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Examining Relationships Between Sub-Components of Reading in Xitsonga

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Abstract—Reading is developed over time and involves the interaction of both simple and complex skills characterised by a hierarchical sequence of foundational reading skills. However, research has shown that children who do not acquire mastery of foundational reading skills have limited chances of acquiring reading success. This study examines the relations between sub-components of reading in Xitsonga and their impact on Grade 1 learners' reading ability. It also aims to identify which early reading skills predict later reading accomplishment. Data in this study was obtained from 75 Grade 1 learners in the Limpopo Province. The early-grade reading assessment tool adapted to Xitsonga was used to test the learners' foundational reading skills: phonological and phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, word reading, oral reading fluency and reading comprehension skills. The results present a compelling relationship between the subcomponents of reading and show that deficits in the development of foundational reading skills negatively impact learners' ability to read. Regression analysis showed that oral reading fluency was the only significant predictor of reading comprehension. Hence, there is a need for reading to be taught and learned consciously in alphabetic languages to help learners develop their early reading skills, which play important roles in the acquisition of reading.

Index Terms—Xitsonga, foundational reading skills, sub-components of reading, early grade reading

I. INTRODUCTION

Successful reading develops from the relationship of five basic components: phonological and phonemic awareness (PA), letter-sound knowledge (LSK), word reading (WR), oral reading fluency (ORF) and reading comprehension (RC). Spaul et al. (2020) also demonstrated robust relationships between various reading skills, from simple to more complex ones. Although the five reading measures contribute immensely to reading achievement, they do not provide children with equal opportunities for developing reading abilities. Some (e.g., PA, LSK, WR, ORF) often referred to as foundational skills are necessary but not sufficient for reading success, while others, as the relationship of the five components of reading changes over time, expose readers to more complex skills which help them transition from emergent to conventional reading. Given this interrelationship, it is vital that children master their foundational reading skills to help them develop the ability to read for meaning. However, evidence highlights low levels of comprehension among learners reading in African languages (Probert, 2019; Spaul et al., 2020; Khosa, 2023). There are several factors contributing to the learners' poor reading performance, and these include, inter alia, the learners' inability to master their foundational/early reading skills (Lyytinen et al., 2019). Fuchs and Fuchs (1999) caution that failing to master early reading skills is associated with serious problems ahead.

There is limited research on the relationship between subcomponents of reading in Xitsonga on Grade 1 learners. Spaul et al. (2020) in their study of analysing the sub-components of reading across the three African languages (Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and IsiZulu) revealed strong relations between LSK and WR, WR and ORF, and ORF and RC in Xitsonga, focusing on Grade 3 learners. The data in the current paper has been extracted from the doctoral thesis on early reading development in Xitsonga (Khosa, 2021). Hence, this paper is meant to examine the relationship between different reading components in Xitsonga and their impact on the Grade 1 learners' ability to develop reading achievement. It also aims to identify which early reading skills predict later reading accomplishment. To address the said aims, the following research questions are posed:

- How are the different reading components in Xitsonga interrelated?
- Which early reading skills in Term 1 predict reading success at the end of Grade 1 in Xitsonga?
- How does the relation between different reading components in Xitsonga impact the Grade 1 learners' ability to develop reading achievement?

This paper first presents the interactive reading model to make broader generalisations. This is followed by a discussion of the five basic components of reading and their interrelationships. Next, the orthographic system of Xitsonga language is presented. Thereafter, this is followed by describing the methodology used for collecting and analysing data, presentation and discussion of the results. Finally, the concluding thoughts are given.

A. Interactive Model of Reading

This study draws on the interactive model of reading proposed by Rumelhart (1977). The model combines the bottom-up (foundational level of reading) and top-down (higher level of reading) reading models (see Figure 1).

Rumelhart used his interactive reading model to demonstrate the weaknesses of the bottom-up and top-down models which respectively proceed only in one direction, while, for the interactive model, each level communicates with those immediately above and below it (Rumelhart & McClelland, 1981). The interactive model has the advantage of providing young readers with opportunities to develop foundational reading skills such as letter-sound knowledge which helps them decode familiar and unfamiliar words accurately to comprehend what they are reading. The interactive approach is relevant for this study on the basis of ensuring that the process of reading (involving bottom-up and top-down approaches) happens reciprocally. This simply means that although foundational reading skills are necessary but not sufficient for the whole reading programme, proficiency and mastery of these skills set learners on track for reading development (Paige et al., 2018).

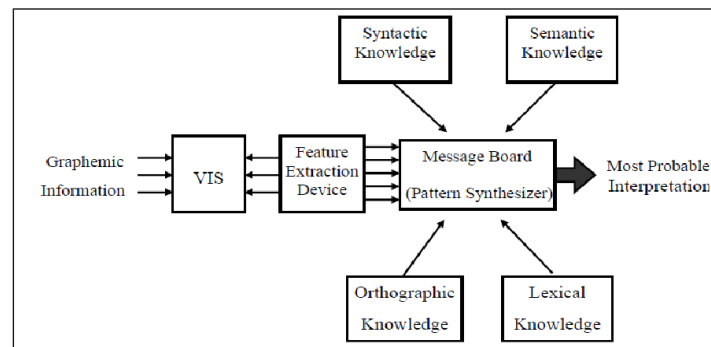


Figure 1. Interactive Model of Reading (Source: Rumelhart, 1977, p. 732)

Figure 1 clearly describes Rumelhart's interactive reading model which happens on three levels: between lower-level and higher-level skills, between bottom-up and top-down processes, and between the background knowledge in the text and the background of the reader. According to Rumelhart, the reader may employ a bottom-up process to comprehend a text and then switch to a top-down process to execute a higher-level interpretation of the meaning of the text (Prasad, 2016).

B. Five Basic Components of Reading

Reading develops from the following five different components, which complement each other for reading success:

(a). Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Phonology deals with sounds in a language. Yet et al. (1978; in Alduais, 2015) defines it as “the science of speech sounds and sound patterns” (p. 159). These sounds are reflected in a stream of speech, which can be broken down into sentences, phrases, words, syllables, and phonemes. Phonemes are the smallest units in language. If one phoneme is replaced with another in a word, it changes the meaning of the word, for example, Xitsonga words, such as *vana* (children), *tana* (come), *fana* (similar). Different languages have different inventories of phonemes, and children acquire these from an early age when they acquire language, as well as knowledge about the permissible sequences of phonemes within words; for example, *nkombe* (wooden spoon) is permissible in Xitsonga but not **nkomte* or **bnkombe*). The PA skill is important for learning to read any alphabetic orthography (Melby-Lervåg et al., 2012). Its critical role is evidenced by permitting phonological recoding, commonly known as *decoding* (i.e., learning and applying sound-symbol mappings to access words in a spoken language) (Goldenberg et al., 2014). A study conducted two decades ago with Grade 2 learners at an English medium school in South Africa found a strong relationship between phonological abilities and performance on reading and spelling measures (Pijper, 2003). Several studies have also revealed significant contributions of PA skills on reading development (Wilsenach, 2013; Gellert & Elbro, 2017). Clayton et al. (2019) examined the predictive relationship between a range of phonological language skills and early reading development of 191 Grade 1 learners in Greater London. Their findings showed that phoneme awareness, letter-sound knowledge and alphanumeric Rapid Automated Naming (RAN) were all strong independent predictors of reading development.

(b). Letter-Sound Knowledge

Letter-sound knowledge refers to the mapping of sounds to written codes, such as letters and blending them (Khosha, 2021). It is “the conscious, concentrated study of the relationship between sounds and symbols to learn to read and spell words” (Savage, 2007, p. 7). Research shows that children can develop knowledge of letters early, even before school, if they have frequent exposure to a print-rich environment. Letter-sound knowledge enables children to decode known and unknown words. Children's knowledge of letter sounds is measured by counting the number of letters read correctly from a chart within a given time, such as a minute.

Several studies demonstrated that letter-sound knowledge helps develop phonological awareness (Foy & Mann, 2006; Kim et al., 2010; Májková 2015). Hulme et al. (2012) also revealed that a reading intervention that included phonological awareness/phonics produced significant improvements in letter-sound knowledge, phoneme awareness,

word reading and spelling. Letter-sound knowledge is critical for word decoding. Several studies have shown the importance of letter-sound knowledge for decoding words, which is important for reading comprehension (Chepchumba et al., 2018; Clayton et al., 2019; Sigmundsson et al., 2020). Chepchumba et al. (2018) examined the influence of learners' ability to correspond letters to their correct sounds on the performance of English reading in Grade 1 in Keiyo Sub County. Their findings revealed that learners need to be taught letter-sound correspondences to improve their ability to read English. Another study of 5 to 6-year-old children learning to read in Norway showed that letter-sound knowledge was associated with the ability to read (Sigmundsson et al., 2020). Apart from directly contributing to the development of phonological awareness and speed and accuracy in word reading, letter-sound knowledge also maps to successful oral reading fluency. This was demonstrated in a longitudinal study of 16,400 learners in three Nguni languages (isiZulu, isiXhosa and isiSwati) in South Africa, where strong letter-sound knowledge was found to be critical for oral reading fluency. Based on this finding, 40 letters correct per minute (lcpm) was recommended as a benchmark for the Nguni young readers by the end of Grade 1 (Ardington et al., 2020).

(c). *Word Reading*

Word reading is the ability to read isolated words quickly and accurately and to recognise shorter high-frequency words without having to sound them out (Spaull et al., 2020). For example, shorter high-frequency words in Xitsonga include *hi* (we), *le* (there), *wa* (of), and *na* (and). For beginning readers to read these words accurately, they require skills, such as the ability to break down known or unknown words into letters, phonemes, syllables, and morphemes that make up words. Word reading is assessed in terms of the number of words read correctly per minute. When children struggle with word reading, early grade reading assessment may reveal poor language skills, lack of vocabulary knowledge, or poor decoding and spelling ability (International Literacy Association, 2018).

Word reading is important in terms of providing beginner readers with regular practice in reading words in and out of context. It increases accuracy and speed in reading. This helps the readers free up attention to focus on the meaning of the text rather than laboriously sounding out words, letter by letter and sound by sound (Hayes & Flanigan, 2014; Pretorius et al., 2016). Although the ability to read words alone is not sufficient for successful reading (Nation & Snowling, 1998), research reiterates that it is not possible for fluent reading to take place without accurate and fast word reading (Roembke et al., 2019; Ardington et al., 2020). For example, a study that assessed the automaticity of middle-school learners in America with an accuracy-based measure found that automaticity significantly predicted reading fluency over and above knowledge of the relevant grapheme-phoneme mappings (Roembke et al., 2019). A local study investigating decoding skills underpinning reading comprehension across three agglutinating languages (Northern Sotho, Xitsonga, and isiZulu) from 785 Grade 3 learners showed that word reading was robustly related to oral reading fluency across the three African languages (Spaull et al., 2020). Much research has also demonstrated the effect of word reading on reading comprehension (Guldenoğlu et al., 2012; Cadime et al., 2016). This also applies to reading in an agglutinating language such as Turkish. For example, in a study on word processing and reading comprehension from skilled ($n=26$) and less skilled ($n=23$) Grade 2 learners in Turkey, involving the processing of isolated real word and pseudoword pairs as well as their reading comprehension skills, Guldenoğlu et al. (2012) found that word processing and reading comprehension skills correlate positively for both skilled and less skilled readers. Kim and Piper (2019), in their study of the relations between component skills of reading comprehension in three sub-Saharan African languages (Kiswahili, Kikamba and Lubukusu), also found that word reading was directly and positively related to reading comprehension.

