas.

III. Finding and Discussion

From the results of interviews with students and the pre-test, there were several problems faced by students in writing, such as using grammatical structures appropriately, developing ideas, and choosing appropriate vocabulary. Students failed to organize their words, sentences, and ideas as much as possible into good paragraphs. They are not able to produce good texts consisting of at least 3 paragraphs. It seems that students need to be directed and taught how to develop ideas and organize texts well according to the generic structure of procedural texts. The students' average score on the pre-test was 65.60, which means it is lower than the standard criteria for learning mastery in English courses at AKNPSFB, which is 70.

From the results of cycle I in figure 2, the students' average score gradually increased from the pre-test. In the pre-test, the students' average score was 65.60. In cycle I, the average increased to 72.15, which means that there was an increase in students' work results in writing texts. The average for cycle 1 increased, although it had not reached the standard value, of 75. Then, in Cycle I, the average value reached 76.25, which averages it achieved the success criteria according to the college standard, namely 75. Figure 2 below shows the progress that occurs in each cycle.



.

Figure 2. The Result of Cycle I

There were only 67 students (45%) out of 150 students who were able to achieve the success criteria in cycle I, while the rest had grades below school standards. In cycle I, we found several problems. First, even though students could write procedure texts with appropriate structural sequences, they still faced obstacles in developing topics, using appropriate diction, and writing sentences well. Most likely, the problem was caused by the researcher providing too much explanation at the MoT stage without proper examples. Apart from that, students worked in large groups with five members per group at JCoT, so many students only relied on other group members. Fortunately, the observation results also showed that 86% of students (129 out of 150) were active and fully concentrated on participating in the teaching and learning process. Similarly, they also showed a positive response to using GBA to write procedure text (80%). From this data, only two success criteria have been achieved. The researcher made the decision to continue to cycle II because the main success criteria had not been met properly. After obtaining the result, it was considered important to conduct cycle II.

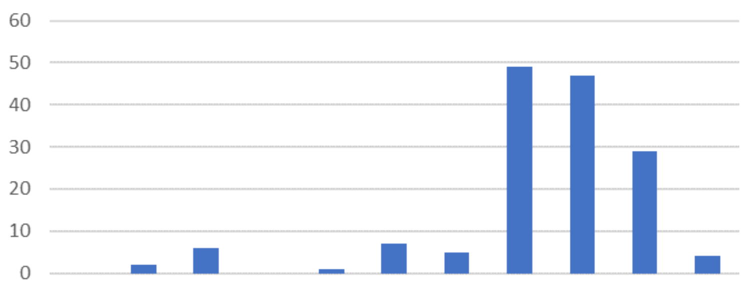


Figure 3. The Result of Cycle II

From cycle II result presented in Figure 3, students' improvement in writing procedure texts looked more significant. This can be seen from several aspects related to increasing students' abilities at writing procedure texts. Student writing became better in organizational and content aspects. They organized text and developed the topics well by stating ideas clearly. Apart from that, there were only a few errors in the use of language, vocabulary and mechanics in the resulting text. From cycle II data, it can be concluded that the writing criteria have been achieved well.

From the reflection on cycle I, there were several revisions to the method for cycle 2. First, students were not only taught how to create good procedure texts at the MoT stage, but are also directly shown examples of how to make them. Students were told the stages of developing an outline until it became a good procedural text. Then, students were asked to work in pairs. The aim was to share equal responsibility among them, so they did not depend on each other. As a result of this revision, students' scores in writing increased in cycle II. This can be seen in Figure 4.

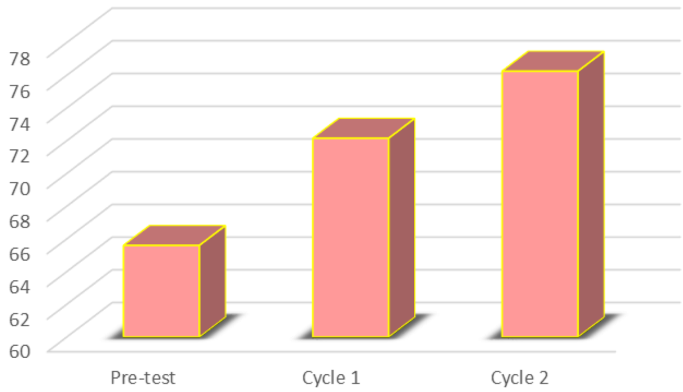


Figure 4. The Average Score of Students

From the Figure 4, the average score of students increased from the pre-test to cycle 2, from 72.15 in cycle I to 76.25 in cycle II. In cycle II, more students achieved a standard score of 75, some even higher than 75. This indicates that the students had reached the ***success*** criteria. With the implementation of GBA, students' achievement in writing procedure text also increased through three stages that had been passed in the pre-test, cycle I, and cycle II.

GBA implementation succeeded in increasing students' achievement in writing procedural texts. GBA is effective and efficient to apply in teaching to write English texts because this approach prioritizes mastery of text. This approach allowed the lecturer to deliver material with explicit and systematic explanations, including how the text was patterned grammatically, the linguistics, and the organization of the text itself. It could help students to have sufficient background knowledge to write certain texts. Furthermore, through GBA, students have the opportunity to improve all of their language skills. Lecturers could give various tasks in the BKoF stage, such as reading or listening. In addition, the lecturers could build students' self-confidence before they start writing individually. Through the JCoT stage, the lecturer could provide opportunities for students to work together in pairs. So, students could learn from others and enrich their knowledge as much as possible.

At the modeling stage (MoT), the success of this classroom action research may only be visible. At this stage, the researcher showed students appropriate examples of how to organize and develop ideas well. Not only through explanations, but researchers also provide examples directly to students. The aim of this activity was to make it easier for students to develop topics in pairs so that they know what to write and how to write well. At this stage, more vocabulary will also be presented. Then, the second factor that caused the success of this research may also lie in the joint construction stage (JCoT). During this stage, students name several objects or action verbs based on the learning media used in learning. This activity aims to make it easier for students to choose appropriate vocabulary in their text.

Then, in the JCoT stage, students are grouped in pairs to compose procedure texts. This method is very effective in making students more active in constructing texts and students can also rely on themselves without depending on other students. This stage is very helpful because it can give students a good experience of learning to write in pairs. With their partners, students can share their ideas and knowledge in developing texts. This is in line with what was stated by Vygotsky (1978; as quoted in Tuan, 2011) that when students work together, they can gain better knowledge. In addition, feedback is also given to students. Feedback is provided in student writing and discussed with the whole class. The purpose of this feedback activity is to guide students in working on the next thing so that the quality of students' writing can improve automatically. This research also used interconnected images as learning media at the JCoT stage to assist students in writing topics. According to Kasihani (2008), the use of learning aids can be a tool to improve motivation and interest. Thus, it can be said that the media can add concreteness to every learning situation. From what has been explained, it could be concluded that the application of GBA allowed students to write English class procedure texts in all research programs at AKNPSFB. These findings supported previous research that had been conducted by Almacıoğlua and Okan (2018), Basori and Maharany (2021), and Hidayat et al. (2018). In addition, GBA steps enable students to write better because these steps reduced students' writing problems. Moreover, GBA approach is able to help students solve problems in producing procedure texts.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the results, several things can be concluded. First, GBA has proven to be effective in increasing students' achievement in writing procedure text. It is proven that there is an increase of the students’ score in the first cycle from 65.60 to 72.15. The result of cycle II was higher than cycle I, increasing from 72.15 to 76.25. The scores obtained by students met the planned target, namely the average student achievement in writing procedure texts was equal to or more than 75, the standard value for English courses at AKNPSFB. In addition to achieving standard values, improvements also occurred in aspects of student behavior. Students enthusiastically paid attention and participated in class activities. They engaged better during the learning process.

It is suggested that a lecturer should understand the types of texts to be taught, functional linguistics, and the basic principles of GBA if the lecturer wants to apply GBA in class. In addition, the lecturer must also play an active role in the learning process and identify what students need, as well as help them to correct their wrong writing. Before starting to write text, the lecturer must first introduce examples of good text procedure and their characteristics. This introduction can help students to know the purpose of the text, the schematic structure of the text, and the language features of the procedure text, so that they can write their text well later. Apart from that, in completing all the activities of the GBA stages properly, time management must also be considered. Third, the use of several learning aids, such as slides, pictures, and worksheets are also needed to apply GBA maximally.

For further research, it is necessary to do more research regarding the effect of GBA on writing in the EFL context to find out more about its effectiveness. First, the next research needs to examine the implementation of GBA in various types of texts, such as expository, report, and argumentative. Second, research on GBA implementation needs to be increased again in vocational colleges where students are non-English majors. Third, further research also needs to be carried out to investigate the effectiveness of GBA, not only in improving writing, reading, listening, or speaking skills, but also in teaching language components, such as vocabulary and grammar.

REFERENCES

[1] Almacıoğlua, G., & Okan, Z. (2018). Genre-Based Approach to Writing Instruction for Students at an English Language and Literature Department. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *4*(1), 71–100.

[2] Aswani, A., Simatupang, N. N., Yusuf, M., & Adha, T. K. R. (2023). Genre-based Approach Implementation in Teaching Listening: A Case Study in Senior High School in Indonesia. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *13*(5), 1197–1203. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.1305.13.

[3] Basori, & Maharany, E. R. (2021). Genre-Based Approach in Teaching BIPA. *Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah*, *9*(2), 73–82.

[4] Brown, H. D. (2004). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Langauge Pedagogy (Second Edi).* (Second Edition). Longman.

[5] Byrne, D. (1984). *Teaching Writing Skill*. Four Strong Printing Company.

[6] Harmer, J. (2004). *How to Teach Writing*. Pearson Education.

[7] Hidayat, R. W., Setyowati, L., & Mabaroh, B. (2018). Genre-Based Approach for Writing Recount Text at MTS. Darul Ulum Karang Pandan, Pasuruan. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia*, *10*(1), 61–80.

[8] Hopkins, D. (1985). *A Teacher’s Guide to Classroom Research*. Open University Press.

[9] Kamaliah, S. M., & Apsari, Y. (2022). The Implementation of Genre Based Approach in Teaching Writing. *PROJECT (Professional Journal of English Education)*, *5*(3), 488–494.

[10] Kasihani, S. (2008). *English for Young Learners*. PT Bumi Aksara.

[11] Paltridge, B. (2001). *Genre in the Language Learning Classroom*. University of Michigan Press.

[12] Raimes, A. (1985). What Unskilled ESL Students Do as They Write: A Classroom Study of Composing. *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL)*, *19*(5), 229–258.

[13] Scott, R., & Avery, S. (2001). *Writing With Style*. Pearson Education Limited.

[14] Thoreau, M. (2006). *Write on Track*. Pearson Education.

[15] Tuan, L. T. (2011). Teaching writing through Genre –Based Approach. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *1*(11), 1471–1478.

[16] Yusuf, M, Hanafiah, R., Zein, T. T., & Perangin-angin, A. B. (2021). Clause projection in news item text written by tertiary EFL learners. *TESOL International Journal*, *16*, 90–109.

[17] Yusuf, M, Syahputra, F. P., Lubis, A. A., Aswani, A., & Tambunan, R. W. (2024). Developing Genre-based English Worksheet for Vocational Students by Using 4-D Development Model to Improve Writing Skill. *World Journal of English Language*, *14*(1), 65–72.

Sri Hardiningsih is an English lecturer at Politeknik Negeri Semarang (State Polytechnic of Semarang). She has done researches, presented papers in local and international forum, and written a number of articles on ELT. She specializes in English Education and Technology; English for Specific Purposes; and developing English materials.

Rika Wahyuni Tambunan is an English lecturer at Akademi Komunitas Negeri Putra Sang Fajar Blitar. She pursued her master degree in English from Universitas Sumatera Utara.

Muhammad Yusuf is a lecturer at English department, Universitas Sumatera Utara. He actively publishes his papers in national and international journals.

Nur Rini has taught business English at Politeknik Negeri Semarang. The courses taught include English for Secretary, Communication Skills for International Business and General English. Her main interests are the studies on language teachings for vocational business students and business communication.

Pandiya is an English teacher in Accounting Department of Politeknik Negeri Semarang. He is active in joining International Conference on English Language Teaching, Literature, and Translation (ELTLT and TEFLIN Seminar).

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 1001-1009, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.34

Assessing Saudi EFL Learners' Use and Understanding of English Idioms: Perceptions, Problems, and Patterns of Learning

Mohammad Jamshed*
Department of English, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, KSA

Abduh Almashy
English Department, Al Qunfudah University College, UQU, Makkah, Saudi Arabia

Mohammad Saleem
University of Prince Mugrin, Madinah, Saudi Arabia

Wahaj Unnisa Warda
Department of English (Female Campus), Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, KSA

***Abstract*—This study aims to investigate Saudi EFL learners' perceptions of English idioms, their problems, and the patterns of their learning and understanding of English idioms. 458 students (around 10%) were selected through a random sampling method from the undergraduate learners in different levels of programs at the College of Business Administration and the College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, KSA. As the study looked at how certain independent variables (gender, level/year of study, and parents' profession) shaped dependent variables (perceptions/attitudes), a questionnaire was self-developed which includes modified items from existing research. A quantitative approach (descriptive statistics) was used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that Saudi EFL learners' perceptions were very positive about English idioms and their impact on enhancing their English proficiency. It was found that lack of background information, unfamiliarity, variation in literal interpretation, lack of Arabic parallels, and insufficient EFL classroom training made learning English idioms challenging for respondents. It was also revealed that Saudi EFL learners acquired and comprehended English idioms via using them in sentences, consulting a dictionary, guessing from contexts, group discussions, and breaking them down into their constituent parts. One-way ANOVA analysis found no statistically significant difference among the respondents based on their demographic differences. The study holds implications for both teachers and students as it will help them teach and learn English idioms effectively. The most common method is translating English idioms into their language.**

***Index Terms*—insufficient instruction, learning and understanding English idioms, lack of equivalents in Arabic language, unawareness about the context**

I. Introduction

Learning and understanding idioms is integral and essential to learning and acquiring effective language skills. They have an essential effect on advancing and enhancing the language skills of EFL/ESL learners. However, they have constantly posed a challenge for both EFL/ESL learners and native speakers (Wu, 2008). Language idioms are highly contextualized and cannot be understood from their constituent parts (Cooper, 1999; Wu, 2008). Idioms pose a challenge to all learners particularly the non-native speakers who experience more difficulty in the use and comprehension of English idioms as they are often unaware of the cultural and psychological consciousness in which these idioms are rooted (Khonbi & Sadeghi, 2017). That is why one's ability and capacity to understand and use English idioms is considered an indication of not only one's command and mastery over language but also the cultural nuances of the idioms. A substantial vocabulary and a wide variety of idioms are prerequisites for understanding novels, books, and magazines as well as watching movies, music, and television programs (O'Dell & McCarthy, 2010). Even in spoken English people often use English idioms and their lack of understanding and knowledge results in the breakdown of the communication.

As idioms are a crucial component of the acquisition and learning of language, they are considered a natural aspect of social interaction. English idioms help EFL/ESL learners grasp a text and communicate effectively and learners can enhance their overall skills and proficiency in the language (Khan & Can Daskin, 2014; Irujo, 1986). As a result,

* Corresponding Author.

learning and teaching English idioms becomes pivotal in English language learning as their knowledge is the manifestation of one's proficiency in the language. Ellis (1997) argued that one's effective and excellent communication in a second language is directly connected to one's knowledge and mastery of the language. Language learners use idioms because of their adaptability and communicational significance in everyday situations.

English is learned and taught as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. With the kingdom embarking on its ambitious mission of economic diversification, English language proficiency assumes significance in realizing this dream of economic empowerment. Saudi graduates with excellent language skills could transform the country's economy and act as an engine of change and transformation. That is why English departments in Saudi universities lay special emphasis on the instruction of idioms in their EFL classrooms. However, it is being observed that Saudi EFL learners are not well-versed in the use and understanding of English idioms. Therefore, this study will identify the challenges in learning English idioms and offer solutions to enhance Saudi EFL learners' language proficiency.

A. Research Problem

Even after years of learning English in schools and at universities, Saudi graduates have poor English skills. They are particularly deficient in the use and understanding of English idioms. The lack of literature specifically dealing with Saudi EFL learners' attitudes, difficulties, and challenges, and the techniques they adopt for learning and understanding English idioms necessitates a fresh study carried out from learners' perspective.

B. Research Purpose Statement

This study attempts to understand Saudi EFL learners' perceptions toward English idioms, their problems and challenges, and the strategies and patterns of learning they use to learn and understand them while reading a text.