(d). *Oral Reading Fluency*

Oral reading fluency refers to the ability to read accurately and fluently, with appropriate intonation and feeling, and paying attention to punctuation (Spaull et al., 2020). Fluency develops through practice and can be assessed in terms of *accuracy*, *speed* (rate) and *prosody*.

Accuracy refers to the ability to identify individual words correctly. Not being accurate can change the meaning of what is read. Accurate word reading is important because it enables readers to distinguish words from each other, e.g., *limp* from *limb*.

Speed refers to the ability to recognise and decode words effortlessly. Reading becomes automatic once readers master accuracy and increase their rate of reading according to their grade level. The speed at which reading occurs at grade level and the accuracy shown in recognising and decoding words reduces the reader's cognitive load so that the focus can be on comprehension. Reading below a certain rate (referred to as a *minimum* threshold) severely compromises reading comprehension. In their study, Ardington et al. (2020) found that by Grade 2, learners who read slower than 20 words correct per minute (wcpm) in the Nguni languages fell into a non-comprehension zone. By Grade 3, most Nguni readers should read at 35 wcpm (benchmark) or higher.

Prosody refers to reading with feeling and intonation, chunking up words or phrases together, and pausing in appropriate places (e.g., after a comma or full stop) (Department of Basic Education, 2019). Reading with prosody reflects language features such as punctuation and text features such as dialogue, sentence features, etc. Grade-level readers can use these features to help them understand what they are reading. Prosody extends across words – it reflects the natural rhythm of speech and is important in African languages due to their tonal characteristic. For example, Xitsonga words, *tiya* (to be strong) and *t'ya* (tea), are spelt the same but are pronounced with different tones according

to their meanings (*i* with a low tone on the first vowel and *í* with a high tone on the second vowel). Because the assessment of prosody is more subjective, fluency is usually measured in terms of accuracy and rate. Studies have also shown that oral reading fluency is significantly related to comprehension in both home language (Álvarez-Cañizo et al., 2015; Kim & Piper, 2019; Spaul et al., 2020) and English First Additional Language (EFAL) (Pretorius & Spaul, 2016). In a large-scale study of 4,697 Grade 5 EFAL learners in South Africa, the relationship between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension was found to be large and robust; reading an additional wcpm was associated with a 14%-point increase in comprehension score after controlling for all school-level variables and certain student-level variables such as age and gender (Pretorius & Spaul, 2016).

The close relationship between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension is further demonstrated in studies that have shown a bidirectional relationship between the two factors (Klauda & Guthrie, 2008; Kim, 2015; Veenendaal et al., 2016). For example, a study that examined the relationship of three levels of reading fluency (the word level, the syntactic unit and the whole passage) to reading comprehension of Grade 5 learners ($n=278$) in the United States found that reading fluency predicted growth in comprehension while comprehension predicted growth in fluency, suggesting bidirectional relations between the two reading skills (Klauda & Guthrie, 2008). In sum, a broad range of research has consistently shown that code-based skills contribute significantly to children's ability to recognise words, read fluently and understand what they read (Share & Stanovich, 1995; Castles et al., 2018).

(e). Reading Comprehension

Comprehension (i.e., reading for meaning) is what reading is all about (Pretorius & Murray, 2019). It involves the author (and his/her text) and the reader. The reader uses his/her decoding skills to read the author's words accurately and fluently and employs various comprehension strategies (e.g., background knowledge, making inferences, predicting, visualising, sequencing, monitoring comprehension, etc.) to construct meaning from what is read. Reading comprehension ability is unconstrained – it develops throughout life. Through the process of acquiring reading skills, children need to develop decoding skills and read words with increasing fluency so that they can start honing their comprehension skills. There are different levels of meaning in a text, where some are easier than others. These include literal, inferential, and critical understanding. Literal comprehension involves the understanding of information that is explicitly stated in the text. Inferential understanding of a text describes readers who make connections between elements in the text and integrate information in the text and in their heads. Critical understanding of a text is the level at which a reader can interpret or evaluate information of a text at a more abstract level of understanding, based on their own knowledge as well as information in the text. A theory of text comprehension attempts to explain how children build a memory representation, which happens in the form of mentally converting individual words and sentences into propositions and connecting them together through background knowledge or through the process of recalling previous experiences. Nevertheless, the ability to develop all the five basic components of reading mentioned above is determined by the level of orthographic knowledge acquired in a particular language.

C. The Orthographic System of Xitsonga Language

Xitsonga is recognised as one of the official languages in South Africa. More than 3 million people in South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe speak Xitsonga. Home language speakers of Xitsonga comprise 4.5% of South Africa's population (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Xitsonga uses a simple vowel system containing five monophthongs which include close, mid, and open vowels: a [a] e [e] i [i] o [o] u [u] (Janson, 2001). The mid-high front vowel is realised as /e/, for example, *xelexo* [ʃeleʃo] (that one). The mid-high back vowel /o/ and the mid-low back vowel [ɔ] are written as /o/, for example, *nhloko* [nʎokɔ] (head). The high front vowel /i/ is written as *i*, for example, *muti* [muti] (household), and the high back vowel /u/ as *u*, for example, *mbuti* [mbuti] (goat).

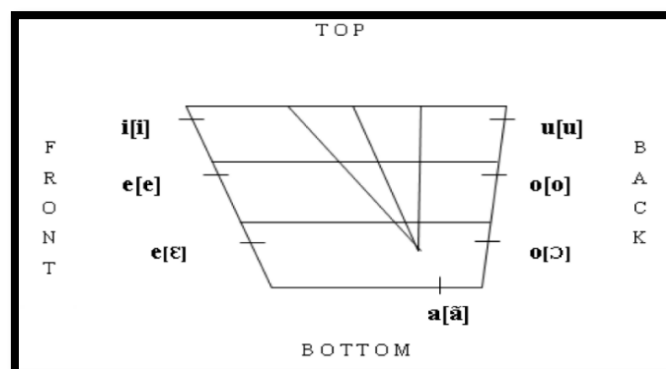


Figure 2. Xitsonga Vowels

Xitsonga phonology comprises very large and complex consonant systems. However, there is much debate around the classification of consonants as phonemes, for example, whether *-nd-* is counted as a single albeit complex consonant and hence represented by a digraph (i.e., two letters representing a single sound) or as a consonant sequence of *n* and *d*.

Janson (2001) claims that there are over 125 consonants in Xitsonga, both simple and complex, and each consonant is regarded as a phoneme. However, there are no minimal pairs to support Janson’s classification of phonemes, but he indicates that the richness and complexity of the consonant system in Xitsonga warrant treating each consonant and consonant variation as individual segments. Table 1 below shows Janson’s classification of simple phonemes in Xitsonga.

TABLE 1
XITSONGA CONSONANTS

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b		T d				k g	
Nasal	m		n			ɲ	ŋ	
Trill			r					
Fricative	β	f v	S z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ			h
Lateral Fricative			ɬ ɮ					
Approx			ɹ			j		
Lateral Approx			l					

Xitsonga also has ‘whistled’ sibilants like Shona, [sw/sv, tsw/tsv, dzw/dzv], referred to as labialised consonant clusters which are coarticulated with consonants /gw/, /lw/, /nw/. Xitsonga orthography contains singles /t/, digraphs /ta/, and large consonant codes such as trigraphs /thl/, 4-consonant sequences /ntsh/, and a few 5-consonant sequences /ndzhw/. Moreover, it also uses loan sounds from languages such as isiZulu, English, and Afrikaans.

Xitsonga makes use of the Latin alphabet. For example, the letter *x* from Portuguese orthography, which is pronounced [ʃ], occurs in words such as *xuxa* (while away time), *xikolo* (school), and *xilo* (thing) in Xitsonga. The spelling-sound correspondence in Xitsonga is transparent, which makes learning to read generally easier, as there is a one-to-one relationship between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes) (Ellis & Hooper, 2001). However, other factors can make learning the code a bit more challenging, such as the larger consonant code mentioned above. Tsonga also shares several cognates with Nguni languages, such as isiZulu. Examples are given below.

Tsonga	Zulu	Gloss
1. <i>-dyá</i>	<i>-dlá</i>	to eat
2. <i>nc l á</i>	<i>Úms ta</i>	tail
3. <i>-b óha</i>	<i>-b ópha</i>	to bind, tie
4. <i>nhl árh ú</i>	<i>úhlwathi</i>	python
5. <i>-rh ándza</i>	<i>-th ánda</i>	to love
6. <i>hahú</i>	<i>iphaphu</i>	lung
7. <i>havú</i>	<i>ínk ávu</i>	monkey
8. <i>ntsumbula</i>	<i>únd úmbul á</i>	cassava

Although Xitsonga and isiZulu share several cognates, Xitsonga has a mainly disjunctive orthography, while isiZulu has a conjunctive orthography. A disjunctive orthography means that some verbal elements are written separately from one another; for example, the sentence, *ndza famba* (I am leaving) in Xitsonga is written as two separate orthographic words, whereas in isiZulu the same sentence is conjunctively written as a single orthographic word *ngiyahamba*. In the conjunctive orthography of isiZulu, prefixes and suffixes are joined to word roots to form long orthographic words with complex morphological structures (De Schryver, 2010). Although there are some long words in Xitsonga, orthographically, Xitsonga written texts contain fewer long orthographic words compared to written Nguni texts.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Background of the Study

Seventy-five Grade 1 learners’ early reading data in Xitsonga were collected in two phases (Term 1, March and Term 3, September 2018) in Mopani district of Limpopo Province in South Africa. However, in Term 3, only 72 learners were assessed, bringing the attrition rate to 4%. The data presented in this article was drawn from the findings of a doctoral study that sought to examine 75 Grade 1s’ early reading development in Xitsonga in five different schools. Of the five schools sampled for the study, four were quintile 2 (under-resourced) Schools B, C, D, and E, where Xitsonga home language is taught as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) to learners whose mother tongue is Xitsonga, while one was a quintile 4 (better-resourced) School A that taught Xitsonga as the First Additional Language (FAL) which is taught to learners whose first language is not Xitsonga. These schools were sampled on the basis of

establishing performance outcome between Xitsonga as the LoLT in comparison to being taught as the FAL. Findings revealed significant differences between the two language levels in favour of the FAL (Khosa, 2023).

B. Reading Assessment Procedures

The reading assessment was administered to Grade 1 learners in Term 1 and again in Term 3. Learners were tested one-on-one in a quiet classroom for about 7 minutes. A good rapport was established by explaining the procedures of the assessment to the learners. Learners were given opportunities to practice before they could be assessed. Learners who could not read anything or got 6 items incorrectly had to stop and move to another subtask.

PA assessment: The PA chart included 13 items. This was an oral task, where the learner had to listen to the items said aloud to delete, substitute, or identify the sounds of each item. All the learners had opportunities to practice the items twice before they were assessed. One point was awarded for a correct response.

LSK assessment: The letter-sound chart included hundred and ten letters, ten per row. Learners practised two items before they were tested. They were asked to read the letter sounds across each row from left to right. Learners were timed for sixty seconds to sound as many letters as they could. While reading, letters that were read incorrectly were noted. After one minute had lapsed, the learner was instructed to stop reading, and a circle was placed around the last letter that was read. The letters attempted were recorded, and the total number of errors was subtracted, and a total of letters read correctly per minute was obtained. One point was assigned for each letter that sounded correct.

WR assessment: A chart containing approximately fifty words was used to test the learners' ability to read words that were out of context. Similar to administering the other subtasks, learners were given opportunities to practice two items before they could be tested. Learners had sixty seconds to read as many words as they could. Errors were noted while reading, and after a minute, the same scoring procedure as done above was used.