II. Literature Review

Nadeem and Almola (2022) investigated Saudi EFL learners' difficulties and challenges in learning English idioms and highlighted how they were often neglected in EFL classrooms. A questionnaire was designed to collect responses from 50 male and female students. The results revealed that the study respondents had trouble in learning English idioms and using context-based meaning-guessing as the main strategy, translating idioms into their mother tongue, and them into parts to understand their meaning. Orfan (2020) examined the attitudes of Afghan EFL learners, their causes and sources of problems, and the strategies used to understand and learn English idioms. A questionnaire was employed to obtain responses from the 337 study participants. The data was analyzed quantitatively. The results showed that EFL learners were very positive towards the use of English idioms and the main sources of difficulty were unawareness of cultural knowledge, lack of understanding of context and background, and non-availability of equivalents in the mother tongue. Alhaysony (2017) examined the problems of Saudi EFL students in using English idioms and learning their strategies. The data was collected through the Nation's Vocabulary Level Test, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. The results revealed that the learners encountered difficulty in understanding them. The findings also revealed that Saudi EFL learners often used understanding the meaning from context-based guessing, figuring them out from their equivalents in their mother tongue, and predicting the meaning. The study holds implications for learning and understanding idiomatic expressions.

Haghshenas and Hashemian (2016) examined how linguistic, visual, and combination methods improved second-language idiom learning. 80 intermediate English learners from three Isfahan language schools were chosen. Intermediate participants were selected using OPT scores. After that, participants were divided into four groups. People who utilized all three approaches found idiom learning simpler. The results also revealed that idiom learning was best with etymological elaboration/pictorial explanation. The findings hold immense implication for learners interested in finding ways to enhance their mastery of English idioms. Al-kadi (2015) investigated Yemeni EFL students' English idiom comprehension and their idiomatic competence and English proficiency among 63 Taiz University Faculty of Education sophomore English majors. Three idiom tests and a questionnaire were utilized to obtain data from the students. The result showed that students who scored higher on idiom tests fared better on speaking and listening tests. It also revealed EFL students' key problems and solutions in using idiomatic language. Tabatabaei and Gahroei (2011) examined the impact of using movie clips on the quality of English idioms. 60 students aged 16-18 were divided into control and experiment groups with the former getting learning through the traditional method and the latter group getting instruction through movie clips. The results revealed that the experimental group's learning and understanding of English idioms significantly improved. The study holds implications for the effective use of movie clips for teaching English idioms in EFL classrooms.

Tran (2012) examined idiom teaching and learning in a foreign language environment at the university level through a 15-week program for pre-service language instructors. The data was collected via interviews, surveys, and email-guided observations. The results showed moderate idiom learning effectiveness among university teachers and students. The study suggested that idiom learning must be encouraged. Khonbi and Sadeghi (2017) explored how educating idioms through four different methods—short sentence use, movie clip, role-play, and definition —affected learners' idiomatic skills. Two institutes organized an idiom test to assess 47 EFL learners' knowledge of idioms before the experiment. The study respondents were taught 100 idioms. The one-way ANOVA of post-test data showed significant differences across the four idiom teaching approaches. The study holds implications for learning and teaching English idioms to enrich one's vocabulary.

A. Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of Saudi EFL learners towards English idioms?
2. What are the problems of Saudi EFL learners in acquiring and understanding English idioms?
3. What are Saudi EFL learners' patterns of learning and understanding English idioms?
4. Do EFL learners of Saudi Arabia differ in their perceptions, problems, and patterns of learning based on differences in their demography?

B. Hypothesis

H01: There is no difference of any statistical significance in Saudi EFL learners' perceptions towards English idioms based on gender.

H02: There is no difference of any statistical significance in Saudi EFL learners' problems in learning and understanding English idioms based on parents' profession.

H03: There is no difference of any statistical significance in Saudi EFL learners' patterns of learning and understanding English idioms based on their level/year of study.

III. Methodology

A. Design

A quantitative technique (descriptive quantitative design) was selected for the study because it deals with numerical data and analyzes how certain independent variables (study levels, gender, and the professional profile of learners' parents) affect the dependent variables (perceptions, problems, and patterns and strategies of learning and understanding). A quantitative approach is recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2017) when the research consists of data involving statistical and numerical findings.

B. Participants' Description

The study population comprises students enrolled in different undergraduate programs at the College of Business Administration and the College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al-Kharj, Saudi Arabia. All the respondents are Arabic native speakers and use English as a foreign language. They have been studying English as a second language for the last seven/eight years. They are in their early twenties. 458 students were selected through a simple selection approach. Out of the total population, 259 (56.40%) are male, 197 (42.90%) are female, and 2 (0.70%) did not specify their gender.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	259	56.40%
Female	197	42.90%
Others	2	0.70%
Level of Study		
Level 6th to 8th	43	9.40%
Level 4th to 5th	67	14.60%
Level 1st to 3rd	349	76.00%
Parents 'Profession		
Government Job	328	72%
Private Job	43	9.40%
Self-Employment	34	7.40%
No Employment	54	11.80%

C. Data Collection Instrument

Before designing the questionnaire, an in-depth analysis of the existing literature was carried out. While some of the items were self-designed, others were adopted from the existing studies (Alhaysony, 2017; Orfan, 2020). The first part of the questionnaire deals with the demographic profile of EFL learners. In the second part, the first nine items deal with the attitudes of learners with each three elements dealing with different aspects of attitude. The next 9 items deal with EFL learner's problems and challenges in learning and understanding English idioms, and the last nine items deal with Saudi EFL learners' patterns of learning and comprehending English idioms. The respondents were asked to rate their responses on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree=5, agree=4, neutral=3, disagree=2, and strongly disagree= 1.

D. Validity

The English items/questions were translated into Arabic to ensure a better understanding of the questions/items and participants' lack of proficiency in the English language. Two language experts both in English and Arabic validated the translation. A pilot study was carried out to confirm the reliability of the items in the questionnaire. Expert suggestions and comments were incorporated.

E. Data Collection Method

The data was collected from the participants using a questionnaire. The questionnaire link was sent to the student and course teacher groups. The Arabic translation was provided alongside the English language to facilitate the participants to effectively communicate their preferences.

The study participants were given directions to read the separate instructions provided in every section of the questionnaire. Given the guarantee of complete confidentiality and secrecy and the use of the data solely for academic and research purposes, they felt free to express their responses.

F. Data Analysis and Interpretation

When adequate responses were obtained, the data was moved from the Google form to an Excel sheet. For easier calculations, the data was put into SPSS version 23 and was assigned numerical values (strongly agree= 5, agree= 4, neutral= 3, disagree=2, and strongly disagree=1). The range of the 5-point Likert scale was determined by reducing the highest score (5) from the lowest score (1) and dividing the result by the highest score (5). As the questionnaire had only closed-ended questions, the participants' responses were put into a table and evaluated with numbers. Descriptive statistics were used for calculating means, frequency ranges, and standard deviations. One-way ANOVA was carried out to examine differences in the means of responses based on demographic variables. For interpreting and categorizing the level/degree of positive/negative perceptions/attitudes, the following criteria were assumed and adopted.

TABLE 2
ASSUMED SCALE/CRITERIA FOR MEASURING THE DEGREE/LEVEL OF ATTITUDE/PERCEPTION

Mean Square		Level
3. 1 – 4.50		High
1.51 – 3.00		Moderate
1.00 – 1.50		Low

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The statistical findings presented in Table 3 showed that Saudi Arabian EFL learners possessed a high level of positive attitudes/perceptions towards English idioms. It also revealed that Saudi EFL students experienced different kinds of problems and challenges in comprehending and learning English idioms. These problems arose from the deficiency of knowledge about the context of idioms, lack of familiarity with English idioms, due to the variation in the literal interpretations of idioms, lack of their equivalents in the Arabic language, and due to insufficient instruction in EFL classrooms. The findings also showed that Saudi EFL learners use different strategies for acquiring and comprehending English idioms. The most frequently employed method of comprehending and understanding English idioms is the translation of English idioms into the mother tongue followed by the use of idioms in sentences, using a dictionary, use of contexts, group discussions, and breaking down idioms into their parts.

TABLE 3
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS, PROBLEMS, AND PATTERNS OF LEARNING ENGLISH IDIOMS

Questions/ Items	Overall Means
1. Saudi EFL learners' perceptions toward English idioms	4.20
2. Saudi EFL learners' problems in learning English idioms	3.89
3. Saudi EFL learners' patterns of learning English idioms	4.01

TABLE 4
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS THE USE OF ENGLISH IDIOMS

Questions/Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
1	52.8%(242)	36.5%(167)	7.4%(34)	2%(9)	1.3%(6)	4.37
2	52.6%(241)	37.8%(173)	6.8%(31)	1.7%(8)	1.1%(5)	4.39
3	50.7%(232)	36.9%(169)	8.7%(40)	3.1%(14)	0.7%(3)	4.33
4	49.8%(228)	37.8%(173)	9%(41)	2.2%(10)	1.3%(6)	4.32
5	40.4%(185)	39.1%(179)	14.6%(67)	3.7%(17)	2.2%(10)	4.11
6	50.7%(232)	39.3%(180)	7.2%(33)	1.5%(7)	1.3%(6)	4.36
7	48%(220)	37.6%(172)	10%(46)	2.6%(12)	1.7%(8)	4.27
8	36.7%(168)	40.8%(187)	14.8%(68)	5.7%(26)	2%(9)	4.04
9	27.1%(124)	31.9%(146)	27.7%(127)	9.8%(45)	3.5%(16)	3.69
Overall means				4.20		

Table 4 shows the Saudi EFL learners' perception toward the use of English idioms measured through items 1 to 9. As is clear from item no 1 in the table, 89.3% (SA 52.8% & 36.5%) of the respondents agreed that English idioms learning was crucial for a better understanding of everyday language. While 7.4% chose to stay neutral, 2% of the participants expressed disagreement, and 1.3% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.37 which is considered high. In item no 2, 90.4% (SA 52.6% & A 37.8%) agreed that making use of English idioms in conversation was very important for enhancing speaking skills. 6.8% remained neutral, 1.7% disagreed, and 1.1% expressed strong disagreement. The mean is 4.39 which is regarded as high. Regarding item no. 3, 87.6% (SA 50.7% & A 36.9%) of the participants agreed that learning English language idioms increased the beauty of the language. While 8.7% remained neutral, 3.1% disagreed, and 0.7% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.33 which is considered high. As far as item no. 4 is concerned, 87.6% (SA 49.8% & A 37.8%) of the participants agreed that they felt that it was important to motivate EFL learners to learn English idioms for effective communication. 9% of the respondents stayed neutral, 2.25 disagreed, and 1.3% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.32 which is considered high. In the next item no. 5, 79.5% (SA 40.4% & A 39.1%) of respondents agreed that they felt that learning English idioms constituted an integral part of the English language learning process. 14.6% of the participants expressed neutrality, 3.7% disagreed, and 2.2% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.11 which is considered high. About item no. 6, 90% (SA 50.7% & A 39.3%) of the participants agreed that they thought that learning and understanding English idioms was necessary for understanding an English text. 7.2% of the respondents remained neutral, 1.5% disagreed, and 1.3% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.36 which is categorized to be high. In the next item no. 7, 85.6% (SA 48% & A 37.6%) of the participants agreed that they loved to learn English idioms to improve their English language proficiency. 10% of the respondents chose neutral, 2.6% disagreed, and 1.7% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.27 which is considered high. Regarding item no. 8, 77.5% (SA 36.7% & A 40.8%) of the respondents agreed that they paid special attention to English language idioms if they came across them while studying a text. 14.8% chose to remain neutral, 5.7% disagreed, and 2% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.04 which is categorized to be high. In the last item 9, 67% (SA 36.7% & 40.8%) of the respondents agreed that they utilized their spare time for learning and understanding English idioms. While 27.7% of the participants stayed neutral, 9.8% disagreed, and 3.5% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.69 which is considered high.

TABLE 5
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PROBLEMS IN THE USE AND UNDERSTANDING OF ENGLISH IDIOMS

Questions/Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
10	37.3%(171)	34.9%(160)	18.8%(86)	6.8%(31)	2.2%(10)	3.58
11	34.3%(157)	35.2%(161)	23.1%(106)	5.9%(27)	1.5%(7)	3.94
12	38.8%(164)	37.1%(170)	20.3%(93)	5.2%(24)	1.5%(7)	4
13	32.1%(147)	42.8%(196)	19.9%(91)	2.8%(13)	2.4%(11)	3.99
14	34.5%(158)	44.8%(205)	15.5%(71)	3.3%(15)	2%(9)	4.06
15	35.6%(163)	36.7%(168)	18.8%(86)	6.6%(30)	2.4%(11)	3.96
16	36.5%(167)	43.9%(201)	13.5%(62)	3.9%(18)	2.2%(10)	4.08
17	27.7%(127)	35.4%(162)	21.6%(99)	11.8%(54)	3.5%(16)	3.72
18	27.3%(125)	36.2%(166)	24.7%(113)	9.4%(43)	2.4%(11)	376
Overall means				3.89		

Table 5 shows the problems and challenges Saudi EFL learners experience in the use and comprehension of English idioms measured through items 10 to 18. In the first item no. 10, 72.2% (SA 37.3% & A 34.9%) of the respondents agreed that the lack of foreign cultural background knowledge made English idioms challenging to understand. 18.8% of the participants stayed neutral, 6.8% disagreed, and 2.2% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.58 is which considered high according to the scale/criteria adopted in the methodology section of the study. In the next item no. 11, 84.1 % (SA 34.3% & 35.2%) of the respondents agreed that learning idioms was difficult to understand due to insufficient instruction/importance in the EFL classroom. 23.1% of the participants stayed neutral, 5.9% disagreed, and 1.5% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.94 which is considered high. Regarding item no. 12, 75.9% (SA 38.8% & A 37.1%) of the respondents agreed that the absence of idioms in the syllabus made their learning/ acquisition more difficult. While 20.3% of participants chose to remain neutral, 5.2% disagreed, and 1.5% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4 which is categorized to be high. As far as item no. 13 is concerned, 74.9% (SA 32.1% & A 42.8%) of the participants found that the literal meaning of idioms differed from their whole meaning, making them hard to comprehend. 19.9% of the respondents expressed neutrality, 2.8% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.99 which is considered high. In the next item no. 14, 79.3% (SA 34.5% & A 44.8%) of the respondents agreed that the lack of familiarity with idioms served as an obstacle to understanding. 15.5% of the respondents remained neutral, 3.3% disagreed, and 2% strongly disapproved. The mean is 4.06 which is accepted to be high. About item no. 15, 72.3% (SA 35.6% & A 36.7%) of the respondents agreed that idioms posed difficulties as they lacked equivalents in their native language. While 18.8% of respondents stayed neutral, 6.6% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.96 which is considered high. Concerning item no. 16, 80.4% (SA 36.5% & A 43.9%) of the participants agreed that English idioms could be particularly difficult to understand when they were used without any context. 13.5% maintained neutrality, 3.9% disagreed, and 2.2% strongly disapproved. The mean is 4.08 which is categorized to be high. In the next item no. 17, 63.1% (SA 27.7% & A 35.4%) of the respondents agreed that learning idioms in a way that was compatible with their use in ordinary speech was challenging. While 21.6% of respondents remained neutral, 11.8% disagreed, and 3.5% strongly disapproved. The mean is 3.72 which is considered high. In the last item no 18 of this category, 63.5% (SA 27.3% & A 36.2%) of the respondents agreed that using idioms across different communicative contexts was difficult. 24.7% of participants expressed neutrality, 9.4% disagreed, and 2.4% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.76 which is categorized to be high. This analysis answers the second research question.