ORF assessment: Learners were instructed to read a passage of a story in one minute, and errors were noted while reading aloud. If they read slowly and seemed to be struggling, they were asked to stop reading. Learners were scored according to the number of words read correctly per minute.

ORC assessment: After reading two passages per minute, learners were asked to respond to the questions presented orally based on what they had read. The score awarded for reading comprehension was the number of correct answers given per item.

C. Grade 1 Assessment Instrument

The Grade 1 learners were tested using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool, adapted to Xitsonga. The assessment tool comprised five foundational reading skills. Holistically, the assessment instrument comprised two sections. **Section A** included the learners' demographic information (e.g., gender, age, school name, etc.). These details were added to compare the learners' scores in different groups. **Section B** included the following five foundational literacy skills: PA (thirteen items), LSK (hundred and ten letters), WR (fifty words), ORF (two passages of fifty-seven and sixty words each), and ORC (five questions per passage, four literal and one inferential). Examples were given for practising purposes and to ensure the learners understood what was read. Learners were given sixty seconds to perform each of the three timed tasks (LSK, WR and ORF). The timed tasks were meant to determine to what extent the learners' foundational decoding skills had been mastered and automatised, while the untimed tasks assessed whether learners could answer the question or not without a time limit.

D. Data Analysis

The learners' reading performance data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical procedures. Inferential statistical analyses included testing for correlations and regression analyses. Preliminary analyses were done from the dataset in order to check assumptions of normality; hence, the Shapiro-Wilk test revealed normal distribution. However, despite schools showing normal distribution, non-parametric statistics were used for the inferential statistics because of the small sample size. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, Version 25, was used for the analysis of data.

E. Ethical Considerations

Before the Grade 1 learners' reading skills were assessed, ethical approval was sought from the University of South Africa (UNISA) with ethical clearance number AL_MK025_2017. Again, permission to test learners was sought from the Provincial Department of Education in Limpopo Province.

III. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 below, presents descriptive results for overall learner performance in raw scores in Term 1 and Term 3. The results are presented in terms of the mean (*M*), standard deviation (*SD*), and standard error of the mean (*SE*). It includes performance at the 25th, 50th, and 75th percentiles (i.e., showing the distribution of results at weaker, average and stronger levels) and the percentage of learners who scored zero on each task. A composite score comprising the *M*

derived from all five measures for baseline and endline assessment times was computed for the purpose of getting a picture of the overall performance for the cohort of Grade 1 learners tested.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Term 1 (N=75)								Term 3 (N=72)						
<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	25 th percentile	50 th percentile	75 th percentile	% zero score		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	25 th percentile	50 th percentile	75 th per cen tile	% zero score
PA	2.3	1.7	0.1	1	2	3	13.3%	3.2	3.5	0.4	0	3	5	36%
LSK	6.3	5.8	0.6	2	5	8	2.7%	17.2	15.3	1.8	4	13	27	0%
WR	2.3	1	0.1	2	2	2	1.3%	8.3	10.4	1.2	1	4	13	14.7%
ORF	1.5	1.3	0.1	1	1	2	14.7%	11.1	18.4	2	0	1	13	37.3%
ORC	0.08	0.3	0	0	0	0	94.7%	0.98	1.9	0.2	0	0	1	70.7%
CS	12.4							40.7						

PA=phonological and phonemic awareness, LSK=letter-sound knowledge, WR=word reading, ORF=oral reading fluency, ORC=oral reading comprehension, CS=composite score

Learner performance across the five reading measures showed improvement from Term 1 to Term 3. However, performance on various subcomponents reflected a low knowledge base in both assessment times. The initial performance in the PA task was low, with learners in the 75th percentile managing only 3 items on average. The LSK score shows improvement far, much better than the other measures in Term 1. However, the ORC task showed a high proportion of floor effect in both assessment times.

B. Examining Relationships Between Different EGRA Components

Spearman’s correlations were used to check the relations between the different reading components in Term 1 and Term 3, as shown in Table 3. Because performance was still so poor in Term 1, the focus was on the associations between the variables in Term 3. The PA showed relatively modest correlations with other subtasks, while LSK indicated robust relationships with WR and ORF but correlated moderately with ORC. WR showed strong associations with ORF and ORC, while ORF and ORC were also strongly correlated. Although Spearman’s *rho* revealed moderate to robust significant correlations across different subtasks, none of these correlations were above 80%, except for WR and ORF (*r*s=.85). However, multicollinearity did not seem to pose a serious problem (Fields, 2013).

TABLE 3
CORRELATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT COMPONENTS OF READING

	Term 1 (March 2018)				Term 3 (September 2018)			
	LSK	WR	ORF	ORC	LSK	WR	ORF	ORC
PA	.40**	.51**	.01	.17*	.59**	.50**	.49**	.53**
LSK		.56**	.02	.08		.75**	.62**	.53**
WR			.12	.15			.85**	.69**
ORC				.23*				.77**

***p*< 0.01 **p*<0.05

**p*<0.01

Multiple regression analyses (MRA) were conducted using the enter method to see which variables functioned as best predictors to the dependent variable in Term 3 for performance on specific components of reading.

First, the effects of PA and LSK on word reading were examined. A significant model emerged $F(2,69) = 53.74, p < 0.01$. The model explains 60% of the variance in WR (Adjusted R2 = 0.598), with LSK as the only significant predictor. Table 4 gives information about regression coefficients for the predictor variables entered into the model. In other words, if learners’ letter-sound knowledge improved by one *SD* (i.e., 15 lcpm), then they would, on average, be able to read 6.6 more words correctly per minute.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF MRA WITH WR AS THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Model		B	Std. Error	β eta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
1	(Constant)	-0.97	1.9		-0.81	.41
	PA	0.56	0.30	0.18	1.86	0.06
	LSK	0.43	0.06	0.64	6.38	0.000**

**Significant at *p* < 0.001.

To see which foundational reading skills best predicted ORF, PA LSK and WR were entered into the model. A significant model emerged $F(3,68) = 53.74, p < 0.01$. The model explains 79% of the variance in ORF (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.790$), with WR as the only significant predictor. Table 5 gives information about regression coefficients for the predictor variables entered into the model.

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF MRA WITH ORF AS THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Model		B	Std. Error	β eta	t	p
1	(Constant)	-1.39	1.56		-0.88	0.37
	PA	0.09	0.40	0.01	0.22	0.82
	LSK	-0.08	0.11	-0.06	-0.73	0.46
	WR	1.64	0.15	0.93	10.46	0.000**

**Significant at $p < 0.001$.

Finally, to see which early reading skills best predicted ORC, PA, LSK, WR, and ORF were examined. A significant model emerged $F(4,67) = 92.28, p < 0.01$. The model explains 84% of the variance in ORC (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.846$). Table 6 gives information about regression coefficients for the predictor variables entered into the model. Oral reading fluency significantly predicted oral reading comprehension. When it comes to the relation of phonological and phonemic awareness and reading comprehension, the magnitude was weak ($\beta = 0.21, p < .05$). Thus, an increase of 1 *SD* in oral reading fluency (18 wcpm) could bring about an increase of 1.7 in the oral reading comprehension score, suggesting that the learners' ability to read for meaning at the end of Grade 1 is strongly related to their accurate and fluent reading aloud in Xitsonga.

TABLE 6
REGRESSION OF MRA WITH ORC AS THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Model		B	Std. Error	β eta	t	p
1	(Constant)	-0.17	0.14		-1.25	0.21
	PA	0.12	0.03	0.21	3.33	0.01
	LSK	-0.01	0.01	-0.07	-0.94	0.34
	WR	-0.01	0.02	-0.06	-0.53	0.59
	ORF	0.09	0.01	0.89	8.57	0.000**

**Significant at $p < 0.001$.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Spearman's correlations and the MRA were used to address the first and second research questions: How are the different reading components in Xitsonga interrelated? Which early reading skills in Term 1 predict later reading accomplishment at the end of Grade 1 in Xitsonga language?

The results revealed moderate to robust relations between all the subcomponents of reading. This corroborates several studies in various languages (Piper & Zuilkowski, 2016 in Swahili and English; Zenlit, 2017; Pretorius, 2018 in isiZulu and isiXhosa; Spaul et al., 2020 in Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and IsiZulu). The PA skills were strongly associated with the LSK and modestly associated with other subtasks. Although the results showed that the PA was only weakly related to oral reading comprehension, after entering all the predictor variables, a direct impact on reading comprehension was reported in other studies. For example, in Northern Sotho (Wilsenach, 2013) and Malayalam (Abdul & Remia, 2013), suggesting that teachers may not be paying attention to teaching the PA skills simply because it may not be informally or formally assessed like other reading skills. Knowledge of letter sounds strongly correlates with fluency and accuracy in the ability to read words but to a certain extent with reading for meaning, suggesting that different processes of reading come into play at different stages of development and contribute differently to reading outcomes as proficiency becomes evident.

The findings as per the hierarchical regression analysis showed that letter-sound knowledge significantly predicted word reading. These results corroborate several studies of children's early reading (e.g., Hulme & Snowling, 2015 in English; Snel et al., 2016 in Dutch; Pretorius, 2018 in isiZulu and isiXhosa; Schaefer & Kotzé 2019 in isiZulu and isiSwati; Kim & Piper, 2019 in Swahili, Kamba and Lubukusu; Spaul et al., 2020 in Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and isiZulu). Ache et al. (2022) found that letter knowledge predicted both reading aloud and the accuracy of words in artificial orthography. Predictable and robust relationships between word reading and oral reading fluency were also evident. These results reveal the importance of word reading in reading fluently (with accuracy and speed), corroborating with several studies (e.g., Pretorius, 2018 in isiZulu and isiXhosa; Roembke et al., 2019 in English; Kim & Piper, 2019 in Swahili, Kamba and Lubukusu; Spaul et al., 2020 in Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and isiZulu). The National Reading Panel (2000) also emphasises that fluency depends upon well-developed word recognition skills. Pikulski and Chard (2005) reiterate the importance of decoding when they argue that children who lack the necessary foundation for developing decoding skills are in no position to read. Developing accurate word reading skills may be difficult for beginner readers; however, Ehri (2005) maintains that children can retrieve knowledge acquired from letter

sounds to help them read known and unknown words. This is especially true in transparent orthographies. The research in the Finnish (Aro, 2017), German (Landerl & Wimmer, 2008) and Spanish (Soriano-Ferrer & Morte-Soriano, 2017) languages show that in transparent orthographies, children can achieve accuracy early – leading to outstanding achievement by the end of Grade 1, but they need to be taught phonics well. Although some have suggested that strong effects between ORF and ORC are mainly obtained in English and that the relationship is not so strong in languages with transparent orthographies (Seidenberg, 2017), research in transparent languages shows strong associations between fluency and ORC (e.g., Piper & Zuilkowski, 2016 in Swahili and English; Pretorius, 2018 in isiZulu and isiXhosa; Spaul et al., 2020 in Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and isiZulu). The results of this study also revealed strong relations between oral reading fluency and reading comprehension in Xitsonga language. These results support the findings from other studies conducted in Northern Sotho, Xitsonga and isiZulu (Spaul et al., 2020) and in Kiswahili on both timed and untimed passage reading (Piper & Zuilkowski, 2016). Kim and Piper (2019) also showed that reading fluency is important for developing reading comprehension skills in African languages. In their structural equation model, oral reading fluency was consistently strongly related to reading comprehension across the three languages, e.g., Kiswahili, Kikamba and Lubukusu. Regression analysis showed that oral reading fluency was the only significant predictor of reading comprehension. These findings coincide with Zenlit 2017 assessment results which showed that oral reading fluency significantly predicted reading comprehension in isiXhosa and isiZulu, and also in English (Pretorius, 2018).