TABLE 6
SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PATTERNS OF LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING ENGLISH IDIOMS

Questions/Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean
19	33.6%(154)	39.5%(181)	18.6%(85)	6.1%(28)	2.2%(10)	3.96
20	41.5%(190)	42.6%(195)	11.8%(54)	2.4%(11)	1.7%(8)	4.19
21	46.3%(212)	38%(174)	10.5%(48)	2.8%(13)	2.4%(11)	4.22
22	40.4%(185)	37.6%(172)	14.8%(68)	4.8%(22)	2.4%(11)	4.08
23	37.8%(173)	38.6%(177)	17.7%(81)	4.1%(19)	1.7%(8)	4.06
24	35.2%(161)	36.9%(169)	16.6%(76)	8.7%(40)	2.6%(12)	3.93
25	30.6%(140)	38.4%(176)	21.8%(100)	7.4%(34)	1.7%(8)	3.88
26	35.4%(162)	38.2%(175)	17.9%(82)	6.1%(28)	2.4%(11)	3.98
27	31.9%(146)	36.7%(168)	21.2%(97)	7%(32)	3.3%(15)	3.86
Overall means			4.01			

Table 6 shows Saudi EFL learners' patterns of learning and comprehending English idioms measured through items 19 to 27. In the first item no 19 of this category, 73.1% (SA 33.6% & A 39.5%) of the respondents agreed that they broke down idioms into components to understand their meaning. 18.6% of participants preferred to remain neutral, 6.1% disagreed, and 2.2% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 3.96 which is considered high as per the assumed criteria in the methodology section of the study. In item no. 20, 84.1% (SA 41.5% & A 42.6%) of the respondents agreed that they learned idioms by using them in their sentences. While 11.8% of respondents chose to stay neutral, 2.4% disagreed, and 1.7% expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The mean is 4.19 which is categorized to be high. In the next item no. 21, 84.3% (SA 46.3% & A 38%) of the respondents agreed that they usually translated English idioms into Arabic to understand their meanings. 10.5% were neutral, 2.8% disagreed, and 2.4% strongly disapproved. The mean is 4.22 which is considered high. Regarding item no. 22, 78% (SA 40.4% & A 37.6%) of the participants agreed that they used their dictionary to understand the meaning of new idioms. While 14.8% of participants chose to remain neutral, 4.8% disagreed, and 2.4% strongly disapproved. The mean is 4.08 which is considered high. As far as item no 23 is concerned, 76.4% (SA 37.8% & A 38.6%) of the respondents agreed that they interpreted the meaning of idiomatic expressions from the contexts. 17.7% of respondents were neutral, 4.1% disagreed, and 1.7% strongly disapproved. The mean is 4.06 which is considered high. In the next item no. 24, 72.1% (SA 35.2% & A 36.9%) of the respondents agreed that memorization was the most useful technique for them to understand English idioms. While 16.6% chose to stay neutral, 8.7% disagreed, and 2.6% strongly disapproved. The mean is 3.93 which is considered high. About item no. 25, 69% (SA 30.6% & 38.4%) of the respondents agreed that they gained knowledge of idiomatic expressions through regular reviews. 21.8% remained neutral, 7.4% disagreed, and 1.7% strongly disapproved. The mean is 3.88 which is categorized to be high. In the next item no. 26, 73.6% (SA 35.4% & A 38.2%) of the participants agreed that they enhanced their knowledge of idioms through participation in group discussions. 17.9% chose to stay neutral, 6.1% disagreed, and 2.4% strongly disapproved. The mean is 3.98 which is considered high. In the last item no. 27, 68.6% (SA 31.9% & A 36.7%) of the respondents agreed that they learned English idioms through regular written practice. While 21.2% remained neutral, 7% disagreed, and 3.3% strongly disapproved. The mean is 3.86 which is categorized to be high. This analysis answers the third research question.

V. DIFFERENCE IN SAUDI EFL LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARD ENGLISH IDIOMS BASED ON THEIR DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

A. Perceptions of Saudi EFL Learners Towards English Idioms and Gender

The one-way ANOVA results about Saudi learners' perceptions towards learning and comprehending English idioms are displayed in Table 7 below. The findings demonstrate that Saudi EFL learners' gender does not affect their responses because the calculated value of F (2.604593) is smaller than the critical value of F (3.47805). Hence, HO1 is accepted.

TABLE 7
ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	15183.73	4	3795.933	2.604593	0.100063	3.47805
Within Groups	14574	10	1457.4			
Total	29757.73	14				

B. Problems/Challenges of Learning and Understanding English Idioms and Parents' Profession

Table 8 presents the one-way ANOVA findings regarding Saudi EFL learners' problems and challenges in learning and understanding English idioms. The findings demonstrate that Saudi EFL learners' parents' profession does not affect their responses because the calculated value of F (1.03442) is smaller than the critical value of F (3.055568). Hence, HO2 is accepted.

TABLE 8
ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	5314.3	4	1328.575	1.03442	0.421766	3.055568
Within Groups	19265.5	15	1284.367			
Total	24579.8	19				

C. Patterns of Learning and Understanding English Idioms and EFL Learners' Level/Year of Study

Table 9 shows the one-way ANOVA results regarding Saudi EFL learners' patterns and strategies for learning and understanding English idioms. The findings demonstrate that Saudi EFL learners' level/year of study does not affect their responses because the calculated value of F (2.2954) is smaller than the critical value of F (3.055568). Hence, HO3 is accepted. This analysis answers the fourth research question.

TABLE 9
ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	26291.2	4	6572.8	2.2954	0.10709	3.055568
Within Groups	42952	15	2863.467			
Total	69243.2	19				

VI. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The study investigated the perceptions of Saudi EFL learners, their problems, and their patterns of comprehending and learning English idioms. The findings demonstrated that perceptions and attitudes towards learning and understanding English idioms are very positive. This finding is in line with many studies (Al-Houti & Aldaihani, 2018; Keshavarz & Amro, 2019; Ababneh, 2016; Tadayyon & Ketabi, 2014). However certain studies (Al-Zahrani, 2008; Abidin et al., 2012) contradict this finding as they reported negative perceptions among EFL learners. In addition, the research discovered that Saudi EFL learners experienced several challenges when acquiring and comprehending English idioms. One of the major obstacles encountered by students learning English as a second language or as a foreign language is contextual ignorance. A study conducted by Orfan (2020) confirms this finding. The study also found that problems in learning English arose from the lack of familiarity with cultural nuances. This finding is supported by Alhaysony (2017) who found that lack of cultural knowledge caused challenges in understanding English idioms. The study's findings that the lack of proper instruction in EFL classrooms and differences in the literal meanings were the cause of difficulties are corroborated by studies carried out by Anjarini and Hatmanto (2021) and Shahidipour and Tahririan (2018). As far as the strategy and pattern of learning English is concerned, the study found that EFL learners of Saudi Arabia employed various strategies to learn English idioms. The findings revealed that Saudi EFL learners employed several strategies for acquiring and comprehending English idioms. The most frequently employed method is the translation of English idioms into their mother tongue followed by the use of idioms in sentences, the use of a dictionary, and understanding the meaning from the context. This finding is confirmed by Ta'amneh (2021) and Alhaysony (2017) who investigated techniques and challenges in acquiring and comprehending English idioms among university graduates. One more study conducted by Anjarini and Hatmanto (2021) echoed the same findings and found two more strategies for using the internet and connecting the meaning with Bhasha Indonesia for learning English idioms. However, Phan et al. (2022) contradicted these findings and found that the most frequently used strategy is acquiring idioms using keywords and a wide range of sources including media. The analysis also investigated if the difference in Saudi EFL learners' demography caused differences in their perceptions and attitudes toward English idioms. One-way ANOVA analysis found that no difference of any statistical significance existed in their attitudes and perceptions based on their gender. This finding is corroborated by several studies (Ababneh, 2016; Iranmanesh & Darani, 2018; Pucelj, 2018; Orfan, 2020). However, some studies (Abdalhamid, 2021; Abidin et al., 2012) were found to be inconsistent with this finding. The research also revealed that there was no difference of any statistical significance in Saudi EFL learners' problems and English learning strategies based on the parents' profession and year/level of study of the respondents respectively. This finding is in line with many studies. However, certain studies (Pucelj, 2018; Abdalhamid, 2021) contradict this finding as they discovered a significant connection between gender and learning techniques.

VII. CONCLUSION

The research study examined the Saudi EFL learners' perceptions of English idioms, their problems and challenges, and their patterns of learning and understanding English idioms. The findings demonstrated that Saudi EFL learners held highly positive perceptions and attitudes toward English idioms. The result also revealed that they experienced many problems. These difficulties stemmed from a lack of understanding of the context of idioms, unfamiliarity with English idioms, the fact that literal meanings of idioms varied, a lack of Arabic equivalents for them, and insufficient instruction in EFL classrooms. It was also demonstrated that Saudi EFL learners utilized different techniques to comprehend and acquire English idioms. The most frequently employed approach is translating English idioms into their native language, using them in sentences, using a dictionary, guessing from the contexts, group discussions, and breaking English idioms into their constituent parts. The result also showed that gender, parents' professional profile, and year/level of study do not affect the responses of Saudi EFL learners. The findings hold implications they would help the teachers understand students' problems and assist students in acquiring excellent English language skills.

APPENDIX

Questions/Items	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**D**	**SD**
1. 1. Learning English idioms is important for a better understanding of everyday language.					
2. Making use of English idioms in conversation is very important for enhancing speaking skills.					
3. Learning English language idioms increases the beauty of the language.					
4. I feel it is important to motivate EFL learners to learn English idioms for effective communication.					
5. I feel that learning English idioms constitutes an integral part of the English language learning process.					
6. 6. I think learning and understanding English idioms is necessary for understanding an English text.					
7. I love to learn English idioms to improve my English language proficiency.					
8. I pay special attention to English language idioms if I come across them while studying a text.					
9. I utilize my spare time for learning and understanding English idioms.					
10. A lack of foreign cultural background knowledge makes English idioms challenging to understand.					
11. Idioms are difficult to understand due to insufficient instruction/importance in the EFL classroom.					
12. The absence of idioms in the syllabus makes their learning/ acquisition more difficult.					
13. The literal meaning of idioms differs from their whole meaning, making them hard to comprehend.					
14. A lack of familiarity with idioms serves as an obstacle to understanding.					
15. Idioms pose difficulties as they lack an equivalent in my native language.					
16. English idioms can be particularly difficult to understand when they are used without any context.					
17. Learning idioms in a way that is compatible with their use in ordinary speech is challenging.					
18. Using idioms across different communicative contexts is difficult.					
19. I break down idioms into components to understand their meaning.					
20. I learn idioms by using them in my sentences.					
21. I usually translate English idioms into Arabic to understand their meanings.					
22. I use my dictionary to understand the meaning of new idioms.					
23. I interpret the meaning of idiomatic expressions from the contexts.					
24. Memorization is the most useful technique for me to understand English idioms.					
25. I gain knowledge of idiomatic expressions through regular reviews.					
26. I enhance my knowledge of idioms through participation in group discussions.					
27. I learn English idioms through regular written practice.					

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is supported via funding from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University project number (PSAU/2024/R/1445).

REFERENCES

[1] Ababneh, S. (2016). Attitudes of Jordanian EFL students towards learning English idioms. *International Journal of English Language Education*, *4*(1), 172-181. https://doi.org/10.5296/ijele.v4i1.9171

[2] Abdalhamid, F. (2021). Investigating Libyan EFL Learners' Attitudes towards Learning English Idioms. *Sabratha University Scientific Journal*, *1*(5), 1-12.

[3] Abidin, M. J. Z., Pour-Mohammadi, M., & Alzwari, H. (2012). EFL students' attitudes towards learning the English language: The case of Libyan secondary school students. *Asian social science*, *8*(2), 119-134. . http://dx. doi.org/10.5539/ass.v8n2p119

[4] Alhaysony, M. H. (2017). Strategies and difficulties of understanding English idioms: A case study of Saudi University EFL students. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *7*(3), 70-84.

[5] Al-Houti, S. K., & Aldaihani, S. M. (2018). Letting the Cat out of the Bag: EFL College Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Idioms. *International Journal of Higher Education*, *7*(1), 140-150.

[6] Al-kadi, A. M. T. (2015). Towards idiomatic competence of Yemeni EFL undergraduates. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *6*(3), 513-523.

[7] Al-Zahrani, M. (2008). Saudi secondary school male students’ attitudes towards English: An exploratory study. *J. King Saudi University, Language, and translation*, *20*(1), 25-39.

[8] Anjarini, R. D., & Hatmanto, E. D. (2021, December). Challenges and Strategies in Understanding English Idioms: English as a Foreign Language Students’ Perception. In *International Conference on Sustainable Innovation Track Humanities Education and Social Sciences (ICSIHESS 2021)* (pp. 241-247). Atlantis Press.

[9] Cooper, T. C. (1999). Processing of idioms by L2 learners of English. *TESOL quarterly*, *33*(2), 233-262.

[10] Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

[11] Ellis, R. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[12] Haghshenas, M. S. M., & Hashemian, M. (2016). A Comparative Study of the Effectiveness of Two Strategies of Etymological Elaboration and Pictorial Elucidation on Idiom Learning: A Case of Young EFL Iranian Learners. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(8), 140-151.
[13] Iranmanesh, A., & Darani, L. H. (2018). Effects of movies and gender on learning English idiomatic and everyday expressions among Iranian EFL learners. *MOJES: Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, *6*(3), 1-11.
[14] Irujo, S. (1986). Don't put your leg in your mouth: Transfer in the acquisition of idioms in a second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, *20*(2), 287-304.
[15] Keshavarz, M. H., & Amro, M. (2019). Attitude of Muslim students towards English idioms and proverbs. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*, *7*(1), 40-51.
[16] Khan, Ö., & Can Daskin, N. (2014). "You Reap What You Sow" Idioms in Materials Designed by EFL Teacher-Trainees. *Novitas-ROYAL (Research on Youth and Language)*, *8*(2), 97-118.
[17] Khonbi, Z. A., & Sadeghi, K. (2017). Improving English Language Learners' Idiomatic Competence: Does Mode of Teaching Play a Role? *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, *5*(3), 61-79.
[18] Nadeem, N., & Almowalad, S. (2022). Challenges and Strategies of Acquiring English Idioms for EFL Undergraduate Saudi Students. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*, *9*(4), 55-68.
[19] O'Dell, F., & McCathy, M. (2010). *English idioms in use* (Advanced). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
[20] Orfan, S. N. (2020). Afghan EFL students' difficulties and strategies in learning and understanding English idioms. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, *7*(1), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2020.1796228
[21] Phan, N. H., Le, T. V., & Pham, T. T. T. (2022). Learning Idioms for English Majors: Vietnamese Students' Perceptions of Difficulties and Learning Strategies. *European Journal of Education Studies*, *9*(11), 97-121.
[22] Pucelj, M. (2018). *Attitudes towards idioms and idiom learning strategies* (Doctoral dissertation, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Department of English Language and Literature).
[23] Tabatabaei, O., & Gahroei, F. R. (2011). The Contribution of Movie Clips to Idiom Learning Improvement of Iranian EFL Learners. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, *1*(8), 990-1000.
[24] Tadayyon, M., & Ketabi, S. (2014). Iranian EFL Learners' Attitude towards Idioms in English. *Theory & Practice in Language Studies*, *4*(3), 608-612. doi:10.4304/tpls.4.3.608-612
[25] Ta'amneh, M. A. A. A. (2021). Strategies and Difficulties of Learning English Idioms Among University Students. *Journal of Education and Practice*, *12*(23), 76-84.
[26] Tran, H. Q. (2012). An Explorative Study of Idiom Teaching for Pre-Service Teachers of English. *English Language Teaching*, *5*(12), 76-86.
[27] Wu, S. (2008). Effective activities for teaching English idioms to EFL learners. *The Internet TESL Journal*, *14*(3), 4-9.

Mohammad Jamshed got his Ph.D. degree in 2018 from Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, UP (INDIA). His area of interest includes postcolonial literature, travel writings, comparative studies, and ESL/EFL teaching. He has presented papers at conferences and published many articles in journals of repute both in literature and ESL/ESL teaching. He is currently working as an Assistant Professor, Department of English, College of Science & Humanities, Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Al Kharj, 11942, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Abduh Almashy is working as Assistant professor in applied linguistics at Umm Al-Qura University and the head of the English Department. His research interests include L2 Acquisition, EFL Speaking Assessment, Extensive Reading Activities, and Communication Skills.

Mohammad Saleem is currently working as an English Language Lecturer, at the University of Prince Mugrin, Madinah, Saudi Arabia. He has many years of teaching ESL/EFL in different colleges and universities across the Arab world. He has presented many research papers at many international conferences and has a number of research papers which have been published in many international journals of repute.

Wahaj Unnisa Warda has been working in the Department of English Language and Literature, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia for the past ten years. Before that, she worked as a senior lecturer in India for thirteen years. She has presented and published papers at various International conferences and journals in London, India, Australia, and Saudi Arabia. She is a member of various national and international organizations besides being a reviewer for international journals. Her areas of interest are psychoanalysis, Classical Mythology, and detective fiction of the 19th century.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 1010-1019, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.35

Readiness for Autonomy Among CFL Learners: A Malaysian Perspective

Mizhe Xi
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia;
Faculty of Literature and Communication, Xianyang Normal University, China

Ng Chwee Fang*
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Mohd Azidan Abdul Jabar
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Ilyana Jalaluddin
Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

***Abstract*—Learner autonomy is paramount in 21st-century education, representing a crucial qualification for lifelong learning. In the area of Chinese as a second/foreign language (CSL/CFL), it is also an important objective of curriculum instruction. However, there is a dearth of empirical research on learner autonomy in a wide range of cultural contexts and distinct domains of language use, especially in the context of CFL. This study aims to scrutinize the readiness for autonomy of CFL learners within the Malaysian settings. The research utilized a quantitative approach to analyze the data. A closed-ended questionnaire survey was conducted with 600 participants. Specifically, the data were synthesized through descriptive statistical analysis to concretely consider the respondents' readiness for learner autonomy in terms of perception of responsibility, assessment of ability, and engagement in the activities in Chinese learning. Findings indicated that Malaysian CFL learners demonstrated a medium readiness for autonomy in Chinese learning. While participants exhibit a relatively high perception of responsibility for autonomous learning, their ability to assess autonomy in decision-making within Chinese learning is somewhat unsatisfactory. Additionally, they express less enthusiasm about engaging in autonomous learning activities inside and outside the classroom. The current study illuminates theoretical and practical dimensions concerning the readiness for autonomy in Chinese learning among Malaysian CFL learners. Moreover, it is anticipated to offer implications for further studies on autonomy development among CFL learners in analogous contexts.**

***Index Terms*—readiness, learner autonomy, CFL, Malaysian context**

I. Introduction

The notion of learner autonomy has been around for almost forty years, and studies conducted on it have come from various academic fields. As academics acknowledged the value of the "student-centred" paradigm in language instruction, nurturing learner autonomy has also become the ultimate goal of education (Benson, 2007). Concurrently, autonomy is fundamental to developing lifelong learning competencies (Badak & Şenel, 2022; Gavrilyuk, 2015). Learner autonomy is one of the essential attributes for students to face the challenges of the 21st-century educational landscape (Khairallah, 2020). As a result, many scholars, policymakers, and front-line instructors are now concerned about developing learner autonomy (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005; Zimmerman, 2000; Ismail et al., 2020). Furthermore, studies have demonstrated that the perception and implementation of learner autonomy differ across diverse cultural and educational contexts (Gremmo & Riley, 1995; Littlewood, 1999; Benson, 2001; Yıldırım, 2008; Khalymon & Shevchenko, 2017; Şenbayrak et al., 2019; Win, 2022).

In CFL, Sheng and Zhang (2021) emphasized fostering learner autonomy. They argued that students must possess a strong sense of autonomy and persistent willpower to attain proficiency in Chinese. In 2014, Han Ban and the Confucius Institute Headquarters in China published the International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education (ICCLE), declaring that the overall objective of ICCLE is to facilitate learners in acquiring knowledge and skills in the Chinese language. Simultaneously, the curriculum aims to reinforce the purpose of language learning, foster the

* Corresponding Author.

capacity for autonomous and collaborative learning, develop effective learning strategies, and ultimately achieve comprehensive language proficiency. In essence, autonomous learning is one of the crucial goals of teaching Chinese as a foreign or second language.

The Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB 2013-2025) underscores the importance of developing autonomous language learning to enhance learners' language proficiency. However, there has been limited study of learner autonomy in CFL in Malaysia, even though Chinese is considered second only to English as an important international language (Cheong et al., 2019). Malaysian authorities proactively engage universities to provide more opportunities for students to learn foreign languages to become proficient in a third language, such as Chinese, Arabic, French, Spanish, and others. Several public universities have recently introduced Chinese language courses, substantially increasing the number of CFL learners in universities (Tan et al., 2015).

Considering all the arguments above, this study aims to investigate the level of readiness for autonomous learning among CFL undergraduates in the Malaysian context. The empirical investigation in this study intends to address the research gap on learner autonomy in CFL under the Malaysian context. Moreover, it also seeks to provide insights into improving curriculum design and teaching methods for Chinese teachers and informing policymakers on issues such as the development of teacher autonomy, student autonomy training, and language education policy-making. Additionally, it anticipates enriching the results of empirical research on learner autonomy in Malaysia.

II. Literature Review

A. Learner Autonomy

The academic definition of learner autonomy still needs to be more conclusive. Holec first defined *autonomy* in language education as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec, 1981, p. 3). His definition was the most influential and cited in the subsequent literature. Similarly, according to Benson (2011), learner autonomy is the capacity to take control of one's learning. Furthermore, Little (2004), building on Holec's definition, further clarified that learner autonomy not only includes "taking responsibility for determining the purpose, content, rhythm, and method of learning, monitoring its progress, and evaluating its outcomes," but it should also involve "the development and exercise of a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action" (p. 69).

In addition, some other scholars have argued that autonomy is an attitude in which learners take responsibility for their learning (Benson, 2005; Dam, 1995; Littlewood, 1996; Scharle & Szabó, 2000; Wenden, 1991). According to Dickinson (1995), learners' attitudes towards making decisions on their own are essential for the development of autonomy. However, some researchers have pointed out that defining learner autonomy solely regarding autonomous capacity and attitudes is incomplete (Reinders & White, 2011). Because learners can do something but do not put it into practice, such autonomy is meaningless to learners (Candy, 1991; Hedge, 2000; Wenden, 1991). As Wenden (1991) stated, autonomous learners possess the skills and attitudes necessary to manage their learning process effectively. They can also implement the actions associated with these skills and attitudes.

Based on the above discussion, it is evident that there is no consensus on the definition of learner autonomy due to the complexity of its internal elements. Nonetheless, it can be seen that the concept of learner autonomy primarily involves the learner's attitude, ability, and behaviour in taking control or responsibility for their own learning (Benson, 2005; Thavenius, 1999; Wenden, 1991; Dam, 1995; Hedge, 2000; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991; Littlewood, 1996; Reinders & White, 2011).

B. Related Studies on Readiness for Learner Autonomy

Many researchers have emphasized that being informed about students' degree of readiness for autonomy is a prerequisite for developing autonomous learning ability. Readiness for autonomy refers to learners' perceptions of responsibility and their actual autonomous language-learning practices (Cotterall, 1995; Scharle & Szabo, 2000; Chan et al., 2002; Chan, 2003). Cotterall (1995) argues that "before any intervention occurs, it is necessary to gauge learners' readiness for the changes in beliefs and behaviour which autonomy implies" (p. 1). He defines autonomy readiness as the learner's beliefs and experiences regarding their readiness for autonomous behavioural change. Understanding the readiness for learner autonomy not only provides guidance and a foundation for curriculum development, textbook revision, classroom practice, and teacher training (Chan et al., 2002; Yıldırım, 2012) but also enhances learner autonomy and learning effectiveness (Ho & Crookall, 1995; Chan, 2003; Little, 1995; Scharle & Szabo, 2000).

Early empirical studies of learner autonomy readiness mainly focused on Western cultural circles. At the turn of the century, Chan (2001) conducted a groundbreaking study on the perception of learner autonomy among 20 tertiary students in Hong Kong. The study's findings indicated that English language learners in Hong Kong have a degree of autonomy in language learning and are aware of the roles of the teacher and themselves in their learning. The study also showed that students had positive attitudes towards autonomous learning. This study pioneered the study of learner autonomy in a "non-Western" context. Subsequent studies have further confirmed that "non-Western" learners exhibit their characteristics in terms of autonomous learning.

Recently, as the learner-centred pedagogical concept gains recognition and development, many researchers have shown a growing interest in exploring learner autonomy readiness across diverse cultural contexts. Khalymon and Shevchenko (2017) conducted a study examining the readiness of prospective teachers of English as a second language in the Ukrainian context to foster learner autonomy. The study's findings revealed a moderate overall level of autonomy among students. Notably, learners demonstrated a high willingness to assume responsibility for their learning. However, their ability and confidence in autonomous learning were at a medium level. Similarly, Orawiwatnakul and Wichadee (2017) carried out a study with 160 English language learners in Thailand. The findings revealed a high level of belief in autonomous language learning among the learners, while their actual behavioural performance in autonomous learning was moderate.

However, another survey on learner autonomy readiness in Turkish English language preparation programs utilized a questionnaire administered to 250 EFL university students. Results indicated that students were more inclined to recognize the power and authority of their teachers, concurrently expressing a readiness to assume responsibility for their learning (Şenbayrak et al., 2019). Likewise, Win (2022) conducted an empirical study in Myanmar on the perception of learner autonomy among English majors at a local public university. Findings revealed that students believed teachers should primarily be responsible for their in-class learning, while they should take charge of their out-of-class and private learning. Surprisingly, their participation in in-class autonomy was low, and though their out-of-class autonomy was notably higher, it still remained at a low level. Another is a study of learner autonomy readiness among "non-English major" undergraduates in Vietnam. Results indicated that students tended to share responsibility and had some confidence in their ability to learn autonomously. However, they were not active enough in extracurricular autonomous language learning activities (Nguyen & Habók, 2022).

In Malaysia, very few studies have been conducted on the autonomy of ESL learners. These studies have revealed that Malaysian learners exhibit low degree for autonomy in their English language learning. Additionally, they tend to prefer a teacher-centred approach to learning (Thang, 2001, 2005, 2009; Thang & Alias, 2007). Nevertheless, Malik et al. (2013) conducted a study on the readiness of learners' autonomy in Malaysian English preparatory courses. The study found that the students preferred the teacher to have a dominant role in their education. However, they were also confident in their ability to learn autonomously and were motivated to participate in autonomous activities. Their findings differ from those earlier (Thang, 2001, 2005, 2009; Thang & Alias, 2007). The study also reflects that the concept of autonomous language learning, advocated by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, has begun to yield positive results. Nonetheless, there is a lack of research on learner autonomy in Malaysia, particularly regarding autonomy in language learning other than English.

In conclusion, the existing studies on learner autonomy exhibit distinct characteristics: First, discrepancies in learner autonomy emerge across diverse cultural contexts and educational systems. Second, previous investigations into learner autonomy predominantly concentrate on English as a second or foreign language, leaving a void in research on languages beyond English. Last but not least, there needs to be more exploration into learner autonomy readiness in CFL, particularly in Malaysian settings. Hence, this study examines the readiness for autonomy among CFL learners in Malaysia. The aspiration is that this research will enhance comprehension of Malaysian learners' autonomy and offer practical guidance for future study, teaching, and learning in CFL in Malaysia. As a result, the following research question was formulated: Are the CFL learners ready for autonomy in Malaysia? Specifically, how do they perceive their responsibility for autonomous learning, assessment of autonomous learning ability, and engagement in learning activities in Chinese learning?

III. Methods

A. Research Design and Participants

The current study adopts a quantitative research design, employing descriptive statistics to meticulously analyze and elucidate the respondents' readiness for autonomous learning. Conducted at a public university in Selangor, Malaysia, the selection of this institution as the target population arises from its distinction as having the highest number of CFL learners in Malaysia (Sim et al., 2019). Utilizing Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size formula, 600 participants were randomly chosen from this public university. All participants were enrolled in Chinese courses during the second semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, comprising 180 males and 420 females, with ages ranging from 20 to 24 years old.

B. Research Instrument

The research instrument for this study was adapted from the questionnaire designed by Chan et al. (2002), which focuses on students' perceptions of responsibility and ability for autonomous language learning. This questionnaire has been used by numerous researchers and has undergone thorough scrutiny in various contexts (Ustunluoglu, 2009; Sakai et al., 2010; Abdel Razeq, 2014; Zakaria et al., 2017; Cirocki et al., 2019; Hossain & Mustapha, 2020; Tuan, 2021; Nguyen & Habók, 2022). The questionnaire was appropriately modified to suit the educational and cultural context of the present study. The final version consisted of 37 items that assessed learners' perceptions of their responsibility for autonomous learning, ability to learn autonomously, and engagement in autonomous learning activities.

Specifically, in the "Responsibility" section, students were asked, "To what extent do you believe you are responsible for your Chinese course?" This section consisted of 10 Likert scale items ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (completely). In the "Ability" section, students were asked, "If given the opportunity, how good do you consider yourself in the following areas?" This section also consisted of 10 Likert scale items ranging from 1 (very poorly) to 5 (very good). In the "Activities" section, students were asked, "How frequently do you engage in the following activities when learning Chinese?" 17 items were assessed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The instrument's reliability in the present study was high, with an alpha coefficient of 0.92.

C. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

Before collecting the data, the researchers initially contacted the head of the Chinese department at the university. Her permission was sought before starting the survey. Next, the researcher forwarded the link to the questionnaire to the students in their classes through the lecturers in the Department of Chinese. Finally, 600 valid questionnaires were collected. The collected data was organized and analyzed using SPSS 25.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). In addition, this study focuses on analyzing quantitative data using descriptive statistical analysis through the mean comparison method. According to Oxford's (1990) criteria for the mean comparison method, mean scores between 1.0 and 2.4 were considered "low". Mean scores between 2.5 and 3.4 are considered 'medium'. A mean between 3.5 and 5.0 was considered "high." These criteria provided specific information about the respondents' readiness for autonomy in Chinese learning.

IV. RESULTS

The level of readiness for autonomy in Chinese learning

This section focuses on participants' readiness for autonomy in Chinese learning. It was analyzed from three perspectives: (1) the degree of students' perceived responsibility for autonomous learning. (2) the assessment of students' ability to learn autonomously. (3) students' engagement in autonomous learning activities inside and outside the classroom. Descriptive statistics were analyzed for each dimension to assess the degree of readiness of respondents for autonomy in Chinese learning. Table 1 indicates that CFL learners' overall degree of autonomy readiness in Malaysia was at a medium level (M=3.46, SD=0.714). In particular, learners' perceptions of responsibility for autonomous learning were high (M=3.62, SD=0.809). Their decision-making ability for autonomous learning was slightly below the overall mean value and at a medium level (M=3.40, SD=0.773). The lowest scores were recorded for learners' autonomy to participate in activities for learning practices inside and outside the classroom (M=3.36, SD=0.849), which is also at a medium level. It demonstrated that the learners were more aware of the responsibility of autonomous learning, relatively weak in decision-making during the autonomous learning process, and performed less effectively in their autonomous learning behaviours. The following section aims to present and analyze the study results, respectively.

TABLE 1
THE LEVEL OF READINESS FOR AUTONOMY IN CHINESE LEARNING

Variables	N	M	SD	Level
Responsibility	600	3.62	0.809	High
Ability	600	3.40	0.773	Medium
Activity	600	3.36	0.849	Medium
LA	600	3.46	0.714	Medium

A. Learners' Perceptions of Responsibility for Learner Autonomy

This subsection describes the perceptions of CFL learners regarding the responsibilities they should assume in Chinese learning. The results indicated that students' perceptions of their responsibilities in learning Chinese were high (M=3.62, SD=0.809) (see Table 1).

As shown in Table 2, most students agreed they should take more responsibility in learning Chinese and chose "mainly my responsibility". Table 2 shows that the scores of all ten items under the dimension of "responsibility" exceeded the threshold value of 3.5. It indicates that the students clearly understand their responsibilities and roles in learning Chinese. Specifically, the majority of students identified themselves as having primary responsibility for identifying their weaknesses (M=3.71, SD=0.923), stimulating their interest in Chinese learning (M=3.69, SD=0.916), checking their learning progress in class (M=3.65, SD=0.911) and out of class (M=3.66, SD=0.911), setting their learning goals (M=3.64, SD=0.935), and evaluating their Chinese learning (M=3.64, SD=0.885) respectively. Among these items, "To identify my weaknesses in Chinese learning" (M=3.71, SD=0.923) scored higher than the mean for this perspective, recording the highest score. Most students (58.8%) believed identifying their weaknesses in Chinese learning was their primary or full responsibility.

However, the analysis results show that 4 out of 10 items scored lower than the mean value for this perspective. From Table 2, it can be seen that item 8, item 6, item 7, and item 9, in that order, were the options most preferred by the students, with "half of it is my responsibility". That is, students are more likely to share responsibility with the teacher in determining the time (40.5%) and content of activities for learning in the classroom (40.3%), curriculum planning (38.7%), and the selection of learning materials (40.3%). Additionally, some of them (more than 10%) believe that they have "hardly" or "not at all" their responsibility in terms of selecting curriculum materials, determining the content of learning, and selecting classroom activities.

In a nutshell, the findings revealed that participants hold generally positive perceptions regarding their responsibilities in learning Chinese. Most of them perceive their responsibility in Chinese learning to identify their weaknesses, stimulate their interest in learning, set learning goals, and assess their learning effectiveness. It can be concluded that CFL learners in Malaysia have a stronger sense of autonomous responsibility and belief in learning Chinese.

TABLE 2
LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES DURING CHINESE LEARNING

Statement	Not mine at all (%)	Hardly mine (%)	Half mine (%)	Mostly mine (%)	Totally mine (%)	**M**	**SD**
4.To identify my weaknesses in Chinese learning	1.2	7.3	32.7	37.5	21.3	3.71	0.923
3.To stimulate my interest in Chinese learning	1.5	5.8	36	35.8	20.8	3.69	0.916
2.To check how much progress I make outside Chinese class	1.8	6.3	35	37.5	19.3	3.66	0.921
1.To check how much progress I make in Chinese class	1.2	7.3	36.3	36	19.2	3.65	0.911
5.To set learning goals in my Chinese course	2	7	35	36.8	19.2	3.64	0.935
10.To evaluate my Chinese learning	1.7	5	39	36.8	17.5	3.64	0.885
8.To decide how long to spend on each activity in Chinese lessons	1.7	6.7	40.5	33.5	16	3.58	0.898
6.To decide what I should learn next in Chinese lessons	1.5	8.5	38.7	35.8	15.5	3.55	0.905
7.To choose what activities to use in Chinese lessons	1.3	8.5	40.3	34.2	15.7	3.54	0.902
9.To choose what materials to use for Chinese learning	1.2	9	40.3	33.5	16	3.54	0.905

B. Learners' Perceptions of Their Abilities to Act Autonomously

This subsection presents the respondents' assessment of their autonomous learning ability in learning Chinese. The results indicated that the respondents' perception of their ability to learn autonomously was not optimistic. As shown in Table 3, most students considered their ability to learn Chinese autonomously "average".