In terms of addressing the last research question (How does the relation between different reading components in Xitsonga impact the Grade 1 learners' ability to develop reading achievement?), the results showed an increase in scores from Term 1 to Term 3 across the different reading measures. However, literacy development for the Grade 1 learners was slow over the year and their performance on various early reading measures was low at the end of the year. The results also revealed that more than a third of the learners could not read at the end of the year. This outcome could have been affected by the learners' inability to master their foundational reading skills, as also cautioned by Fuchs and Fuchs (1999) and Lyytinen et al. (2019) that failing to master early reading skills has serious implications which are likely to negatively impact learner performance throughout schooling.

V. CONCLUSION

Given what is proposed by Rumelhart (1977) with regard to his interactive model of reading, which emphasises the engagement of bottom-up and top-down reading development processes simultaneously, it is clear that reading achievement could be unlikely if learners have not properly mastered their home language foundational reading skills, which are the building blocks of reading. This suggests that even in transparent agglutinating languages such as Xitsonga, there is still a need for the learners to develop accuracy, fluency and speed in reading. This helps learners to focus on reading for meaning rather than spending much time decoding words. Thus, although Xitsonga uses a transparent orthographic system which is complemented by simple vowel systems, the structures and features of Xitsonga language may have implications for reading development, given the complex consonant codes containing trigraphs in words such as *mbyana* (dog), 4-consonant sequences, *ntshava* (mountain), and 5-consonant sequences, *ndzhwalo* (load). Hence, there is a need for reading to be taught and learned consciously in alphabetic languages, in particular, African languages, to help learners develop their early reading skills, which play important roles in the acquisition of reading in any alphabetic language.

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Teaching English for Tourism: A Case Study in Kosovo

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Abstract—This paper analyzes the necessity of teaching English for tourism in Kosovo. This study falls within the realm of applied linguistics, specifically in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Tourism undoubtedly stands as a vital pillar for a country's economy. The aim of this paper is to underscore the significance of teaching the English language to students specializing in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment. English is widely recognized among scholars focusing on tourism as a facilitative tool that enhances the quality of services provided to foreign tourists. Individuals working in national, municipal tourism offices, or private business facilities involved in tourism activities are obligated, as per their job descriptions, to communicate effectively with guests—foreign tourists who come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Hence, mastery of the English language and proficient communication in English are essential factors in the field of tourism and hospitality. This paper aims to address the challenges of mastering English language skills and the importance of teaching English in the context of tourism and hospitality in Kosovo. The paper includes a research study conducted among students of the Department of Management in Tourism, Hospitality, and Environment (MTHE), emphasizing the relevance of the English language in this domain. The research methodology utilized in this study is both quantitative and qualitative, involving data collection through a questionnaire. The questionnaire results underscore the necessity of teaching English for tourism and the pivotal role of the English language in the entire industry.

Index Terms—English for specific purpose, English, Albanian, language teaching, tourism

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper will focus on the significance of English as a "lingua franca" in both the global and local contexts, particularly its importance for tourism in Kosovo. It will encompass an analysis of the necessity of teaching English within Kosovo's tourism sector. This analysis will draw upon data collected from questionnaires distributed to employees in this sector and students from the Department of Tourism and Hospitality at the Public University "Haxhi Zeka" in Peja, Kosovo. The focus of analyzing the data collected from students will center on their expectations regarding the importance of English, as well as its professional application.

In today's modern world, tourism stands as one of the most developed and frequently engaged activities. It plays a pivotal role in a country's economic development. Professionals in the field of economics assert that globally, tourism ranks as the third-largest contributor to the economy after the oil and chemical industries. The industry's contribution is multifaceted. In developed countries, tourism significantly promotes the cultural diversity characteristic of the country and its people. In transitioning economies, it creates numerous job opportunities and business prospects.

Tourism has evolved into a global phenomenon, involving millions worldwide. Its growth and development necessitate heightened communication skills as a fundamental requirement for improving global interconnectedness. Communication serves as a fundamental pillar in the tourism and hospitality industry. Its importance stems from the significant role the service sector plays in this industry. As English has solidified its position as an international language, its proficiency has become indispensable for professionals in tourism and hospitality. Thus, mastering English has become a mandatory prerequisite in this field, with effective communication in English constituting a vital part of delivering efficient service.

Kosovo, as a transitioning country, has witnessed tourism emerge as a crucial sector, significantly contributing to its economy over the last decade. Despite its small geographical size, Kosovo possesses remarkable natural and human characteristics, showcasing extraordinary tourist potential. It offers ideal prospects for domestic, regional, and international tourism development. Although tourism plays a pivotal role in Kosovo's economy and holds substantial development prospects, it's fair to say that its full potential remains untapped. Consequently, from the standpoint of tourism and hospitality, Kosovo is still in a developmental phase.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section constitutes the theoretical framework of this paper. Here, the focus lies on reviewing opinions that present English as a “lingua franca,” followed by an exploration of scholarly work discussing the importance of teaching English for Specific Purposes, particularly in the context of teaching English for Tourism. Primarily, this literature review aims to define language as both a phenomenon and a field of study, while also elucidating tourism as a social phenomenon and an area of academic inquiry.

Definitions of language abound due to their multifaceted functions. However, the most widespread definition conceives of language primarily as a tool for communication. It serves as the medium through which we both receive and convey information, shaping our thoughts in the process. Language enables the expression of thoughts, ideas, and attitudes to others, facilitating communication. While the ability to communicate through language is universal, the languages individuals possess vary. Each group forms a language community that employs a specific language for communication.

From earlier authors, Sapir defines that language is a purely human and noninstinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols (Sapir, 1921). Sapir's contemporary, Bloomfield, defines language as the totality of utterances that can be made in a speech community (Bloomfield, 1926). Furthermore, Richards and Platt (1992) define language as the system of human communication which consists of structured arrangement of sounds (or their written representation) into larger units. Also, other authors, Saussure, Block and Trager, von Humboldt, Chomsky, have given their definitions on language, definitions which are given below. Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), defines that a language is a system of signs expressing ideas, and hence comparable to writing, the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, symbolic rites, forms of politeness, military signals, and so on. It is simply the most important of such systems.

On the other hand, one problem in defining tourism lies in the fact that many scholars have opposing views about the fact that tourism is not an object of study, not a field of study. This is due to the fact that some researchers see tourism only as a human activity. Tourism as a phenomenon is difficult to define because different scholars give different definitions and such scholars are usually professionals in other fields than tourism. Such variations in definitions are present because, as Lundberg, Krishnamoorthy and Stavenga (1995) state, tourism is “an umbrella concept” in which multiple disciplines are linked. Being professional in a different field can unconsciously force these researchers to provide definitions related to the impact of tourism on the field in which they graduated or vice versa. This makes defining tourism to have different approaches. The large number of definitions of tourism as a phenomenon is also due to the fact that today tourism is associated with almost all sectors of social activity.

There is a definition given by the World Tourism Organization which states that tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business / professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure. (<https://www.unwto.org>) Despite the fact that such a definition is given by the World Tourism Organization, many scholars and many professionals do not see this definition as unanimous. This is due to the fact that tourism, according to them, is a more complex phenomenon.

A. *English as Lingua Franca*

Today, English is the most widely learned language worldwide. It serves as the language of political discourse, international business, air transport, science, and global medicine. Furthermore, it dominates the spheres of world media, film, television, culture, and information technology. Professionals, specialists, and educated individuals across the globe understand English. Many English words have become universally familiar and comprehensible, contributing to the label of English as a universal or global language. The necessity for such a lingua franca has never been more pronounced than in this era of globalization. The emergence of a global language was a logical consequence, and two pivotal factors in establishing the global status of English are the 19th-century British Industrial Revolution and the substantial growth of the American economy, propelling it to an economic superpower throughout the 20th century.

But beyond that, many scholars and professionals refer to the English language as “lingua franca”. “Lingua franca” as a term has been used continuously in linguistic and sociological literature. The term lingua franca is used to refer to a contact language, that is, a language between speakers who do not share the same first language. Today, this term is inextricably linked only to the English language. Since the beginning of this century, there is an extremely voluminous number of monographs, works, researches on the distribution and influence of the English language and its undeniable role as “lingua franca”. As Jenkins (2009) puts it, “The phenomenon of English as a lingua franca (ELF) has become the subject of considerable debate during the past few years.” This has created the basis for creating a perspective of English Lingua Franca and for the English language to be studied as a phenomenon of intercultural communication. The role of English as a lingua franca has contributed to the creation of a new phenomenon called World Standard English.

Mauranen (2018) states that “the two remarkable things about English today are that it has spread around the globe like no other language before, and that it is spoken by people for whom it is a second or additional language more than by those for whom it is a first language.” The widespread dissemination of English worldwide and its extensive utilization across various domains undeniably consolidates its role as a “lingua franca.” There's no denying that its

influence steadily amplifies day by day, driven by emerging global trends that increasingly engage diverse populations with the English language.

B. English for Specific Purposes

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) emerged in the latter half of the 20th century due to two significant factors: the post-Second World War global landscape and what Swales (1992) referred to as the linguistic revolution. This shift arose from the diverse needs and interests of learners, prompting course designers to create tailored programs for specific contexts. As Swales presented, learners had different needs and interests, and as a result, course designers had to develop courses to fit factors in particular contexts. Various definitions of ESP emerged among different authors. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) described ESP as "an approach to language teaching where all decisions regarding content and method are based on the learner's purpose for learning." According to Richards and Schmidt (2010), ESP is defined as "the role of English in a language course or program determined by the specific needs of a particular group of learners." The definition by Richards and Schmidt best encapsulates the actual purpose behind the emergence of ESP as a phenomenon and academic field. ESP's focus on meeting the specific needs of various groups elevates its significance considerably. Its capacity to cater to diverse scientific fields within its domain further strengthens its standing within the academic sphere.

In this discussion, it is very important to analyze English for Tourism as a subfield of a wider discipline known as English for Specific Purpose. The term "specific" refers to the very narrow purpose for learning English. In such cases, students approach the acquisition of English through a field that is already known and relevant. As such, ESP combines English language teaching and subject matter. It is pointed out that a combination such as the aforementioned is of great motivation for students. This is due to the fact that ESP enables them to learn and use English in their field of study. In our case, ESP approach is highly motivating for Tourism and Hospitality students. And one simple reason for this is that ESP is more concentrated in pragmatics than in morphology or syntax. English for Tourism is one of the many fields constituting the wider discipline of English for Specific Purposes. In the field of English for Tourism, students' focus falls in analyzing the required skills and needs for adequacy in their job position which is necessarily related to communicating with tourists who have a different cultural background compared to that of the employee. This makes English a prerequisite for all employees of this sector. As Otilia Simion (2012) states "English proficiency is required in all professional areas but it becomes essential in the tourist industry because of its specific characteristics".

C. Importance of English for Tourism

Contemporary services hold a pivotal role in fulfilling diverse human needs, and within this spectrum, tourism stands intimately connected to the service sector. In an industry where the primary focus revolves around the dynamic interaction between service seekers and providers, the possession of a shared language becomes an indispensable asset. A common language serves as the cornerstone for fostering effective, coherent, and comprehensive communication among all involved parties. Proficiency in a foreign language undoubtedly stands as an invaluable skill, significantly enhancing the ability to deliver high-quality services in the dynamic realm of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Nevertheless, acquiring English stands as the foremost tool in delivering quality services to tourists. This is primarily due to its status as the "lingua franca," rendering the importance of mastering this language incomparable to any other. Yet, mastering English remains the paramount tool for providing top-notch tourist services, given its "lingua franca" status, incomparable to other languages' significance. The status of "lingua franca" in the field of tourism has an inalienable impact. We see that many of the road signs today are offered in English, announcements at bus stations, train stations and airports are given in English, restaurants offer menus in English. Almost any type of tourist information is provided in English. This is why communication in English in the tourism and hospitality industry is of particular importance. Fatos Gjata (2017) defines some advantages of using English. These advantages are as it follows:

1. It provides advantages in making reservations. In this regard, English knowledge as an international language helps to accomplish some goals before and during a trip including ticket purchase, hotel reservation, food ordering, accommodation etc.
2. It provides communication opportunities. If you speak and communicate in this international language you can better explain your preferences during a trip.
3. It enables cooperation with locals. English acquisition enables you to interact with locals, to get acquainted with their lives and culture.
4. It provides the opportunity to communicate with other travelers. English is an international language that facilitates communication between people of different nationalities; it also allows different travelers to share their experiences.
5. It gives you the opportunity to be independent during your trip. As the knowledge of different tourists for the places they visit is insufficient, it is necessary for them to have a tour guide. But English enables travelers to explore these foreign countries even without the help of a tour guide.

D. Analysis of English Use in the Kosovo Tourism Sector

We have chosen the city of Peja as a major tourism destination in Kosovo. Peja is the westernmost city of Kosovo with about 100 thousand inhabitants. It is surrounded by mountain ranges. The Lumbardhi river that springs through the Rugova Canyon separates the city in half. History, culture, tradition, natural resources, location, are some of the features

that distinguish Peja as a tourist destination attract visitors from various countries throughout the year. The city has a rich ancient history. The greatest wealth is the mountainous region of Rugova where Rugova Canyon, Lumbardhi, lakes at an altitude of 1860m, caves, as well as waterfalls along the canyon, mountain peaks over 2000m, are offered for use to visitors. One of the main attractions of the city of Peja is the Waterfall of Drini with a length of 30m, which is visited throughout the year by many local and foreign visitors, which is part of the system of mountain ranges of the Cursed Mountains.

The city of Peja in 2019, the last year before the COVID-19 pandemic, had a number of hotels stays of around 150 thousand. With the impact of the pandemic, this number has dropped to about 56 thousand in the last year. If we see visitors from their country of origin, most visitors are from Albania, Switzerland and Germany. In this case, we can say that most of the visitors are Albanian speakers as a large number of visitors from Switzerland and Germany are immigrants who spend the holiday period in Kosovo. Therefore, knowledge of English is not necessary for effective communication with these tourists. The rest of the visitors are mostly from Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy and France. With this part of tourists, the need of knowing English is evident.

We compared questionnaire findings of the study conducted among students in tourism at the Haxhi Zeka University. The results of this questionnaire and its findings will be discussed henceforth.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Sample / Participants

The participants of this research are the students of the first and second group of the first year of studies in the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment. Also, the population of this paper consists of second year students of the same faculty, 8 participants for each group. The number of questionnaires completed is a total of 24, all the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment at Haxhi Zeka University in the city of Peja. At the "Haxhi Zeka" University, students of the Faculty of Management in Tourism and Hospitality, study English as a mandatory subject, divided into two modules that are taught in the first and second year of bachelor studies. The aim of English subject in this Faculty is to acquire a richer vocabulary and language skills ranging from level A1 to B2. From the experience at this university, we can say that the inclusion of another elective subject - English for Professional Communication - would be more than necessary and welcomed by the students of this department. Of course, such a course would be offered in the third or fourth year of study in other departments besides the Faculty of Management in Tourism and Hospitality.

B. Instrument(s)

The questionnaire was applied as a very successful research tool. The other reason for using the questionnaire in this research is because it collects data on our points of interest, which are structured in advance. The questionnaire used contained a total of 12 questions, where some of the questions were with alternatives, in other questions we used the Likert scale and in one of the questions we left the opportunity to add comments if they have any thoughts or ideas which were not mentioned in the alternatives mentioned by our side.

C. Data Collection Procedures

Before the respondents were recruited in this research, the purpose of the research was explained to them and they were informed that their answers will remain completely anonymous. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire which contained points on the importance of the English language in the tourism sector, points related to their experience in communicating with foreign tourists and about the importance of the English language in the Faculty of Management in Tourism, Hospitality and Environment.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A questionnaire was distributed to 24 responders. Out of the 24 total responders, the percentage of female responders (41.7%) was lower than male (58.3). All of the responders (100%) have Albanian language as their first language or native language. The results obtained from the questionnaire show that there were 14 responders (58.3) with upper level of English proficiency.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCY OF MTHE STUDENTS

		Frequency (n=24)	%
Gender	Female	10	41.7
	Male	14	58.3
Level of English proficiency	Beginner	3	12.5
	Elementary	4	16.7
	Pre-intermediate	3	12.5
	Upper-intermediate	6	25
	Advanced	8	33.3

In questioning responders “Do you find English as necessary in the tourism sector?” the following data were collected.

TABLE 2
NECESSITY OF ENGLISH IN THE SECTOR OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

		Frequency (n=24)		%
<i>Gender</i>	Female	Necessary	3	12.5
		Essential	7	29.2
	Male	Necessary	3	12.5
		Essential	11	45.8

As shown in Table 2, most students emphasize the necessity of English in the tourism section, which suggests higher inclusion of English courses in their studies. Only two English courses are taught to tourism and hospitality students. English language I and English language II constitute the totality of what is taught in English. Such two courses are mainly concerned with general skills in English and not with the specific purpose of using English for Tourism. The results indicate that 58.3% of responders (n=14) believe that English is very useful for employees of the tourism and hospitality sector. 41.7% (n=10) believe that English is advantageous and none of the responders believe that English is useless or not useful at all. Results show the positive attitude of responders towards the importance of English in this sector.

Additionally, responders were asked “How necessary do you find English for tourism and hospitality students?”. The results from data collected show that that 75% of responders (n=18) believe that English is essential for students of tourism and hospitality. On the other hand, 25% (n=6) believe that English is necessary and none of the responders believe that English is needless or not necessary at all.

Table 3 shows the results from data collected related to the importance of four main skills (speaking, listening, reading, writing) in the sector of tourism and hospitality.

TABLE 3
IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE SKILLS

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
1	14 (58.3%)	11 (45.8%)	6 (25%)	9 (37.5%)
2	3 (12.5%)	2 (8.3%)	8 (33.3%)	7 (29.2%)
3	1 (4.2%)	6 (25%)	7 (29.2%)	6 (25%)
4	0 (0.00%)	2 (8.3%)	2 (8.3%)	1 (4.2%)
5	6 (25%)	3 (12.5%)	1 (4.2%)	1 (4.2%)

Note: 1 – very important, 5 – less important

When asked “In what skill do you think you have the most stagnation in English?”, the following data were collected.

TABLE 4
STAGNATION BASED ON SKILL

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
Frequency (n=24)	8 (33.3%)	6 (25%)	1 (4.2%)	9 (37.5%)

The results from this research show that students from MTHE claims English in the tourism sector as essential and necessary. Based on these results, the issue of greater inclusion of the English language throughout the studies arises. At present, English Language 1 at MTHE Faculty is taught as mandatory in the first year, second semester. English Language 2 on the other hand is taught as mandatory in the second year, the fourth semester. Both of these courses are taught in 15 weeks, with 2 hours of lectures per week and 2 hours of tutorials per week. Undoubtedly, with the importance of English language, during the studies, offering English Language 3 and 4 as elective courses would be welcomed by students. Another option would be to include English for Specific Purposes, English for Tourism, as an elective course. This is also supported by the data collected, presented above, that 75% of respondents believe that English is essential for tourism and hospitality students.

The results from this research show that among the four (4) English language skills, the most important skill is the speaking skill, followed by the skill of listening. In terms of importance, according to the collected results, the skill of writing is ranked before that of reading. Such results show that in the sector of tourism and hospitality, the most needed skill is that of speaking since the contact with foreign tourists is in most cases physical and requires verbal communication. Meanwhile, students of MTHE claim that in English they face the greatest difficulties in the writing skills. Contrary, according to the collected results, they claim that the English skill with least stagnation is that of reading. Based on this, they do not consider reading skills as a problem in their flow of acquiring English.

V. CONCLUSIONS

In the modern world, the phenomenon of tourism is among the most frequented phenomena in terms of frequency of activity. Tourism as such represents an industry that stands on its own as an influential factor in the economy of a country. We state that the contribution of tourism as an industry is multidimensional. In some countries, we state, that this industry aims to promote the culture and history of the country, while in some other countries this industry has a

specific contribution in creating jobs and generating new businesses. Specifically, we state that in Kosovo, as a country in transition, tourism is a growing sector. The touristic potential that Kosovo has for the development of domestic, regional, or international tourism businesses is not met. Based on this, in terms of tourism, Kosovo is still under development. This brings us to the conclusion that the importance of tourism in Kosovo is still assessed according to the contribution that tourism is bringing to the opening of new businesses and the opening of new jobs. So, Kosovo, as a country with still unfulfilled tourism potential, cannot be considered alongside countries that initially assess tourism as an opportunity for promotion. In principle, we can conclude that the institutional goal is to promote the country and culture but the goal of entrepreneurs in the field of tourism is the development and fulfillment of tourism potential.

The tourism and hospitality sector involves millions of people. The inclusion of people from different origins, different cultural backgrounds, different languages, makes communication an essential element in this sector. Based on this, we conclude that English has managed to stabilize its role as an international (global) language and as such becomes mandatory for effective communication in the field of tourism and hospitality. Also, we conclude that good English skills result in more efficient service to tourists. In this paper, we have defined language as a field of study and as a phenomenon, saying that language is a means through which we transmit and receive information, communicate our ideas and thoughts to others. Also, we defined tourism as a field of study and as a phenomenon, saying that tourism is a phenomenon that has its main aim to travel from one country to another, for the purpose of entertainment and recreation without excluding the business purpose.

A. Findings

In our paper, we elaborated on the role of English in today's world. We stated that the existence of English is a logical need that responds to the need of states and peoples to communicate. From the review of the literature on the importance of the English language, we came to the conclusion that the reference to English as "lingua franca" is more than reasonable because today English is present in every area of life and its absence as a global language would affect the degradation of many fields. Given the role of English as a global language, we discussed the importance of English in the field of tourism and hospitality. We mention the fact that the phenomenon of tourism is inextricably linked to the services sector. In a sector where the epicenter is the applicant, the service of the provider must be effective. In an industry where the epicenter is the tourist, the service to him must be efficient. The necessity to understand the request of the applicant makes the acquisition of English vital in the provision of the service. This was also our conclusion that possessing good English skills is the best tool to understand and offer quality service to tourists.

From the research conducted at Haxhi Zeka University in Peja, we came to the conclusion that English is essential in the tourism sector. From the research, we understand that none of the respondents consider English unnecessary or not needed at all. Most of the data that was collected indicated that English is essential and only a minority of respondents think that English is only necessary. From the same research, we found that most respondents believe that English is very useful for employees in the tourism and hotel sector. From this, we can conclude that there should be an institutional approach to the training of employees in English. This would include a course with a curriculum developed specifically for developing the ability to communicate with tourists.