This perspective covered ten items; only item 9 (M=3.57, SD=0.902) scored more than 3.5. It indicates that students were more confident in identifying their weaknesses, with 51.5% choosing "good" or "very good" options. However, the scores for the remaining nine items were moderate, with mean values ranging from 3.34 to 3.43.

More specifically, the mean values for the items, such as *assessing Chinese learning* (M=3.43, SD=0.889), *selecting learning materials for Chinese class* (M=3.42, SD=0.904), *determining the time for each activity in Chinese class* (M=3.42, SD=0.885), and *selecting learning activities for Chinese class* (M=3.40, SD=0.906), were higher than the overall mean for this dimension (M = 3.40, SD = 0.773). It indicates that participants were moderately confident in assessing learning, selecting learning materials, and determining the content and timing of classroom activities.

Furthermore, the items for *choosing learning activities outside the Chinese class*(M=3.37, SD=0.910), *choosing learning objectives in the Chinese class* (M=3.36, SD=0.898), *deciding the next topic of the Chinese lessons* (M=3.35, SD=0.902), *choosing learning objectives outside the Chinese class* (M=3.34, SD=0.899), and *choosing learning materials outside the Chinese class* (M=3.34, SD=0.899) had scores slightly lower than the overall mean value for the dimension. It indicates that participants lack confidence in choosing extracurricular activities, defining learning objectives, determining instruction content, and selecting extracurricular learning materials. Nearly 50% of the respondents consider their abilities in these areas "OK". According to Chan et al. (2002), if the participants' response is "OK", it indicates weakness in a specific aspect.

In short, CFL learners in Malaysia exhibited moderate autonomy in their decision-making abilities during their learning process. Furthermore, this study suggested that learners need more confidence in deciding on pertinent learning content and activities beyond the classroom. In these external learning environments, learners needed more appropriate training for organizing educational materials and activities due to the absence of teacher supervision. Conversely, the study illustrated that CFL learners in Malaysia relied more on teachers' classroom instruction and guidance in Chinese learning.

TABLE 3
STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ABILITIES TO ACT AUTONOMOUSLY WHILE LEARNING CHINESE

Statement	Very poor (%)	Poor (%)	Average (%)	Good (%)	Very good (%)	M	SD
9.Identifying my weaknesses in Chinese learning	2	6.3	40.2	35.5	16	3.57	0.902
10.Evaluating my Chinese learning	2	8.5	46.7	30.2	12.7	3.43	0.889
5.Choosing learning materials in Chinese class	2.3	9.3	44.8	31.2	12.3	3.42	0.904
8.Deciding how long to spend on each activity in Chinese lessons	2.2	8.8	46	31.3	11.7	3.42	0.885
1.Choosing learning activities in Chinese class	2.7	9.2	45.3	31	11.8	3.4	0.906
2.Choosing learning activities outside Chinese class	2.8	9.3	47.8	28.2	11.8	3.37	0.91
3.Choosing learning objectives in Chinese class	2.7	9.2	48.8	27.8	11.5	3.36	0.898
7.Deciding the next topic of the Chinese lessons	3	9.8	49.3	27.5	11.3	3.35	0.902
4.Choosing learning objectives outside Chinese class	2.8	10	48.5	28	10.7	3.34	0.899
6.Choosing learning materials outside Chinese class	3.3	8.8	49	28.5	10.3	3.34	0.899

C. Learners' Engagement in Autonomous Activities Inside and Outside the Class

This subsection describes the results of the respondents' activities inside and outside the classroom, reflecting their behavioural performance in autonomous learning. The analysis is based on 17 items, as shown in Table 4. According to Table 1, the mean score for this dimension is 3.36 (SD = 0.849), indicating a medium level. It means most respondents only "sometimes" engaged in Chinese learning activities inside and outside the classroom, as detailed in Table 4.

In particular, the activities of "taking notes" (M=3.61, SD=1.056) and "using external resources (internet/app)" (M=3.5, SD=0.996) were the most frequently used by participants. The mean values of both items exceeded the critical value of 3.5, with 57.5% and 49.3% of participants considering themselves to be "often" or "always" engaged in these two activities. The results also revealed that students were moderately inclined to learn through various activities. Among them, the mean values for item 2, item 5, item 8, item 17, item 9, and item 14 were higher than the overall mean of the dimension.

However, for the items, *completing non-compulsory assignments* (M=3.35, SD=0.986), *asking questions to the teacher* (M=3.35, SD=0.967), and *making a plan to learn Chinese* (M=3.35, SD=0.946), the percentage of students who chose "sometimes" reached 43%, 44%, and 46.3%, respectively. The number of participants did not frequently engage in these learning activities. As for the items, *listening to Chinese songs* (M=3.33, SD=0.953), *attending self-study centres to improve Chinese* (M=3.26, SD=1.065), *visiting Chinese teacher to ask about study tasks*(M=3.25, SD=0.988), *reading materials (books/newspapers) in Chinese* (M=3.23, SD=1.017), *talking to foreigners in Chinese* (M=3.16, SD=1.023), and *suggesting to my Chinese teacher* (M=3.15, SD=1.044) scored lower than the mean for the overall dimension. It indicates that most participants engaged in the listed activities infrequently, with over 20% reporting "never" or "rarely" participating in activities such as self-study centres, reading Chinese materials, chatting with foreigners, and advising Chinese language teachers. The social and cultural environment in which the learners live may influence this.

Based on the findings above, CFL learners in Malaysia do not actively participate in Chinese learning activities on their initiative, which could be the primary reason for the unsatisfactory level of learner autonomy in this context.

TABLE 4
STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN AUTONOMOUS ACTIVITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CLASS

Statement	Never (%)	Rarely (%)	Sometimes (%)	Often (%)	Always (%)	M	SD
15.Taken notes during Chinese lessons	2	15	25.5	34.7	22.8	3.61	1.056
16.Used external resources(internet/app) while learning Chinese	2.8	11.2	36.7	32	17.3	3.5	0.996
2.Note down new words and their meanings while Chinese learning	3.7	16.5	28	33	18.8	3.47	1.085
5.Watch TV shows/dramas/movies in Chinese	2.8	13.7	34.8	33.2	15.5	3.45	1.001
8.Practice speaking Chinese with my friends	2.7	12.3	37.7	32.7	15.7	3.44	0.974
17.Discussing learning problems with classmates	2.8	10.8	42.2	29.7	14.5	3.42	0.96
9.Engage in group studies in Chinese lessons	4	11.3	41.2	30	13.5	3.38	0.986
14.Summarize my studies while learning Chinese	3.5	12	41.8	29.7	13	3.37	0.971
1.Complete non-compulsory assignments while Chinese learning	4.3	11.2	43	28.5	13	3.35	0.986
11.Ask the teacher questions when I don't understand in Chinese learning	3.2	12.5	44	27	13.3	3.35	0.967
13.Plan my Chinese study	3.2	11.2	46.3	26.7	12.7	3.35	0.946
6.Listen to Chinese songs	2.7	15.3	39.7	31.3	11	3.33	0.953
10.Attend the self-study center to improve my Chinese level	6.5	15.7	35.5	30.8	11.8	3.26	1.065
3.Visit Chinese lecturer to inquire about learning tasks	5.3	13.5	41.7	29.7	9.8	3.25	0.988
4.Read materials(books/newspapers) in Chinese	5.7	15.5	39.5	29	10.3	3.23	1.017
7.Talk to foreigners in Chinese	7.7	14.3	40.3	29.5	8.2	3.16	1.023
12.Make suggestions to my Chinese teacher	7.3	16.3	40.5	26	9.8	3.15	1.044

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings from previous analyses, the level of autonomy readiness among Malaysian CFL learners is medium; that is, they are not ready to learn Chinese autonomously. Specifically, there are differences in learners' perceptions of the internal elements of learner autonomy.

The results of this study indicated that CFL learners in Malaysia had a strong sense of responsibility when it came to learning Chinese. It was particularly evident in their willingness to identify learning goals, determine their weaknesses, stimulate their interest in learning, and evaluate their learning performance. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Tuan (2021), which also demonstrated that Vietnamese learners exhibit a strong awareness of autonomous learning in the context of English language acquisition.

However, the study also showed that students preferred to share responsibility with the teacher to determine the timing and content of classroom learning activities, plan the curriculum, and select learning materials. Some students even believed that the teacher should bear the primary responsibility. One of the reasons for this is that in Asian culture, the teacher is often regarded as the most authoritative figure and plays a dominant role in teaching and learning. As mentioned earlier, the traditional teaching model influences Malaysian learners, and students are also more dependent on their teachers (Thang, 2001, 2005, 2009; Thang & Alias, 2007). The present study is consistent with the findings of many studies on Asian students (Abdel Razeq, 2014; Alrabai, 2017; Chan et al., 2002; Lin & Reinders, 2019). It further indicates that teachers play an essential role in the development of learner autonomy. It is crucial to explore new teaching methods at a later stage to enhance the collaborative teaching approach between teachers and students.

As for assessing the ability to learn autonomously among CFL learners, the results indicated that they perceived their ability in this perspective to be limited and below the overall average. It indicates that learners lacked sufficient confidence in making decisions while learning Chinese. In particular, their performance in selecting learning materials, establishing learning objectives, and choosing learning activities outside the classroom is unsatisfactory. It contrasts previous findings that indicated a sense of responsibility and awareness of the crucial role of autonomous learning. However, their decision-making abilities are insufficient, and they rely heavily on the teacher. In addition, it was also suggested that the teacher in the classroom assumed responsibility and exercised authority in deciding and carrying out classroom activities with the students, which helped build their confidence (Little, 1996). Students' autonomy outside the classroom has yet to be developed. This result is inconsistent with previous findings in the literature, which suggest that learners appear confident in their ability to learn autonomously (Şenbayrak et al., 2019; Nguyen & Habók, 2022; Abdel Razeq, 2014; Alrabai, 2017).

The results of the practical activities of autonomous learning engagement are unsatisfactory. The results of this study are consistent with previous related studies (Orawiwatnakul & Wichadee, 2017; Nguyen & Habók, 2022). The overall scores in this perspective are moderate, with most learners' autonomous activities being infrequent and characterized as "sometimes". It is especially true when making suggestions to Chinese teachers, conversing with foreigners in Chinese, reading Chinese materials (books/newspapers), visiting Chinese lecturers to inquire about learning tasks and attending the self-study center to improve proficiency in Chinese. On the one hand, the cause is still influenced by traditional Malaysian culture. Learners have a strong respect for the teacher's authority and are not adept at asking questions or offering suggestions to the teacher. On the other hand, Chinese is considered a foreign language among participants in Malaysia, and its influence is not as significant as that of English. Additionally, learners need a stronger inclination to engage in activities such as studying materials, visiting self-learning centers, or conversing with foreigners. It can be seen that there is a difference in learners' perception and practice of autonomous learning. This difference is mainly due to the influence of the traditional mode of delivery, in which students do not have the right to choose the content of teaching and activities, nor can they decide on the content of learning and the form of assessment. They are heavily dependent on the teacher in the learning process.

The current findings also align with Liu's (2015) report, which explored Taiwanese learners' autonomous behaviours. According to the study, learners' perceptions of responsibility were satisfactory, with a mean of over 3.5. As for learners' perception of autonomous learning ability, it was considered average. In contrast, learners were seldom actively involved in activities inside and outside the classroom, indicating their engagement in Chinese learning was highly unsatisfactory. Other studies also support the notion that Malaysian students rely much on their educators, though on a different measure from the one used in this study (Thang & Alias, 2007; Thang, 2009). It indicates the cause of the inadequate level of autonomy among Malaysian students. According to Jones (1995), autonomy is embedded in cultural values, and the socio-cultural context determines learners' perceptions of responsibilities, abilities and activities.

This study affirms that CFL learners in Malaysia are still teacher-dependent learners. Someone intricately linked this phenomenon to the enduring influence of the traditional teaching model and the cultural milieu prevalent in Malaysia. Malaysia bears the influence of British colonial culture, and concurrently, it is steeped in the dogma of religious culture, both of which exist in profound reverence for educators, exemplified by the prevalent practice in Malay culture wherein teachers have bestowed canes when parents enrol their children in schools or religious gatherings. It symbolizes the bestowed high authority, respect, and trust upon teachers in their role as educators (Tang, 2007). Accordingly, students undergo training to accord due respect and acceptance to the knowledge imparted by teachers. As a result, teachers wield unequivocal authority in the teaching process, leading students to develop a reliance on them. This dependence, in turn, results in a deficiency of confidence in autonomous decision-making during learning, consequently influencing the level of engagement in autonomous activities.

VI. Conclusion

This investigation scrutinized the readiness for learner autonomy among CFL learners enrolled in a Malaysian public university. Despite the participants exhibiting fair perceptions and attitudes towards learner autonomy, the study revealed inadequacies in their readiness for autonomous learning. They continued to exhibit a notable dependence on the teacher. Furthermore, participants demonstrated reduced involvement in autonomous language learning activities within and beyond the classroom setting. This diminished engagement may be both a result of and a contributing factor to their lower proficiency in Chinese.

Given this circumstance, educational institutions should reassess their pedagogical approach to autonomous learning. They should actively promote student engagement in extracurricular autonomous activities to bolster Chinese proficiency. Moreover, educators should strive to devise more effective strategies to foster student involvement within the instructional process. For instance, project-based learning allows students to make decisions and assume greater responsibility for their academic advancement. A genuinely student-centred approach can be realized by collaboratively shaping the syllabus design, enabling learners and teachers to jointly determine the content and teaching activities.

Investigators could explore learner autonomy across various academic levels and disciplines for future research. It would facilitate comparisons with existing studies, unveil distinct characteristics of learner autonomy, and offer improved guidance for teaching practices. Additionally, there is a need for further qualitative research to enhance our comprehension of the factors influencing learner autonomy performance. This inquiry should elucidate the reasons for the limited readiness for learner autonomy within the Malaysian context.

In summary, this study has laid the groundwork for understanding the autonomy among CFL learners in Malaysia. Additional research findings focusing on autonomy in Chinese as a foreign language within this context are anticipated to provide valuable guidance for language teaching practices. Furthermore, such research endeavours have the potential to foster the development of learners' autonomy, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of their proficiency in Chinese during subsequent stages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We sincerely appreciate all respondents who participated in this study.

REFERENCES

[1] Alrabai, F. (2017). From teacher dependency to learner independence: a study of Saudi learners' readiness for autonomous learning of English as a Foreign Language. Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: *Gulf Perspectives*, *14*(1), 70-97.

[2] Abdel Razeq, A. A. (2014). University EFL learners' perceptions of their autonomous learning responsibilities and abilities. *RELC Journal*, *45*(3), 321-336.

[3] Boekaerts, M., & Corno, L. (2005). Self-Regulation in the Classroom: A Perspective on Assessment and Intervention. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, *54*(2), 199–231.

[4] Badak, E. F., & Şenel, M. (2022). The relationship between learner autonomy attitudes and lifelong learning tendencies of prospective English language teachers. *Gazi Üniversitesi Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, *1*(1), 339-362.

[5] Benson, P. (2001). *Teaching and Researching Autonomy in Language Learning*. Longman.

[6] Benson, P. (2005). (Auto)biography and learner diversity. In P. Benson, & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Learners stories: difference and diversity in language learning* (pp. 4-21). Cambridge University Press.

[7] Benson, P. (2007). Autonomy in language teaching and learning. *Language Teaching*, *40*(1), 21–40. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444806003958

[8] Benson, P. (2011). *Teaching and Researching: Autonomy in Language Learning*. Routledge. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833767

[9] Candy, P. (1991). *Self-direction for lifelong learning: A comprehensive guide to theory and practice*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

[10] Cotterall, S. (1995). Readiness for autonomy: Investigating learner beliefs. *System*, *23*(2), 195-205.

[11] Chan, V. (2001). Readiness for learner autonomy: What do our learners tell us?. *Teaching in higher education*, *6*(4), 505-518.

[12] Chan, V., M. Spratt & G. Humphreys. (2002). Autonomous language learning: Hong Kong tertiary students' attitudes and behaviours. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, *16*(1), 1–18.

[13] Chan, V. (2003). Autonomous language learning: The teachers' perspectives. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *8*(1), 33-54.

[14] Cirocki, A., Anam, S., & Retnaningdyah, P. (2019). Readiness for autonomy in English language learning: The case of Indonesian high school students. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, *7*(2), 1-18.

[15] Confucius Institute Headquarters & Han Ban. (2014). *International Curriculum for Chinese Language Education*, Beijing Language and Culture University Press.