B. Implications

From this research, we have obtained results that show that English is essential for tourism and hospitality students. Based on our discussion of these results, we conclude that the two mandatory courses, English Language 1 and 2, are insufficient in developing the necessary skills for specializing in English for tourism. Based on this study, the inclusion of one of the options: English Language 3 and English Language 4, English for Tourism, or English for Professional Communication, as elective courses, would have a positive effect on strengthening English language skills in order to use the language in the specific field of tourism and hospitality. Students are aware of the importance of English in tourism and hospitality and are aware of the role of English as a means of communication in this sector.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

Future research endeavors should consider conducting a comparative analysis of language curricula in countries with growing tourism sectors to distinguish best practices that can inform the development of more effective language programs in Kosovo. Longitudinal studies assessing the enduring impact of English language courses on students' proficiency and communication skills within the tourism and hospitality sector would offer valuable insights into the sustainability of language. Exploring business perspectives within the tourism industry in Kosovo and understanding how businesses perceive the importance of English language skills could contribute to adapting language teaching programs to meet industry demands. Additionally, further research could delve into the efficacy of alternative language courses, such as English Language 3 and 4, English for Tourism, or English for Professional Communication, as elective options to supplement the current mandatory courses (English Language 1 and 2) in enhancing English language skills for students specializing in tourism and hospitality.

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Mobile Learning and Verbal Proficiency: A Cross-Sectional Study Investigating English Speaking Skills Enhancement

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Abstract—Mobile learning supports a constructivist approach to learning by providing student-focused pedagogies and enhancing students' self-directed learning toward a goal. While reading, writing, listening, and speaking are all important life skills, speaking or, to put it another way, communication—occurs often in both official and casual settings. For this reason, speaking is typically more important than the other abilities. Gaining speaking proficiency is just as crucial as developing other abilities that are necessary for target language learners to improve their communication. Offering a comprehensive picture of how mobile learning interventions function for different learner profiles is the aim of this methodical sampling strategy. Due to their widespread use, mobile devices offer unparalleled accessibility and flexibility for learning, independent of location. Consequently, developing successful educational interventions requires an understanding of the connection between these technology benefits and the enhancement of English language proficiency through speaking. Data from 29 surveys were gathered for a quantitative cross-sectional study using Google Forms, which examined the effects of mobile learning, prior English proficiency, frequency of mobile engagement, and their link to English-speaking abilities. The study sought to clarify the importance and association of these factors in improving verbal competency through mobile learning in English language acquisition, using t-tests for group comparison and Cronbach's Alpha for reliability. Findings highlight the necessity for customized methods depending on learners' proficiency levels to maximize their efficacy. Regular mobile learning engagement is strongly correlated with prior English proficiency and increased language abilities.

Index Terms—mobile learning, English speaking skills, frequency of mobile learning engagement, verbal proficiency, regression analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology is a vital part of our everyday lives in the twenty-first century, and to utilize it to rethink or re-engineer the education and training systems, professionals, educators, and students must reevaluate their core values (Viltz-Emerson, 2021). Every area of our lives has been impacted by technology, but education is the most critical since it focuses primarily on the teaching-learning process. With features like a data-show projector and smart board, the majority of classrooms in the present day are cutting edge. With the recent advancements in mobile technologies, feature phones are gradually being supplanted by smartphones as the most widely used mobile devices (Moreira et al., 2017). By utilizing mobile technology for learning, students may extend their conversations and research outside of the classroom and carry the device with them everywhere they go. Students may collaborate to study and develop knowledge while engaging with a wide range of information using mobile devices. Because mobile learning offers student-focused pedagogies and can improve students' self-directed learning toward a goal, it promotes a constructivist perspective on learning (Khadimally, 2021; Mitry, 2021). Promoting the availability of educational possibilities, enabling individual development, offering instantaneous suggestions, acquiring at any time and place, bridging the gap between formal and informal learning, lowering barriers to education in remote areas, supporting students with disabilities, enhancing communication, and being cost-effective are just a few of the opportunities and challenges that mobile learning brings.

The four English language proficiency areas speaking, writing, listening, and reading are all important language skills that need to be learned (Newton et al., 2018). To correctly and successfully interact with people, language learners need to be able to perceive and produce spoken language. These four skills are all so closely related to each other that a deficiency in one will directly affect the others. While the ability to read, write, listen, and talk are all valuable, speaking is usually more significant than the other skills because speaking or, to put it another way, communication occurs often in both formal and informal situations in daily life (Toro et al., 2019; Ting et al., 2017). Speaking proficiency is equally important as other skills that need to be developed for target language learners to communicate

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better. The main goal of this study is to clarify how mobile learning apps, interactive courses, and immersive online resources affect the growth of English language proficiency. Using a cross-sectional methodology, the study encompasses a heterogeneous sample of students from different educational levels, age groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The goal of this thorough sampling approach is to offer a full picture of how mobile learning interventions work for various learner profiles.

Additionally, the study breaks new ground by examining the complex factors that support successful mobile-based language acquisition. Some factors are being studied, including the function of gamification, personalized learning paths, instantaneous feedback systems, and the use of multimedia components in mobile applications. These components show great promise for developing and perfecting English-speaking abilities in addition to adding to the learning experience's depth. This study's knowledge of the modern socio-cultural environment that influences learning preferences and behaviours is intricately woven throughout. Since mobile devices are so widely used, they are incomparably accessible and flexible for learning, regardless of location. Consequently, comprehending the relationship between these technological advantages and the improvement of English language competency via speech is essential for creating pedagogical interventions that are effective. This work is important in ways that go beyond scholarly research. Being able to communicate effectively in the English language has a significant impact on people's ability to pursue further education, progress in their careers, and move up the socioeconomic ladder in an increasingly linked world. Therefore, it is critical to identify the processes by which mobile education might improve English-speaking proficiency to develop inclusive educational practices and an internationally competitive workforce. For educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders interested in maximizing the transformative effect of technology-enhanced language learning, the study intends to provide nuanced insights and useful implications as it delves into the complex web of mobile learning and its effects on English verbal proficiency. Using empirical data and thorough analysis, this study aims to make a significant contribution to the current conversation on mobile instructional interventions and how they shape language skills in the modern educational environment.

Hypothesis

H₁₀: There is no significant relationship between Mobile Learning and English-speaking skills enhancement.

H_{1a}: Increased engagement with Mobile Learning positively correlates with enhanced English-speaking skills.

H₂₀: The impact of Mobile Learning on English Speaking Skills remains consistent across different levels of Prior English Proficiency.

H_{2a}: Prior English Proficiency moderates the relationship between Mobile Learning and English-speaking skills enhancement.

H₃₀: The effect of Mobile Learning on English Speaking Skills is not mediated by the Frequency of Mobile Learning Engagement.

H_{3a}: Frequency of Mobile Learning Engagement mediates the relationship between Mobile Learning and English-speaking skills enhancement.

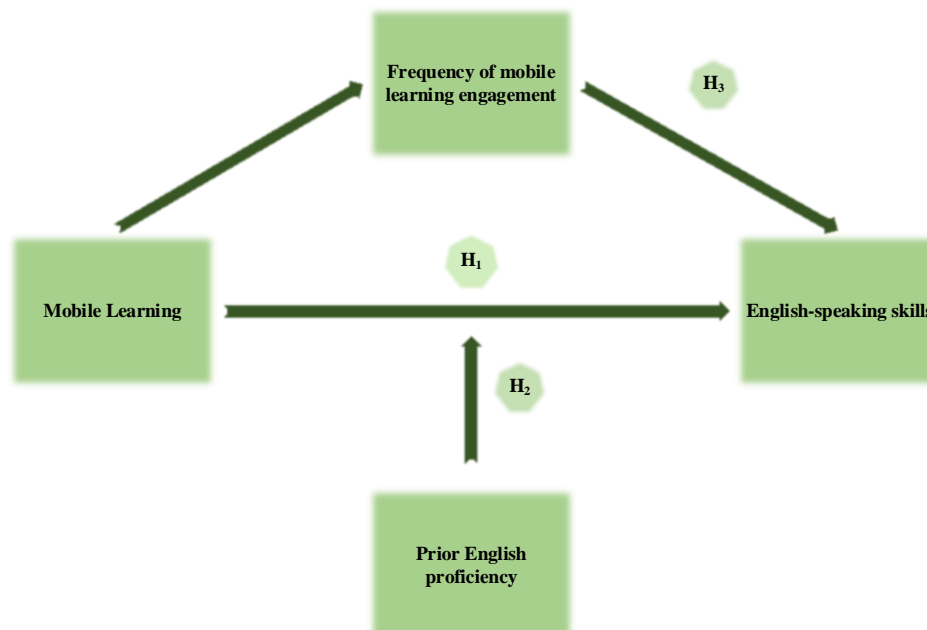


Figure 1. Flow-Diagram of Proposed Hypothesis

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Klimova (2019) demonstrated that the integration of smartphone app learning into constant assessment effectively helps foreign language learning and improves university pupil achievement. An in-depth examination of the demands of the pupils was used as the approach, and the information was statistically processed. The findings demonstrated the effectiveness of foreign language education in improving university pupil achievement, especially when it comes to reviewing and learning English phrases and words on handheld devices. Zhonggen et al. (2019) determined that learning via mobile platforms resulted in satisfaction with learning, lower students' intellectual burdens in EFL classrooms, and a notable improvement in EFL. To get accurate and credible data, the research used a quasi-experimental combination of methods to assess the efficacy of the mobile educational platform. Mobile-supported PA exercises have to make use of Immediate Response System techniques to improve learners' speech in EFL. The usefulness of this strategy in the setting of a university English language program was assessed by an indirect experiment.

Hao et al. (2019) investigated the efficacy of a smartphone application (app) created under the guise of an intellectual apprenticeship to help learners who are having trouble learning EFL. Ten seventh-grade pupils who thrived well below the standard in their EFL classroom were included in the study. The study queries focused on how the app changed users' perspectives concerning learning, how students perceived the app's layout, and how their educational results changed as a result of using it. Data were gathered through questionnaires, tests, evaluations, and conversations. Khan et al. (2021) examined students' opinions of the WhatsApp app in English language learning and their plans to utilize it in the future. Over six weeks, 32 EFL students were subjected to vocabulary learning through the usage of the WhatsApp app and collected their responsive data through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Ghorbani and Ebadi (2020) explained the findings of a mixed methods study that looked into how teacher feedback affected the verbal advancement of EFL learners in mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) by a quasi-experimental study involving 40 female EFL learners who were randomly selected from online messaging groups on Telegram for English learning. The experimental group's participants were divided into 15 chat groups, each consisting of two individuals who were at the identical degree of linguistic competence as the educator, based on the results of a pre-test administered using Dialang, a free online language proficiency tool.

Bakar et al. (2019) examined how well project-based learning (PjBL) exercises worked as an instructional tool to help Malaysian English language learners become more proficient communicators orally. The strategy consisted of eight PjBL activities that were the focus of twelve weeks of classes delivered using the PjBL teaching methodology. Speaking and listening exams that were given as pre-and post-tests, as well as a student questionnaire that was given after the research, were used to gather data. The results showed that the learners' total oral communication skills had significantly improved, and they also had a positive opinion of PjBL. Wulandari (2019) examined the possibility of an association between Instagram Vlogs and improved speaking skills among EFLs and also looked at how students felt about using Instagram Vlogs in speaking classes. Pre- and post-tests were used to gauge the progress in the EFL learners' communication skills to ascertain the effect of the Instagram Vlog and showed that adding Instagram Vlogs to a beginning speaking course enhanced the students' speaking abilities in terms of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and overall target language usage. Saed et al. (2021) investigated the efficacy of YouTube videos in imparting speech to Jordanian students taking EFL. YouTube videos were used to teach communication abilities to the experimental population, whereas the conventional method was used for the control group. The IELTS speaking band descriptors, which comprise four primary categories—fluency and continuity, verbal asset, grammatical reach and correctness, and pronunciation—were used to grade the respondent's progress.