[16] Cheong, K. M., Jano, Z., Salam, S., Bareed, N. A., Ithnin, F., & Suraidi, N. (2019). Motivational Factors Among Undergraduates Learning Chinese: A Qualitative Perspective. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, *8*(2), 187–199.

[17] Dam, L. (1995). *Learner autonomy 3: From theory to classroom practice*. Authentik.

[18] Dickinson, L. (1995). Autonomy and motivation: A literature review. *System*, *23*(2), 165–174.

[19] Gavrilyuk, O. A. (2015). Autonomy as a Core Value of Lifelong Learning. Journal of Siberian Federal University. *Humanities & Social Sciences*, *8*(11), 2283–2290. https://doi.org/10.17516/1997-1370-2015-8-11-2283-2290

[20] Gremmo, M. J., & Riley, P. (1995). Autonomy, self-direction and self access in language teaching and learning: The history of an idea. *System*, *23*(2), 151-164.https://doi.org/10.1016/0346-251X(95)00002-2

[21] Holec, H. (1981). *Autonomy in foreign language learning*. Pergamon.

[22] Ho, J., & Crookall, D. (1995). Breaking with Chinese cultural traditions: Learner autonomy in English language teaching. *System*, 23(2), 235-243.

[23] Hossain, M. M., & Mustapha, S. M. B. (2020). The relationship between learner autonomy readiness and English language performance of undergraduates at public universities in Bangladesh. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, *16*(1), 82-92.

[24] Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford university press.

[25] Ismail, F., Yunus, M. M., & Zahidi, A. M. (2020). Promotion of Learner Autonomy: Beliefs and Practices from the ESL Teachers' Perspectives. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, *9*(2), 309–317.

[26] Jones, J.F. (1995). Self-access and Culture Retreating from Autonomy. *ELT Journal*, *49*(3), 228-234.https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/49.3.228.

[27] Khairallah, M., Fleonova, O., & Nicolas, M. O. (2020). Understanding Students' Resistance to Autonomous Learning in an L2 English Language Course at a University in Lebanon. *European Journal of Education (EJE)*, *3*(1), 20-38.

[28] Khalymon, I., & Shevchenko, S. (2017). Readiness for Learner Autonomy of Prospective Teachers Minoring in English.

Advanced Education, *4*(8), 65–71. https://doi.org/10.20535/2410-8286.107296
[29] Krejcie, R. V. and Morgan, D.W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological measurement*, *30*(3), 607-610.
[30] Little, D. (1995). Learning as dialogue: The dependence of learner autonomy on teacher autonomy. *System*, *23*(2), 175– 182.
[31] Little, D. (2004). Learner autonomy, teacher autonomy and the European Language Portfolio. *UNTELE, Université de Compiègne*, 17-20.
[32] Littlewood, W. (1996). “Autonomy”: An anatomy and a framework. *System*, *24*(4), 427-435.
[33] Littlewood, W. (1999). Defining and developing autonomy in East Asian contexts. *Applied Linguistic*, *20*(1), 71-94. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.1.71
[34] Lin, L., & Reinders, H. (2019). Students’ and teachers’ readiness for autonomy: Beliefs and practices in developing autonomy in the Chinese context. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *20*, 69-89.
[35] Liu, H. J. (2015). Learner autonomy: The role of motivation in foreign language learning. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, *6*(6), 1165-1174.
[36] Malik, F. A., Asraf, R. M., Othman, K., & Muhamad, A. J. (2017). EFL Pre-University Students’ Readiness for Learner Autonomy: Does culture matter? *Asian EFL Journal*, *(101)*, 83-95.
[37] Nguyen, S. Van, & Habók, A. (2022). Non-English major students’ perceptions of aspects of their autonomous language learning. *Language Learning in Higher Education*, *12*(1), 231–253.
[38] Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know* (1sted.). Heinle ELT.
[39] Orawiwatnakul, W., & Wichadee, S. (2017). An investigation of undergraduate students’ beliefs about autonomous language learning. *International Journal of Instruction*, *10*(1), 117–132. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2017.1018a
[40] Reinders, H. & White, C. (2011). Learner Autonomy and New Learning Environments. *Language Learning & Technology*, *15*(3), 1–3.
[41] Şenbayrak, M., Ortaçtepe, D., & Trimble, K. (2019). An exploratory study on Turkish EFL learners’ readiness for autonomy and attitudes toward self-access centers. *TESOL Journal*, *10*(2), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.401
[42] Sim, M. S., Khin, L. S., & K. Sankaran, S. S. A. (2019). The Error Analysis of Learning Chinese Endocentric Phrases among the Malay Students in Malaysia. *International Journal of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics*, *3*(2), 49-62.
[43] Sakai, S., Takagi, A, & Chu, M.P. (2010). Promoting Learner Autonomy: Student Perceptions of Responsibilities in a Language Classroom in East Asia. *Educational Perspectives*, *43*(1), 12–27.
[44] Sheng, L & Zhang,Y. H.(2021). Han guo han yu xue xi zhe er yu zi wo dui zi zhu xue xi xing wei ying xiang de shi zheng yan jiu[An empirical study on the efficient of Chinese learners’L2 self on autonomous learning behavior in Korea]. *Language Teaching and Research*, *209*(3), 45-57.
[45] Scharle, A., & Szabó, A. (2000). *Learner Autonomy: A Guide to Developing Learner Responsibility.* Cambridge University Press.
[46] Thavenius, C. (1999). Teacher autonomy for learner autonomy. In S. Cotterall, & D. Crabbe (Eds.), *Learner autonomy in language learning: Defining the field and effecting change* (pp. 159-163). Peter Lang.
[47] Thang, S.M. (2001). *Malaysian learners' conceptions of their learning processes and their perceptions of their English as a Second Language courses in a tertiary distance learning context*. [Unpublished PhD thesis]. University of Nottingham.
[48] Thang, S. M. (2005). Investigating Malaysian distance learners’ perceptions of their English Proficiency Courses, *Open Learning*, *20*(3), 243-256.
[49] Thang, S. M. & Alias, A. (2007). Investigating readiness for autonomy: a comparison of Malaysian ESL undergraduates of three public universities. *Reflections on English Language Teaching*, *6*(1), 1-18.
[50] Thang, S. M. (2009). Investigating Autonomy of Malaysian ESL Learners: Comparison between Public and Private Universities. 3L Language, Linguistics and Literature. *The South East Asia Journal of English Language Studies*. *Vol 15*, 97-124.
[51] Tuan, D. M. (2021). Learner autonomy in English language learning: Vietnamese EFL students’ perceptions and practices. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *11*(2), 307-317.
[52] Tan, T. G., Ismail, H. N., Hoe, F. T., & Ho, C. C. (2015). The motivation of undergraduates learning Chinese as a foreign language. *Academia Journal UiTMT*, *4*(1), 1-16.
[53] Üstünlüoğlu, E. (2009). Autonomy in language learning: Do student take responsibility for their learning? *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education*, *5*(2), 148-169.
[54] Wenden, A. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. Prentice Hall.
[55] Win, C. C. (2022). Myanmar English majors’ perceptions of learner autonomy in Learning English at tertiary level. *Journal of Adult Learning, Knowledge and Innovation*, *5*(2), 79–90. https://doi.org/10.1556/2059.2022.00059
[56] YILDIRIM, Ö. (2008). Turkish EFL learners’ readiness for learner autonomy. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *4*(1)，65-80.
[57] Yıldırım, S. (2012). Teacher support, motivation, learning strategy use, and achievement: A multilevel mediation model. The *Journal of Experimental Education*, *80*(2), 150-172.
[58] Zakaria, N. L., Aziz, A. A., & Ramayah, K. (2017). Language learning strategies and learner autonomy in learning Japanese. *Journal of Advanced Research in Social and Behavioural Sciences*, *9*(3), 50-60.
[59] Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). *A*ttaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13–39). Academic Press.

Mizhe Xi was born in 1982 in China. In 2010, she obtained her Master's degree in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics from Xi'an International Studies University, China. She is presently a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her main academic interests are Teaching Chinese as a Second or Foreign Language, Literacy Studies. To date, she has published and presented numbers of papers in international and national journals and conferences. She is experienced in teaching Chinese as a second or foreign language and has been teaching Chinese to native and non-native speakers for over 14 years.

Ng Chwee Fang is currently a senior lecturer and PhD supervisor at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her main research interests involve Chinese linguistics, comparative linguistics, psycholinguistics, and language typology. Currently, she has published several papers in national and international journals and one academic book.

Mohd Azidan Abdul Jabar is a professor and PhD supervisor at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. His main research interesting involves discourse studies, Arabic linguistics, Arabic language and literature. Currently, he has published a number of articles and books.

Ilyana Jalaluddin is currently at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. She is a senior lecturer and PhD supervisor. Her main research areas include TESL, writing in ESL contexts. She has published several academic papers.

ISSN 1798-4769
Journal of Language Teaching and Research, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 1020-1028, May 2024
DOI: https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.1503.36

Thomas Davis' "The Sack of Baltimore": A Literary-Historical Perspective

Nisreen T. Yousef
Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts and Educational Sciences, Middle East University, Amman, Jordan

***Abstract*—This article is an attempt to read Thomas Davis' poem "The Sack of Baltimore" (1845) from a literary-historical perspective. It explores Davis' representation of the sack of Baltimore village, West Cork, Ireland as a historical event depicted from a literary angle. A typical nineteenth-century historical Irish ballad, "The Sack of Baltimore" has not only remained at the margins of literary studies, but even where it has received attention, it has mainly been treated as a historical source material on an Algerian piratical raid that has come to be called "the sack of Baltimore". This paper proposes that we need to reread the Irish poet's narrative poem with a stronger interest both in its literary composition and historical contexts. Only in this way would it be possible to do justice and draw more sustained attention to this hitherto understudied lyrical narrative poem.**

***Index Terms*—Thomas Davis, "The Sack of Baltimore", Algerine corsairs, historical ballad**

I. Introduction

The sack of the seaport village of Baltimore in southwestern Ireland was perhaps the most catastrophic invasion ever mounted by Algerian corsairs on Ireland or England. In 1631 the village of Baltimore was sacked when "a joint force consisting of 230 elite troops of the Turkish Ottoman Empire and pirates from the Barbary Coast of North Africa stormed ashore at the little port of Baltimore … and spirited almost all the villagers away to a life of slavery in Algiers" (Ekin, 2012, p. 10). The group was led by the Dutch sailor and pirate Morat (or Murat) Rais, formerly known as Jan Jansen or "Janszoon van Haarlem". The pirates abducted around 107 Baltimore inhabitants, men, women, and children and took them to the port of Algiers. It is unknown what happened to the victims, but many of them are believed to have ended their life in the slave market of Algiers. Memories of the raid have been kept alive by poems such as Thomas Davis' (1814–1845) "The Sack of Baltimore", the subject of this study.

II. Literature Review

Over the years, the exotic Baltimore raid has captured the imagination of many writers of screenplays, songs, and historical fiction. Nevertheless; there is hardly any study that discusses Davis' poem as a literary work in its own right. All we have are general references to the poet's life and works or to the ballad itself, scattered in the introductions to some anthologies of Davis' poems or in historical works dealing with the Baltimore raid ranging from general references to the event to short articles and full-length books.

An early reference to Thomas Davis and his poem occurs in Mitford's (1852) memoirs where the author praises the literary merits of Davis' poems and in particular his poem "The sack of Baltimore". In her brief introduction to the poem, she only makes general comments without giving any specific details.

Wallis (1846) passionately praises Davis as a "genuine poet", statesman, thinker, and writer. Tracing the development of Davis' life from early childhood through his education, his role in Irish politics, and his contribution to *the Nation*, an Irish national weekly newspaper, and to Irish literature, Wallis highlights the poet's merits and diversified talents.

Barnby's (1969) article is a comprehensive account of the events of the Baltimore raid as well as its historical origins and consequences. In his other article, Barnby (1970) focuses on the reasons for the delay of "a King's ship lying at anchor in Kinsale harbour only 40 miles away to the east" at the time of the raid on Baltimore to respond to the Baltimore attack. Both articles make useful references to Davis' poem.

Moody (1966) surveys in some detail Davis' personal and public life, his career as a politician, writer, and journalist, underscoring Davis's patriotism, nationalism, and interest in history. His article also contains some passing remarks on Davis' prose and poetry.

Brown's (1973) study examines the history of Irish literature from Davis to Yeats. Brown maintains that Davis' political leadership and nationalistic verse contributions made him perhaps the most significant Irish literary figure in the 1840s. Although he gives a comprehensive survey of the poetry published in *the Nation,* Brown does not make any particular reference to "The Sack of Baltimore".

In her article, Murray (2006) traces the journey of Morat Rais from Algerine to Baltimore and his return with the Baltimore captives to the slave market of the Barbary Coast. Besides providing a comprehensive account of the raid, she mulls over the probable events that happened aboard the two ships carrying the captives and the different fates awaiting them in Algiers.

Bekkaoui (2010, p. 276) refers specifically to the Baltimore raid as part of the long series of Algerine piratical operations in Europe. Additionally, he provides a few historical sources for an insightful study of the Baltimore raid, including "The Sack of Baltimore".

A thorough account of the sack of Baltimore can be found in Ekin's (2012) *The Stolen Village* which provides wide historical, political, and social contexts at the time of the raid and what followed thereof. Ekin tries to recapture the reactions and feelings of the Baltimore villagers during the attack, on their journey to Algiers, and in their new country. He also refers to Davis' ballad several times and lists it as one of his historical sources.

Brown (2019) explores slavery as a moral and theological issue in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions He further explicates how Islam has viewed slavery in theory and practice across Islamic history, including the Ottoman period during which slavery flourished.

Webb (2020) traces the history of slavery in Europe, arguing that vast numbers of Europeans were taken by Turkish corsairs to Africa where they were often treated cruelly. One such incident was the notorious sack of Baltimore.

The above literature survey shows that the wealth of historical/biographical material contrasts sharply with the paucity of critical interpretations of Davis' ballad. Hence, the current paper aims at exploring this largely under-researched work from a literary-historical perspective.

III. Discussion

Thomas Davis' narrative poem, or rather, historical ballad, "The Sack of Baltimore" (1845) tells the story of the tragic pirate raid against the Irish village of Baltimore and the consequent abduction and slavery of its inhabitants. It is a narrative wherein kidnapping, captivity, and slavery become closely interrelated concepts. In literature, a captivity narrative is a fictional or real story often featuring a moment of capture, the hardships endured, and the ultimate attainment of freedom and happy return. Traditional captivity narratives are usually autobiographical and often contain value judgments and fanciful fictional events. By contrast, this poem's narrative is about the actual kidnapping of whole village inhabitants who are forced into indefinite slavery and is fairly anchored in some plausible statements of fact. None of the captives survived to tell the story and "not one of those who escaped capture that night at Baltimore wrote an account of his experiences" (Barnby, 1969, p. 102).

Davis starts his poem by painting a serene and placid picture of Baltimore, apparently making sure to open with a stanza that sets the scene for the story to unfold. In the opening few lines, he presents a vivid and an accurate description of the tragedy's place. The sun is shining brightly on the cluster of small islands along the coast of Carbery and is gleaming across the narrow passages of mount Gabriel's cliffs, while the ancient ruins of Inisherkin Island's friary/temple look like a bird's worn-out feathers:

> The summer sun is falling soft on Carbery's hundred isles,
> The summer sun is gleaming still through Gabriel's rough defiles,—
> Old Inisherkin's crumbled fane looks like a moulting bird.
>
> (Davis; qtd. in Wallis, 1846, ll, 1-3)

Later in the evening and after a long summer-day labour, the villagers begin to enjoy a relaxed and tranquil atmosphere in their peaceful and fear-free town. The June sunset is beautiful and mild; the ocean tide is quiet while the fishing-boats lie upon the beach, perhaps waiting for the ebb tides. The children have stopped their play; the town's gossips have ceased their talk and the households begin their prayers:

> And in a calm and sleepy swell the ocean tide is heard:
> The hookers lie upon the beach; the children cease their play;
> The gossips leave the little inn; the households kneel to pray;
> And full of love and peace and rest,—its daily labor o'er,—
> Upon that cosy creek there lay the town of Baltimore. (ll. 4-8)

In the first stanza, Davis makes specific references to particular places (i.e. Carbery, Gabriel, Inisherkin), in addition to Baltimore, the basic locale of the story where the narrated events occur and develop. This minute and accurate portrayal discloses the poet's intimate knowledge of the place, its scenery, natural setting, and artificial and physical features. Actually, Davis seems to be acting on the advice he himself gives to balladists, especially those writing historical ballads. In "A Ballad History of Ireland", Davis (qtd. in Mitchel, 1879, p. 239) gives some hints on the properties of historical ballads and enjoins that a balladist should have good knowledge of "topographical and scenic descriptions" of the places he describes. Undoubtedly, the detailed and unmistakable descriptions in the stanza indicate that the poet must have been to the place and had scrutinized it closely before composing his poem.

As in the first, so in the second stanza, Davis seems to be embarking on building up an appropriate background for his poem as a way of setting the stage for the core story by continuing to delineate an even quieter atmosphere than that in stanza one. Around midnight, a deeper calm and a profound sleeplike state prevails, lulled by a throbbing wave that can be heard everywhere in the temporary stillness, producing a characteristically mild and temperate atmosphere. Meanwhile, the fibrous turf and fragrant trees breathe out their balmy smell, giving a feeling of comfort.

A deeper rest, a starry trance, has come with midnight there;
No sound, except that throbbing wave, in earth or sea or air.
The massive capes and ruined towers seem conscious of the calm.
The fibrous sod and stunted trees are breathing heavy balm. (ll. 9-12)

The quietness of the evening is followed by the calm of the night. As Darkness is just falling, two ships gliding round the Dunashad castle drop anchors near the entrance to Baltimore harbour. Perhaps they are bringing a lover to his beloved, who has been long waiting for him in Baltimore:

So still the night, these two long barks round Dunashad that glide
Must trust their oars—methinks not few—against the ebbing tide.
O, some sweet mission of true love must urge them to the shore,—
They bring some lover to his bride, who sighs in Baltimore! (ll. 13-16)

While the inhabitants are fast asleep under the thatched roofs of their cottages along the shoreline, an ironic turn of events takes place. Suddenly, noise and confusion disrupt the peace of the summer night. The two ships anchoring off the harbour, instead of bringing "a lover to his bride", as initially surmised, turn out to be bringing something completely different: imminent danger. Some obscure raiders abruptly launch their surprise attack, and the whole village is in tumult. The inhabitants, who have been completely taken by surprise and have no time to defend themselves, wake up screaming as the flimsy doors of their houses are smashed by the invaders' iron bars and the thatched roofs of the houses are torched. Wearing their "crimson shawl[s]" and yelling "Allah", two clear sign of Turkish Janissaries, the Barbary pirates attack the armless villagers with their muskets and scimitars. Spreading fear and panic everywhere, they overwhelm the victims' prayers and shrieks and instantly seize control of Baltimore:

All, all asleep within each roof along that rocky street,
And these must be the lover's friends, with gently gliding feet.
A stifled gasp, a dreamy noise! 'The roof is in a flame!'
From out their beds and to their doors rush maid and sire and dame
And meet upon the threshold stone, the gleaming sabre's fall,
And o'er each black and bearded face the white or crimson shawl.
The yell of "Allah!" breaks above the prayer and shriek and roar—
O blessèd God! the Algerine is lord of Baltimore! (17-24)

Despite the minute and accurate descriptive and narrative details given, the speaker/narrator is apparently not telling everything, a traditional technique that characterises a typical historical ballad. As Prudchenko (2022, np.) notes, a ballad tends to focus on a single dramatic event, unlike other types of narrative poems. Davis' ballad does not deviate from its main storyline and seems to have little exposition, presenting only a minimal amount of external information, such as setting, necessary to understanding the story. For instance, Davis does not give any details about Morat Rais' motives, his earlier seizing of a few French and English ships, his capture of ten or so Dungarvan fishermen before his arrival at Baltimore, his preliminary reconnaissance of the area, or Hackett's alleged advice to make him change his target from Kinsale to Baltimore. For Davis, it seems that this is not the place to tell the whole story of Baltimore; his main objective is to focus on the atrocity of the raid, the cruelty of the raiders, and the valiancy of Irish young men and women.

A hypothetical contrast between the poet's literary account of the events and a typical historical account of the same incidents can be exemplified as follows. Whereas the poem's text seeks to enlighten and elicit some emotional impact through a creative use of language and literary structure, a historical narrative would endeavour to inform through the use of facts and accurate information. Unlike the poem's text which starts by providing background information, a historian's narrative often begins by immediately introducing the main ideas. Though a historical account tends to provide some specific days and dates, Davis' poetic composition is not primarily interested in such details nor does it give the exact number of the captives or of those who died during the onslaught, thus allowing for chroniclers, historians, and readers to complete the task. More importantly, it delineates the main story by gradually preparing the scene for a dramatic situation: the moment when an entire remote village falls victim to the brutal pirate onslaught.

With this dramatic moment, the action seems to have reached its climax and the events of the Baltimore raid appear to be presented in the context of Islam-Christianity polarity and east-west conflict. When the invading "Algerines" scream "Allah" in the midst of the foray, it becomes obvious that Islam is here depicted as a violent power. The invocation of Allah, the Arabic word for God, coincides with the moment the whole village is in utter confusion and the people are shouting and screaming in great panic as they are wrested from their sleep by strangers speaking a different language. Indignant at the harrowing destruction, the poet expresses those apparently anti-Muslim sentiments even though he is known, as Moody (1966, p. 17) points out, for "having his emotions well under control" and despite the usually traditional balladist's impersonal style of narration characterizing the poem.

Nevertheless, one may argue that the reference made to the Algerine "yell of 'Allah!'" comes more as part of a broader discussion of imperial oppression as well as political and economic hegemony than an exclusively isolated aggressive Islamist attack. As Ibrahim (2015, p. 30) argues, Davis' "commemoration of the Sack of Baltimore served as an allegory of British and Anglican oppression over Irish religious and national identity, a fate shared by many territories under the British Empire". Davis' poem, therefore, can be read not just as a historical narrative about a past destructive piratic Muslim raid on Irish territory but more as a reflection of the poet's moral standpoint on the issues of slavery, oppression, colonialism, and nationalism.

That said, recent writings on the Baltimore attack tend to take on a more anti-Islamic stand. Apparently capitalizing on Davis' verse "The yell of 'Allah!' breaks above the prayer and shriek and roar--" (l. 23), Ekin (2012, p. 60) reads the Baltimore raid legacy as an example of what he considers an "Islamist invasion". In his somewhat rhetorical and inflammatory preface to his book, he enthusiastically links what he views as modern Muslim terrorism to the sacking of Baltimore, which, he asserts, "would go down in history as the most devastating invasion ever carried out by the forces of the Islamist *jihad* on Britain or Ireland" (2012, p. 10). For him, the raid was not an isolated incident but "part of the endless *jihad* or holy war waged against the Christian nations of northern Europe" (ibid.). He also regards Morat Rais as a zealous convert who "had become a sword of the *jihad*, the holy war … a man who had reached new heights of evil inventiveness in a bid to bring the war to the very doorsteps of the enemies of his new faith" (p. 38). Ekin further maintains that the raid was conducted by Algerian pirates supported by the Ottoman Janissaries who "originally formed as a celibate order of religious warriors" (p. 12).

Definitely, Ekin is not alone in this anti-Muslim trend. For instance, Davis (2004, p. xxv) had argued that the Islamic societies of the North African coast, in reaction to the expulsion of the Moors from Spain, soon set out to settle accounts with Christendom by attacking European merchant shipping, raiding coastal areas, and taking slaves. He further opines that slavery in the Barbary Coast was at its inception a matter of passion and greed:

> In Barbary, those who hunted and traded slaves certainly hoped to make a profit, but in their traffic in Christians there was also always an element of revenge, almost of jihad -- for the wrongs of 1492, for the centuries of crusading violence that had preceded them, and for the ongoing religious struggle between Christian and Muslim that has continued to roil the Mediterranean world well into modern times. (Davis, 2004, p. xxv)

Davis (2004, p. 17) later subsumes the captives of the Baltimore raid into the category of ideologically- and revenge-motivated slavery in the Barbary Coast states. For him, it is this insistence on vengeance that spurred and characterised Muslim slavery in the Barbary Coast.

Apparently basing their arguments in popular contemporary anti-Muslim views and writings about Islam which have come to the fore since the tragic attack of September 11, 2001, both Ekin (2012) and Davis (2004) view the Baltimore onslaught as part of an age-old systematic Islamist war against Christendom. Since its occurrence, the attack has often been seen in the western world in terms of a long ongoing holy war between the east and the west, Islam and Christianity. Davis (2004) and Ekin (2012) seem to have been impacted by the event and its anti-Muslimism representations in the media. Rather than anchoring their discourse about the Baltimore pirate narrative in the European-Ottoman seventeenth-century background, both authors primarily place it in the context of present-day west and Islam dichotomy in which the raid is conceived as an old example of a long sequence of what they consider Islamic *jihad* or terrorist attacks against the west.

Significant counterarguments to those of Davis (2004) and Ekin (2012) and, more generally, to the prevailing western discourse on old Islamic piracy and slavery, can be seen in Matar (1999) and Murray (2006). Matar provides a different perspective about the realities of exchange between England and the Islamic Mediterranean in the early seventeenth century, maintaining that during this period, the rhetoric of a "holy war" was not restricted to Muslims. In their wars with the Muslim peoples, he argues, the English enacted a discourse of a "holy war" against what they stereotyped as the "infidels" (pp. 12, 13, 16, 153). Nor was the practice of taking slaves confined to Barbary Corsairs for both Christians and Muslims took each other captive and "Britons were involved not only in piracy, but in the slave trade too" (p. 57). Similarly, Murray (2006, p. 15) argues that "slave-raiding as an economic and ideological weapon was not confined to the Muslims of the Ottoman Empire and North Africa. European seafaring powers engaged equally in the taking of Islamic ships and the use of their crews as slave labour".

However, in his poem, Davis does not use the term "*jihad*" or "holy war" as Davis (2004) and Ekin (2012) do. At the time the poem was written, British imperialism had begun to establish its international hegemony and the power of Islam had been declining. So, the poet was perhaps more concerned about an English ferocious colonialism on the rise than an Ottoman power in decline. He was more interested in inspiring his fellow countrymen with the hatred of English rule than in evoking anti-Muslim sentiments. As Moody (1966, p. 21) observes: "The existing connection of Ireland with Britain Davis regarded as fundamentally evil and degrading. He saw England as an egregious example of overbearing imperialism". Apparently reflecting the poet's viewpoint underlying "The Sack of Baltimore", Wallis (1846, p. 115) considers Baltimore an English settlement on native Irish soil as it "grew up round a Castle of O'Driscoll's, and was, after his ruin, colonized by the English". One would, therefore, assume that the moving passion behind the poem was a deep hatred for the English colonisation of Ireland than an anti-Muslim grudge.

Still, Davis appears to be viewing the raiders of Baltimore as Muslim "Algerine" pirates unfairly targeting the peaceful Baltimore community. From a historical viewpoint, Barbary pirates operated from Algiers and owed allegiance to the Dey of Algiers, a ruling official of the Ottoman Empire. Davis does not directly mention either the Ottoman Janissaries, the elite infantry units that formed the Ottoman Sultan's household troops, or the pirates' leader Morat Rais, “a Dutch convert to Islam with extensive experience in the North Sea” (Murray, 2006, p. 15). But the poem as a whole underlines the devastating role of the Algerian pirates operating under the banner of a Muslim Barbary State that owed a loose allegiance to the Ottoman Empire, thus making the Barbary State of Algiers bear the brunt of responsibility for the destructive attack, a view that has continued since the publication of the poem to the present.

Despite the ferocity of the attack, some of Baltimore’s defenseless inhabitants seem to have put up bold resistance. One man is reported to have forcefully thrown his hand against a shearing sword, while another youth was pierced, and apparently both were slain. Also depicted are a woman defending her child, an old man protecting his grandsons, and a moaning mother embracing her baby:

> Then flung the youth his naked hand against the shearing sword
> Then sprung the mother on the brand with which her son was gored;
> Then sunk the grandsire on the floor, his grand-babes clutching wild;
> Then fled the maiden moaning faint, and nestled with the child. (ll. 25-28)

Indeed, the above two acts of heroic resistance may be taken as an allusion to an actual event that happened during the corsairs’ onslaught. Historically speaking, two villagers showed strong resistance and both were killed (Ekin, 2012, p. 17).

A yet more heroic scene is portrayed when a pirate is seen strangled and crushed with blood-splashing heels by a valiant Irish fighter using the assailant’s sword. Amid the great havoc wreaked on Baltimore and its population, when virtue sinks into despair, courage is faltering, and misers are ready to give up their hoardings, this unique incident comes as an appropriate act of vengeance, an impressive display of heroic resistance, and an emblem of national pride. Thus, virtue, courage, pride, and justice are interrelated and work together as basic moral principles where revenge becomes morally justifiable:

> But see, yon pirate strangling lies, and crushed with splashing heel,
> While o’er him in an Irish hand there sweeps his Syrian steel;
> Though virtue sink, and courage fail, and misers yield their store,
> There’s one hearth well avenged in the sack of Baltimore! (ll. 29-32)

Undoubtedly, the speaker is keen on evoking strong nationalistic feelings by drawing on a memorable event in Irish history. For Davis, such incident as the sack of Baltimore, sorrowful and regretful though it is, would stir deep passions that can be conducive to various virtues. As he maintains: “To rouse, and soften, and strengthen, and enlarge us with the passions of great periods; to lead us into love of self-denial, of justice, of beauty, of valour, of generous life and proud death ... these are the highest duties of history, and these are best taught by a Ballad History” (qtd. in Mitchel, 1879, pp. 231-232). A man with a passion for truth and justice, Davis contends that the ultimate objective behind a historical ballad is to tell the truth: “One of the essential qualities of a good historical ballad is truth. … He who goes to write a historical ballad should master the main facts of the time, and state them truly” (qtd. in Mitchel, 1879, p. 236).

Whether the incident of a valiant Irish youth killing an aggressor is factual or not is open for debate. According to Barnby (1969, p. 103), there is no mention in the historical evidence of the Baltimore actual attack that any of the pirates “were killed or even injured”. Thus, Davis’s picture of such incident is “mere poetic licence” (Barnby, 1969, p. 104). However, the question is whether the details of the historical evidence “contained in a letter written from Kinsale within three days of the event” upon which Barnby (1969, p. 102) bases his argument are necessarily true. Regardless of the validity of such evidence, there is no doubt that Davis’ departure from historical facts is intended to make the story more interesting and the poem more effective by rousing Irish nationalistic sentiments. Davis does not take this poetic licence too far and uses it with a minimal amount and it only occurs within the zealous and patriotic style of the whole poem without causing any serious controversy. In fact, Davis’ departure from historical fact is reminiscent of Shakespeare’s frequent utilisation of numerous cases of poetic licence by his intentional departure from his sources to fit a dramatic narrative.

“The Sack of Baltimore” makes no reference to the second phase of the attack. Factually, after capturing most of the inhabitants of the Cove, the fishermen’s residential area, the raiders moved on to the main Baltimore settlement (Barnby, 1969, pp. 118-119; Murray, 2006, pp. 16-17). Ten more captives were taken before the corsairs returned to their anchored ships spiriting with them their booty of more than one hundred men, women, and children. That Davis does not include in the poem a representation of the second phase of the attack should not be surprising. As mentioned earlier, Davis, being a ballad writer and theorist, favoured concentrating on one main dramatic incident. Consequently, it is likely that he wanted the story at the Cove to be the main focus of his interest so as to secure a greater emotional effect.

The remainder of the poem is devoted to the portrayal of the aftermath of the devastating raid. Writing in a typically Victorian poetic style, Davis initially invokes nature as a basic constituent of the thematic structure of his ballad. In the opening lines of the fifth stanza, the natural world is represented as being unwittingly indifferent to human life, an obvious contrast with the conventionally idealistic and benevolent nature of the Romantic age. Unaware of the human tragedy that has occurred overnight, the birds are happily signing their traditional songs: “Midsummer morn, in woodland nigh, the birds begin to sing; / They see not now the milking-maids, deserted is the spring!” (ll. 33-34). It is a desolate and human-deserted post-tragedy place, giving an impression of bleakness that contrasts sharply with the joyfulness of the pre-tragedy atmosphere.

After sacking the seaport settlement and taking captive almost all its population with them, the crews of the two Algerine galleys sailed off Baltimore harbour to Algiers. Following this, a young man from Brandon together with boat hookers from Skull and a skiff from Affadown arrive at the scene, but they find only "smoking walls" sprinkled with the people's blood. They first walk wildly on the untidy and heavily trodden beach and soon dash to the sea and spot the vanishing pirate galleys five leagues away:

> Midsummer morn, this gallant rides from the distant Bandon's town,
> These hookers crossed from stormy Skull, that skiff from Affadown.
> They only found the smoking walls with neighbors' blood besprent,
> And on the strewed and trampled beach awhile they wildly went,
> Then dashed to sea, and passed Cape Clear, and saw, five leagues before,
> The pirate-galleys vanishing that ravaged Baltimore. (ll. 35-40)

The excerpt above and the two lines preceding it shed light on Davis's endeavour to generate deep passions and sympathetic feelings following the sacking of the village and the kidnapping of its populace, thus making the reader more aware of the grievous tragedy that has taken place. Together, they offer a good example of an impassioned text imbued with profound thought. In this respect, it complies with Davis' own assertion that a ballad must have "strong passions, daring invention, [and] vivid sympathy for great acts" (qtd. in Mitchel, 1879, p. 239).