Hamad et al. (2019) indicated that employing the Listening Audio Tracks Imitation (YATI) strategy has an advantageous effect on the efficacy of EFL learners' communication abilities, proficiency, and pronunciation. The study employed a qualitative approach to demonstrate the efficacy of utilizing YouTube videos and YATI as pedagogical tools for instructing the English language in educational settings. Bawanti and Arifani (2021) investigated the effects of using the Zoom app on smartphones by looking at how learners felt about their ability to communicate and how they behaved when taking classes online. This study employed a survey strategy and gathered data by providing students with 12 questionnaire items using a Google form. Reitz et al. (2019) provided a unique approach to teaching spoken language skills by integrating the technique of acquiring EFL into a general 3D cooperative virtual reality (VR) game. VR made it possible to simulate real-world scenarios, resulting in training settings that are both cozy and realistic. The game's material may be modified to meet the specifications of students or fit certain curricula and rely on the globally recognized Graded Examination in Spoken English (GESE) Trinity Exam. Chen and Hsu (2020) examined the efficacy of pupil English understanding, pupil gameplay participation, and autonomy in learning when utilizing a mobile English learning application that uses virtual reality games from an intellectual and behavioral standpoint. Ghonivita et al. (2021) explained how contextual teaching and learning (CTL) utilizing online learning helped pupils develop their vocabulary and listening skills and found out how this improved student performance. Using classroom action research as a tool, the study employed a qualitative research approach.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We used Google Forms with a mono-quantitative approach and an online poll to collect primary data. The survey, consisting of 29 questionnaires, aimed to ascertain the ways in which mobile learning improves English-speaking

abilities and the impact that prior English proficiency and frequency of mobile involvement had on these activities. The concepts outlined in the literature study, together with several other theoretical ideas related to mobile English language acquisition, formed the basis for the survey's question format. The increase in English-speaking abilities specific to verbal competence is examined as an independent variable in this study, along with the interaction between mobile learning techniques and usage as dependent factors. The study design was cross-sectional, quantitative, mono-method, and deductive to facilitate statistical analysis of the data and precise control of variables over a shorter time range. The choice of Google Forms as the questionnaire platform was based on security and regulatory requirements. The researcher was able to pseudonymize the participant data thanks to active directory restrictions. Cronbach's Alpha test is used to calculate correlations between variables: The stronger the relationship, the more valid the data (Heale & Twycross, 2015). In quantitative research, this calculation is a frequently used reliability test that performs particularly well with Likert scales. Following data collection, t-tests—a two-sample statistical technique that presupposes unequal variances—were used to analyze the data in more detail. The t-test, an inferential statistic, was used to determine if the results from the two groups differed significantly.

IV. RESULTS

A. Sociodemographic Information

The distribution of participants by age, gender, educational attainment, native language, residence location, access to technology, prior English language learning experience, and frequency of mobile usage is shown in Table 1. The results show that 43.4 percent of participants are between the ages of 26 and 35, and 34% are between the ages of 36 and 45. In terms of gender, there is a minor skewed distribution with slightly more men (52.6%) than females (47.4%). When it comes to education, the majority have a bachelor's degree (42.9%), while high school grads are next, with 38.9%. Remarkably, just 11.7% of participants use English as their first language, suggesting that participants come from a variety of linguistic backgrounds. In addition, the data shows that a significant majority of people live in suburban regions (58.2%), as opposed to rural areas (23.2%) and urban areas (18.6%). The majority of participants (55.8%) have access to technology, especially smartphones. Internet access and computer/laptop ownership come in second and third, respectively, at 22.5% and 21.7%. There is variation in prior English learning experiences: a sizeable fraction has formal schooling (48.5%) and a sizeable part is self-taught (17.1%). Furthermore, according to the frequency of mobile usage, a significant percentage (52.3%) of users spend 2-4 hours a day on their smartphones. Figure 2 highlights the heterogeneous demographic makeup of research participants, encompassing a range of ages, educational attainment, language distinctions, and technical proficiency.

TABLE 1
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDED PARTICIPANTS

S. No	Demographic factors	Frequency (%)	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	
1	Age	18-25 years	10.3	0.703	0.156	-0.564
		26-35 years	43.4			
		36-45 years	34.0			
		46+ years	12.3			
2	Gender	Male	52.6	0.250	0.105	-1.995
		Female	47.4			
3	Education level	High school	38.9	0.720	0.854	0.183
		Bachelor's degree	42.9			
		Master's degree	12.5			
		Doctorate	5.7			
4	Native language	English	11.7	0.740	0.046	-0.644
		Hindi	39.2			
		Arabic	36.3			
		Other	12.8			
5	Residential area	Urban	18.6	0.417	-0.043	-0.600
		Suburban	58.2			
		Rural	23.2			
6	Access to technology	Owns a smartphone	55.8	0.660	0.700	-1.131
		Access to the internet	22.5			
		Access to computer/laptop	21.7			
7	Previous English learning experience	Formal education	48.5	1.325	0.603	-1.168
		Self-taught	17.1			
		English language courses	18.0			
		No formal experience	16.5			
8	Frequency of mobile daily usage	Less than an hour per day	17.7	0.908	-0.560	-0.615
		1-2 hours per day	13.2			
		2-4 hours per day	52.3			
		More than 4 hours per day	16.8			

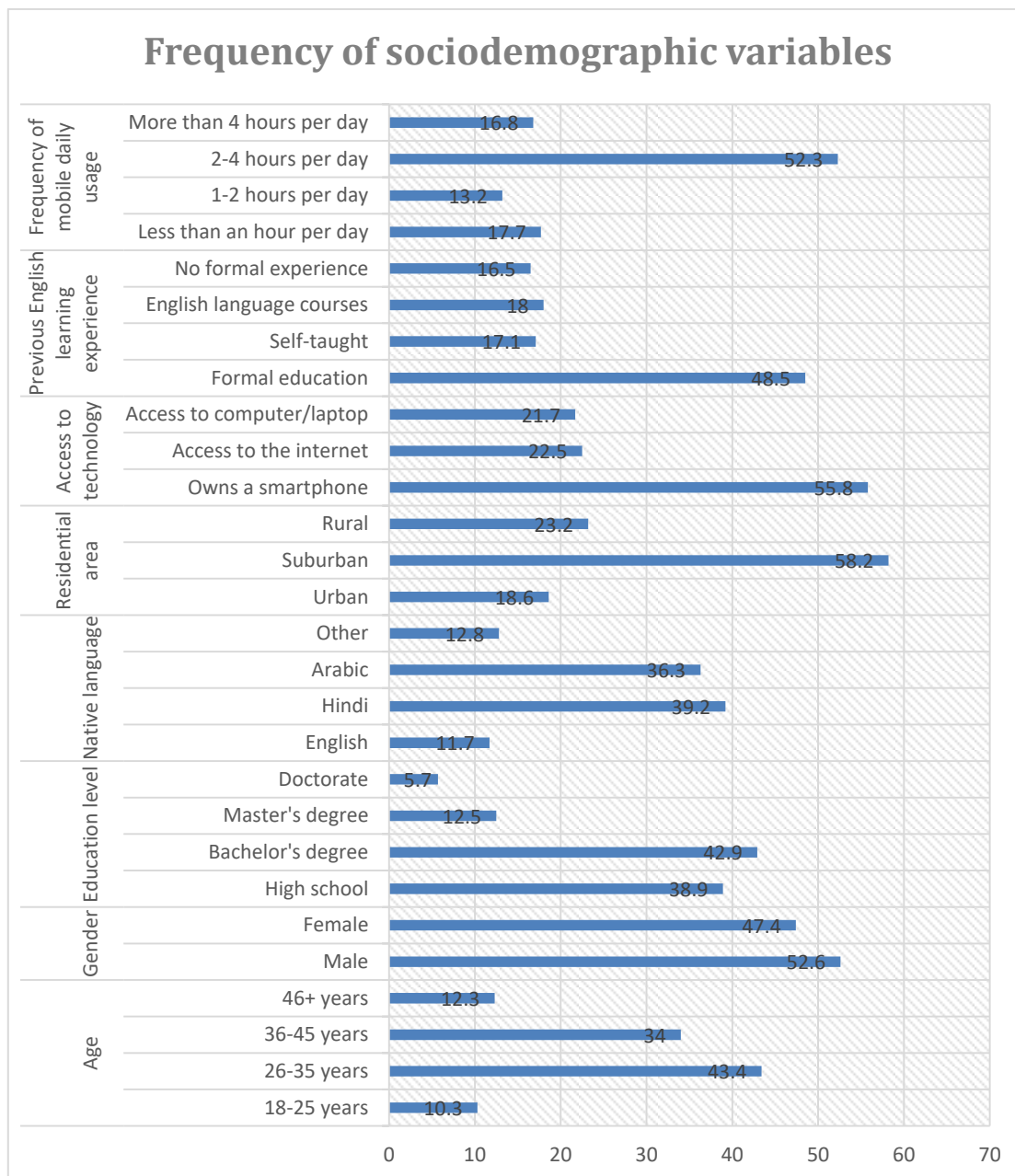


Figure 2. Bar Chart Showing the Frequency of Different Sociodemographic Variables

B. Perception of Respondents About the Influence of Mobile Learning on English Verbal Proficiency

The influence of mobile learning on enhancing English-speaking abilities across a range of factors is reported by respondents in Table 2. The average ratings, which hover around a 4 out of 5, show that people have an overall good attitude towards using mobile learning for English practice. The majority of the skewness values are negative, pointing to a distribution that leans somewhat left and favorably toward views. The kurtosis values show a significant peak and a somewhat normal distribution; they are often around 1 or slightly above. The ease and efficacy of mobile learning for English-speaking respondents were highly agreed upon by the respondents. They prefer it over conventional approaches because they find it interesting, approachable, and appropriate for their everyday activities. The mean ratings for English speaking, which average about a 4 out of 5, show that participants typically feel well about their ability to have a conversation. The distribution appears to be slightly left-leaning, with a preponderance of negative skewness values, suggesting a bias towards positive replies. In the meanwhile, a modest amount of peak is shown by the kurtosis values, which range from 1.6 to 2.2, suggesting a distribution that is somewhat more peaked than a normal curve. The respondents feel confident in their ability to communicate in English, are at ease expressing themselves in a variety of settings, and believe that their skills are getting better. Although they believe they can speak rather fluently, carry on discussions, and express themselves logically most of the time, it is acknowledged that there may occasionally be difficulties keeping up the pace and flow of English talks.

Before using mobile learning resources, respondents' assessments of their English ability suggest mean scores above 3.9 out of 5, which show a generally favorable self-assessment of their pre-existing English abilities. A modest leftward bias in the distribution is shown by the skewness values, which are primarily negative and show a trend towards positive ratings. The distribution is depicted as somewhat more peaked than a normal curve by the kurtosis values, which range from 1 to 2.2. The respondents were confident in their pre-mobile English learning abilities in some areas, such as comprehension of spoken English, writing ability, ease of conversation, grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Furthermore, all respondents agree that having previously spoken and understood English gave them a solid foundation and an advantage while using and profiting from mobile learning tools. It suggests a perceived synergy between their past knowledge and the efficacy of mobile learning interventions that they felt their prior English abilities had a favorable impact on their experience using mobile platforms. Regarding how often and consistently respondents engage in mobile learning, their attitudes and behaviors indicate that they are typically quite committed to using these frequent opportunities to practice speaking English more fluently. The distribution is slightly left-leaning, with a tendency towards positive replies, as shown by the primarily negative skewness values. The distribution appears to be slightly more peaked than a normal curve, as indicated by the moderate degree of peak indicated by the kurtosis values, which range from 1.2 to 1.8. The participants exhibit a persistent commitment to mobile learning, as seen by their extensive usage of these applications, near-daily participation, and allocation of dedicated time slots for these tasks. They have a great dedication to consistency, seldom skipping days without using mobile platforms for English-speaking practice. Setting constant involvement as a top priority reveals a strong emphasis on the value and efficacy of mobile learning in improving their English-speaking skills.