Speculating in the first half of the fifth stanza on the many fates awaiting the captives, Davis presumes that some of the men would become galley slaves, stable boys, a Bey's servants / pages to bear their Turkish tobacco pipes and their long javelins. Others might serve in military arsenals or join the caravans across the Arabian deserts.

> Oh, some must tug the galley's oar, and some must tend the steed;
> This boy will bear a Scheik's chibouk, and that a Bey's jerreed.
> Oh, some are for the arsenals by beauteous Dardanelles;
> And some are in the caravan to Mecca's sandy dells. (ll. 41-44)

Exactly what happened to the Baltimore captives after leaving Ireland is still shrouded in mystery and a matter of postulation. In Davis' poetical narrative, there is no detailed explanation either of the way the abductees were treated on board after the pirates began their long voyage to Algiers or the destiny of the captives and the O'Driscoll's maid in Algerine. As there are no direct records left of the return journey and its aftermath, several historians including Barnby (1969), Murray (2006), and Ekin (2012), have tried to speculate on the conditions with which the captives had to contend on board ship and on their lot in Algiers.

Drawing upon the accounts left by the Icelandic captivity narratives and contemporary descriptions of similar voyages on Algerine ships, Barnby (1969, pp. 119-120) speculates that only the men captives on board might have been fettered and that there would not have been any cases of molestation (p. 120). Following their arrival in Algiers, the captives would be brought to the *Pasha's* palace to get his share of the booty before the rest would be exposed for sale on the open market (p. 121). By the same token, Murray (2006, p. 17) reckons a similar view of the captives' treatment. Ekin, on the other hand, envisions a horrid picture of what life must have been like for the Baltimore captives aboard (p. 12) but he would not imagine any of the women to have been molested during the voyage "(p. 109).

Stating that "no one actually knows the fate of any of the Baltimore captives", Barnby (1969, p. 122) proceeds to "speculate with some confidence on their fate". He postulates that the captives would fall under four categories: First, male labourers and women fit for domestic drudgery; second, pages selected as companions to their owners or young women filling the role of concubines; third, rich or skillful captives kept with the hope of being ransomed; and fourth, young boys "purchased as a tribute to Allah" to convert to Islam. Similarly, Murray (2006, pp. 17-18) expects men to have been destined to a brutal life as galley slaves or labourers while most women would have ended up as concubines and the children to be raised as Muslims and ultimately join the slave corps within the Ottoman army.

By contrast, Ekin (2012, p. 12), using parallel experiences of other Irish, English and European captives in Barbary at around the same time, gives a mixed and somewhat self-contradictory picture of the fates awaiting the prisoners. After their "auction", some of the men would become galley slaves and some labourers working on State Farms (2012, pp. 158-159). Some lucky enslaved men might be treated well by their owners and if a slave converted to Islam, he could be given his freedom (p. 163). The younger and more attractive women would be destined as concubines/courtesans and the older ones as domestic servants. Some would have ended up in the Pasha's harem, and some would have been sent to the Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople (2012, pp. 165, 179). The majority of the children would have become page boys and spear carriers and would be highly prized once they converted to Islam (p. 185). The girls could be put to work as maidservants or purchased and raised by investors (p. 187). Ekin eventually proclaims that "it was possible for a child captive in Barbary not only to survive and to live well, but even to rise to the highest positions" (p. 188).

A common denominator among the above mentioned speculations on the fates of the Baltimore captives and those of Davis in the aforementioned sixth stanza is their general agreement on the prospective fates that the captives would have been destined for and not all of them unpleasant. Both sides speculate that some men prisoners were destined for the galleys, as labourers or as pages while women would serve as concubines or domestic servants and those young men who converted to Islam would settle well into their new environment. By and large, major discrepancies are relatively few and are discussed or referred to in due course throughout the discussion.

In the second half of the sixth stanza, Davis postulates that the unfortunate O'Driscoll's maid whom the "gallant" from Brandon desired to marry would be selected by the governing Bey/Dey in Algiers to join his harem. He further imagines that she died a heroic death after stabbing to death the Algerine Dey in the midst of his harem. O'Driscoll, David posits, was not afraid to die a death by fire (an execution method involving exposure to extreme heat) and chose to kill the Algerine Governor, and nobly fell, pleased with her death:

The maid that Bandon gallant sought is chosen for the Dey,
She's safe,—she's dead,—she stabbed him in the midst of his Serai;
And when to die a death of fire that noble maid they bore,
She only smiled, O'Driscoll's child; she thought of Baltimore. (ll. 45-48)

The speculation that O'Driscoll would end up as one of the Dey's harem looks to be true. All historical reports maintain that attractive young women from Baltimore were selected as concubines by rich and powerful men. Supposedly, this Irish girl had the boldness and courage to stab her captor presumably to prevent her ravishment and thereby save her own personal and national dignity. Whether the stabbing incident is real or fictional, it cannot be definitively ascertained. However, according to some historical sources, this story was pure fiction as there is no record of a concubine ever stabbed by an Algiers ruler (Barnby, 1969, p. 104; Ekin, 2012, p. 166).

If the whole story is purely fictional, it can still be argued that Davis is using it as part of his avid attempt to promote Irish nationalism and, with it, Irish heroism and self-sacrifice. The fact that "The Sack of Baltimore" was first published in the *Nation* whose declared objective was to foster Irish national spirit "by all aids, which literary as well as political talent could bring to its advocacy" (Wallis, 1846, p. xii), which indicates that for Davis, poetry was an active means of inspiring and recreating Ireland. As Brooke and Rolleston (1900, p. xi) aptly point out, Davis and other poets of *the Nation* newspaper "united literature to their politics and civic morality to literature". So, Davis is here utilising yet another instance of poetic licence as a means of uniting the people of Ireland for the freedom and national independence of their country.

All through the poem, Davis has been speaking of Irish rather than English or British nationals even though the greatest majority of Baltimore's population at the time was not Irish but English settlers who took over land that was once the property of the Irish O'Driscoll clan. The fact is that a lease for twenty-one years for the town of Baltimore had been sold by the Irish Sir Fineen O'Driscoll to the English colonist Thomas Crooke who used it to establish an English settlement, an act which led most of the local Irish inhabitants of the town to leave (Barnby, 1969, p. 106). To achieve his nationalistic objectives, Davis bypasses this astonishing historical fact while simultaneously keeping his discourse untinged by Irish party politics or Protestant-Catholic sectarianism. Like he did with the aforementioned valiant Irish fighter and the Odriscoll's maid episodes, Davis is employing Irish history to promote his own conception of Irish cultural nationalism. Moody (1966, p. 19) convincingly argues that many of Davis' poems "were written not to express his own soul but to inform and inspire the souls of the people of Ireland". As a revolutionary Irish patriot, politician, and chief founder and editor of *the Nation*, Davis supported nineteenth-century Irish nationalism and independence from Britain, using the newspaper as well as his poems as a vehicle for promoting an Irish cultural identity separate from that of Britain.

In the last stanza, the speaker narrates a historical event revolving around John Hackett, an Irish fisherman who was, two years after the raid, tried for treason, convicted, and hanged on a clifftop overlooking Baltimore bay. Davis depicts a large crowd of people who have gathered on the heavily trodden beach of the deserted village to watch Hackett being hanged for conspiracy. Hackett, he says, died deservedly without any adequate passing prayers for he was a traitor. Davis, perhaps inspired by some popular stories, compares the convict to Diarmuid MacMurrough, the one who brought the Anglo-Norman invasion into Ireland in the twelfth century and Judas Iscariot, the man who betrayed Jesus:

'T is two long years since sunk the town beneath that bloody band,
And all around its trampled hearth a larger concourse stand,
Where high upon a gallows-tree a yelling wretch is seen,—
'T is Hackett of Dungarvan,—he who steered the Algerine!
He fell amid a sullen shout, with scarce a passing prayer,
For he had slain the kith and kin of many a hundred there:
Some muttered of MacMorrogh, who had brought the Norman o'er,
Some cursed him with Iscariot, that day in Baltimore. (ll. 49-56)

The comparison of Hackett to Demot MacMurrough highlights Hackett's notorious image as a treacherous collaborator who piloted the corsairs to Baltimore to save his life. MacMurrough has for long been blamed for facilitating the invasion and subsequent conquest of Ireland by outside powers in the twelfth century. This comparison is further enhanced by the analogy drawn between John Hackett and the biblical Judas Iscariot, a controversial disciple of Jesus who finally betrayed and handed him over to his enemies for material gain.

However, there is no mention here of the motives behind Hackett's alleged betrayal. Historians mention different motives for Hackett. For instance, Webb (2020, p. 73) explains that after Hackett had been captured by the pirates, he was afraid he would be taken captive to Barbary. To save his life, he struck a deal with his captors. In return for his freedom, he would pilot them to a small village where they could capture as many victims as they pleased. Barnby (1967, p. 116), by contrast, opines that "probably the major reason why John Hackett suggested Baltimore was that it was a comparatively new English Protestant plantation". Barnby's statement is thought-provoking as it would make us wonder whether or not Hackett had some political motives behind his suggestion.

Still, Davis' version of the Hackett story has been partially contested by more than one historical source. Both Barnby (1969, p. 104) and Ekin (2012, p. 191) affirm that Davis' timing of the execution of Hackett was inaccurate for Hackett was hanged within eight months of the raid and not two years later. Ekin (2012) also differs with Davis over his handling of the event. Though Davis, apparently depending on hearsay, sees Hackett as an accomplice to the catastrophic attack, Ekin (2012, p. 191) speaks of a Hackett conspiracy which he deems to have been used as a cover-up for the failure of the British officers in charge of guarding the southern Irish coast to do their duties.

With such departures, together with the aforementioned ones, from the well-established historical versions of the story, it seems likely that Davis might have based his narrative about Hackett's treachery on a largely popularized version or on oral tradition. It may sound tempting, therefore, to concur with Barnby's (1970, p. 27) statement that "Davis composed his poem two hundred years after the raid and few of his facts agree with those preserved in the Public Records" and with Ekin's (2012, p. 192) assertion that Davis was using some "oral history [not historical records] as the basis for the climax of his poem". However, Davis was writing poetry rather than history and each of them has its own unique conventions and rules. Despite any such discrepancies or departures, Davis' stirring ballad has become not only one of the main historical and literary sources on the story of Baltimore but also a poem that has indisputably immortalized this unique event.

IV. Conclusion

Davis' "The Sack of Baltimore" is a highly accomplished literary work that utilises an early seventeenth-century historical event in Ireland for its subject and theme/s. Deploying the techniques of ballad writing, the poet delineates a vivid and moving picture of a horrendous pirate attack that resulted in the kidnapping and ultimate enslavement of the whole civil population of the Irish fishing village of Baltimore. The epoch in which the event happened had witnessed antagonistic relations between Christendom and Islamdom when piracy was a common practice from both sides. The raid is explicitly and solely attributed to Muslim pirates operating from the Barbary State of Algiers loosely attached to the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, it was the Dutch Renegado Morat Rais who masterminded and led the piratical expedition which was a composite force of Algerians, Turks, and some European converts to Islam.

Written in the middle of the nineteenth century, Davis' ballad witnessed the birth of a new era in east-west relations when the Muslim Turkey weakened and Europe, particularly Britain, began to rise rapidly. This situation led to the emergence of a robust discourse of Orientalism that seems to have impacted "The Sack of Baltimore". A combination of literary analysis and historical investigation perspective indicates that Davis drew on a medley of historical facts, oral tradition, fiction, and imagination to portray the Baltimore tragic raid on which he takes a moral stance and which he indefatigably utilises as a means of reviving Irish history to bolster the national unity and political independence of Ireland.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Middle East University in Amman, Jordan, for their financial support granted to cover the publication fees of this research article.

References

[1] Barnby, Henry. (1970). The Algerian attack on Baltimore 1631. *The Mariner's Mirror*, *56*(1), 27-31. https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1970.10658512
[2] Bekkaoui, Khaled. (2010). *White women captives in North Africa: Narratives of enslavement,* 1735- 1830. Palgrave Macmillan.
[3] Brooke, Stopford A., & Rolleston ,T. W. (Eds). (1900). *A treasury of Irish Poetry in the English Tongue.* Macmillan.
[4] Brown, Malcolm. (1973). *The politics of Irish Literature: From Thomas Davis to W.B. Yeats*. University of Washington & University of Toronto Press.
[5] Brown, Jonathan A. C. (2019). *Slavery and Islam*. Oneworld Academic.
[6] Davis, Robert C. (2004). *Christian slaves, Muslim masters: White slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast and Italy, 1500-1800*. Palgrave Macmillan.
[7] Davis, Thomas. (1846). The sack of Baltimore. In Thomas Wallis (Ed.), *The Poems of Thomas Davis: Now first collected with notes and historical illustrations* (pp. 115- 118). James Duffy.
[8] Davis, Thomas. (1846). A Ballad history of Ireland. In, John Mitchel (Ed.), *Literary and historical essays by Thomas Davis* (pp. 231-240).
[9] Ekin, Des. (2012). *The stolen village: Baltimore and the Barbary pirates*. O'Brien Press.
[10] Ibrahim, V. (2015). Sailors, Merchants, Migrants: From the Sack of Baltimore to World War II. In O. Scharbrodt, T. Sakaranaho, A. H. Khan, Y. Shanneik, & V. Ibrahim (Eds.), *Muslims in Ireland: Past and present* (pp. 27-48). Edinburgh University Press. https://doi.org/10.3366/edinburgh/9780748696888.003.0002
[11] Matar, Nabil. (1999). *Turks, Moors, and Englishmen in the age of discovery*. Columbia University Press.
[12] Mitchel, John. (Ed.). (1879). *Literary and historical essays by Thomas Davis*. P.J. Kenedy, Excelsior Catholic Publishing House.
[13] Mitford, Mary Russel. (1852). *Recollections of a literary life, or books, places and People* (Vol. I. pp.22-24). Richard Bentley.

[14] Moody, T. W. (1966). Thomas Davis and the Irish nation. *Hermathena*, *103*, 5–31.
[15] Murray, Theresa D. (2006). From Baltimore to Barbary: The 1631 sack of Baltimore. *History Ireland*, *14*(4), 14-18.
[16] Prudchenko, Kate. (2022). *The structure of a ballad.* Retrieved February 8, 2023, from penandthepad.com, https://penandthepad.com/structure-ballad-1898.html.
[17] Wallis, Thomas. (Ed.). (1846). Introduction. *The poems of Thomas Davis: Now first collected with notes and historical illustrations.* (pp. ix-xxviii). James Duffy.
[18] Webb, Simon. (2020). *The forgotten slave trade: The white European slaves of Islam*. Pen & Sword Books Ltd.

Nisreen T. Yousef is an Associate Professor of Contemporary British and American Literature. She obtained her PhD in Literature from the University of Leicester, UK in 2017. She currently works for Middle East University, Amman, Jordan. Her researches interests revolve around Colonial and Postcolonial literature, Historical fiction and drama and Contemporary Literature. Dr. Yousef is a former Chairperson of the Department of English at Middle East University; she is currently a Deputy Dean for the Deanship of Graduate Studies and Research.

Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

Journal of Language Teaching and Research (JLTR) is a scholarly peer-reviewed international scientific journal published bimonthly, focusing on theories, methods, and materials in language teaching, study and research. It provides a high profile, leading edge forum for academics, professionals, consultants, educators, practitioners and students in the field to contribute and disseminate innovative new work on language teaching and research.

JLTR invites original, previously unpublished, research and survey articles, plus research-in-progress reports and short research notes, on both practical and theoretical aspects of language teaching, learning, and research. These areas include, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Language teaching methodologies
- Pedagogical techniques
- Teaching and curricular practices
- Curriculum development and teaching methods
- Programme, syllabus, and materials design
- Second and foreign language teaching and learning
- Classroom-centered research
- Literacy
- Language education
- Teacher education and professional development
- Teacher training
- Cross-cultural studies
- Child, second, and foreign language acquisition
- Bilingual and multilingual education
- Translation
- Teaching of specific skills
- Language teaching for specific purposes
- New technologies in language teaching
- Testing and evaluation
- Language representation
- Language planning
- Literature, language, and linguistics
- Applied linguistics
- Phonetics, phonology, and morphology
- Syntax and semantics
- Sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics
- Discourse analysis
- Stylistics
- Language and culture, cognition, and pragmatics
- Language teaching and psychology, anthropology, sociology
- Theories and practice in related fields

Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 15 to 30 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
    - Submission of extended version
    - Notification of acceptance
    - Final submission due
    - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- Preparing the “Call for Papers” to be included on the Journal’s Web site.
- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal’s style, together with all authors’ contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

More information is available on the web site at http://www.academypublication.com/jltr/

(Contents Continued from Back Cover)