TABLE 2
MEAN SCORE OF RESPONDENTS FOR DIFFERENT QUESTIONNAIRES BASED ON DIFFERENT VARIABLES

Mobile Learning (Usage, methods, platforms)	The mean score of the respondents	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mobile learning activities help improve my English-speaking skills.	4.00±1.01	-1.281	1.162
I find mobile learning apps/methods engaging for improving my English-speaking ability.	4.09±0.88	-1.187	1.108
Mobile learning enhances my confidence in speaking English.	4.03±0.92	-1.340	1.705
I find it easy to access English learning resources through mobile devices.	4.06±0.87	-1.238	1.568
Mobile learning allows me to practice English speaking anytime, anywhere.	4.10±0.86	-1.208	1.264
Using mobile devices for English practice fits well with my daily routine.	4.08±0.91	-1.409	2.062
I prefer using mobile apps/methods for learning English speaking over traditional methods.	4.02±0.94	-1.317	1.564
I am satisfied with the variety of mobile learning resources available for English-speaking practice.	4.04±0.89	-1.187	1.232
Mobile learning makes English speaking practice more enjoyable for me.	3.99±0.85	-1.237	1.582
English Speaking Skills (Verbal Proficiency)			
I feel confident expressing myself in English conversationally.	4.07±0.93	-1.347	1.682
I believe my English-speaking skills have improved recently.	4.05±0.94	-1.343	1.660
I am comfortable speaking English in different situations.	4.00±0.92	-1.363	1.890
I can express my thoughts smoothly and coherently in English.	4.05±0.86	-1.317	1.968
I find it easy to maintain a conversation in English without frequent pauses.	3.99±0.90	-1.411	2.170
I speak English with a good flow and rhythm.	4.00±0.91	-1.390	2.047
Prior English Proficiency (level before mobile learning intervention)			
My ability to understand spoken English was strong before using mobile learning tools.	3.98±0.89	-1.143	1.066
I felt confident in my written English skills before utilizing mobile learning apps.	4.05±0.93	-1.310	1.578
Before engaging with mobile learning, I could comfortably express myself in English conversationally.	3.97±0.94	-1.328	1.688
My grasp of English grammar and vocabulary was proficient before starting mobile learning activities.	4.01±0.87	-1.338	2.026
I had a high level of comfort in reading English texts before using mobile learning resources.	3.98±0.91	-1.432	2.222
I believe my pre-existing English proficiency positively influenced my mobile learning experience.	3.97±0.92	-1.317	1.706
My prior English skills were foundational in understanding and utilizing English-language mobile learning materials.	4.09±0.87	-1.176	1.192
I perceived myself as having an advantage in learning through mobile platforms due to my pre-established English abilities.	4.09±0.89	-1.383	2.051
Frequency of Mobile Learning Engagement (time spent, consistency)			
I spend a significant amount of time on mobile apps for English-speaking practice.	4.02±0.96	-1.263	1.248
I engage in mobile learning for English speaking almost every day.	4.01±0.91	-1.191	1.203
I allocate specific periods in my schedule for mobile learning activities.	3.97±0.86	-1.213	1.521
I am committed to maintaining regularity in using mobile devices for English-speaking practice.	4.06±0.91	-1.344	1.820
I rarely miss a day without engaging in some form of English-speaking practice through mobile learning.	4.02±0.97	-1.269	1.271
I prioritize consistent engagement with mobile learning to improve my English-speaking skills.	3.97±0.93	-1.298	1.595

C. Relationship Between the Assessed Factors

Every variable shows statistically significant mean differences, indicating that different average values for these variables exist throughout the population under examination (Table 3). In particular, the confidence intervals (ranging from 3.9540 to 4.0979) and mean differences (ranging from 4.00667 to 4.04684) for each variable verify that these differences are consistently significant. Table 4 has correlation values ranging from 0.789 to 0.875, which suggest moderate to high positive associations. In particular, FMLE (Frequency of Mobile Learning Engagement) has a reasonably good positive association ($r = 0.789-0.875$) with all other factors. Furthermore, there are moderate to high positive correlations between ML, ESS, and PEP; their correlation values range from 0.814 to 0.868. The frequency of mobile learning engagement itself, prior English proficiency, and English-speaking skills all appear to be positively correlated with higher levels of engagement in mobile learning. This shows that people's English-speaking abilities, competency, and frequency of engagement tend to improve as they participate in more mobile learning activities.

TABLE 3
T-TEST

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
ML	155.649	649	0.000	4.04684	3.9958	4.0979
ESS	149.287	649	0.000	4.02692	3.9740	4.0799
PEP	158.687	649	0.000	4.01654	3.9668	4.0662
FMLE	149.452	649	0.000	4.00667	3.9540	4.0593

“ML- Mobile Learning; ESS- English Speaking Skills; PEP- Prior English Proficiency; FMLE- Frequency of Mobile Learning engagement”

TABLE 4
CORRELATION BETWEEN THE VARIABLES

	ML	ESS	PEP	FMLE
ML	1			
ESS	.815**	1		
PEP	.868**	.814**	1	
FMLE	.839**	.875**	.789**	1

D. Enhancement of English-Speaking Skills by Mobile Learning

The variation in English-speaking skills that may be explained by mobile learning is shown by the Regression Sum of Squares (203.948) (Table 5). Furthermore, the model appears to be statistically significant based on the high F-statistic (1283.112). Strong evidence opposing the null hypothesis H_{10} is shown by the p-value (Sig. = .000), which is less than the usual significance level of 0.05. As a result, we reject the null hypothesis H_{10} , which states that there is no meaningful connection between improving English-speaking skills and mobile learning. Rather, we choose the alternative hypothesis H_{1a} , which states that improved English-speaking skills positively correlate with more involvement with mobile learning.

TABLE 5
REGRESSION TABLE I

Model	R	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Durbin-Watson	Sig.	
1	Regression	0.815 ^a	203.948	203.948	1283.112	1.773	.000 ^b

E. Influence of Prior English Proficiency on the Enhancement of English-Speaking Skills

The influence of mobile learning on English speaking skills is moderated by prior English proficiency, as seen in Tables 6, 7, and 8. Understanding the interplay between Prior English Proficiency, Mobile Learning, and English-speaking skills is largely dependent on the findings. The interaction coefficient is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), indicating that prior English proficiency levels do have an impact on the link between mobile learning and English-speaking skills. This provides credence to the alternative hypothesis H_{2a} , which holds that the association between mobile learning and improving English-speaking skills is moderated by prior English proficiency. Furthermore, the examination of conditional effects shows that the impact of mobile learning on English Speaking Skills varies with Prior English Proficiency. In particular, as PEP rises from 3.6250 to 4.5000, the influence of mobile learning on speaking English becomes less significant, indicating that the effect varies depending on the Prior English Proficiency level.

TABLE 6
REGRESSION TABLE II

R	R ²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
0.8927	0.7969	0.0897	844.9456	3	646	0.000

TABLE 7
TEST OF HIGHER-ORDER INTERACTION

R ² -change	F	df1	df2	P
0.0086	27.2195	1	646	0.000

TABLE 8
CONDITIONAL EFFECTS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS AT PRIOR ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (PEP)

PEP	Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
3.625	0.296	0.029	10.028	0.000	0.2383	0.3543
4.250	0.222	0.034	6.542	0.000	0.1554	0.2886
4.500	0.192	0.037	5.183	0.000	0.1194	0.2651

F. Mediating Role of Mobile Learning Frequency on the Relationship Between Mobile Learning and English-Speaking Skills Enhancement

The findings point to evidence in favor of the alternative hypothesis H_{3a}, which holds that the association between mobile learning and improving English-speaking skills is mediated by the frequency of engagement with mobile learning (Table 9, 10). Mobile learning has a substantial ($p < 0.05$) direct influence on English-speaking skills, suggesting that it directly affects the improvement of English-speaking abilities. Furthermore, with an indirect effect size of .4512 and confidence intervals (.3576, .5558) that don't span zero, the indirect effect of mobile learning on English speaking abilities through the frequency of mobile learning engagement is also substantial (Table 11). This indicates that mobile learning influences the frequency of mobile learning engagement, which in turn affects how much of an impact it has on English speaking abilities. The results indicate that although mobile learning has a direct impact on English speaking abilities, the frequency of mobile learning engagement has a major indirect role in this effect. This demonstrates the possible mediating function, suggesting that regular participation in mobile learning activities modulates the association between improved English-speaking skills and mobile learning. The influence of mobile learning on English proficiency seems to be strengthened when people use these tools and resources more regularly. This indirect impact shows that people are more likely to have improved English-speaking skills as a result of their participation in mobile learning activities the more they participate in these activities.

TABLE 9
REGRESSION TABLE III

R	R ²	MSE	F	df1	df2	P
0.8552	0.7314	0.1184	880.814	2	647	0.000

TABLE 10
REGRESSION TABLE IV

	Coeff	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant (ML)	0.6216	0.0828	7.504	0.000	0.459	0.784
ESS	0.3345	0.0406	8.239	0.000	0.255	0.414
FMLE	0.5187	0.0408	12.698	0.000	0.438	0.599

TABLE 11
INDIRECT EFFECT OF MOBILE LEARNING ON ENGLISH-SPEAKING SKILLS

Effect	Boot SE	Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
0.4512	0.0501	0.3576	0.5558

V. DISCUSSION

The majority of the participants, according to the findings of their interviews, tended to use their cell phones to study languages. One explanation for the variations in the outcomes might be the evolution of mobile technology over time, from a toy to a teaching aid. The enthusiasm for the novel component of language learning through this approach may be one of the many reasons why a group of EFL learners in this immersion program found that mobile applications had a favorable impact on their acquisition of English grammar in a short amount of time. The interview findings also demonstrated how keen the participants were to use the technique. The generally high average ratings show that there is a general acceptance of and preference for mobile learning over traditional methods when it comes to practicing English. These positive attitudes towards mobile learning are seen in these ratings. The participants attributed their confidence in speaking English to this practical and efficient platform, finding mobile learning to be interesting, approachable, and appropriate for their everyday routines.

Pre-existing English proficiency is a fundamental benefit for efficiently utilizing mobile learning technologies, as evidenced by the positive self-assessments of respondents. A symbiotic relationship is indicated by the observed correlations between the frequency of mobile learning engagement, prior English proficiency, and English-speaking abilities. More involvement improves language skills, although the effect varies depending on past proficiency levels. This moderating effect highlights the fact that although mobile learning has a broad impact, its effectiveness may vary depending on the learner's starting level of English proficiency. The findings also demonstrate the important moderating

influence that engagement frequency with mobile learning plays. This indirect effect implies that regular engagement with mobile learning activities enhances the overall impact of mobile learning on competence while also having a direct impact on English-speaking ability. The results validate the hypothesis that consistent engagement in mobile learning activities strengthens the relationship between enhanced English language proficiency and mobile platform utilization.

The regression analysis shows a strong connection between improved English-speaking skills and mobile learning. The alternative hypothesis was accepted over the null hypothesis, indicating that there is a significant relationship between the two variables and highlighting the critical role that mobile learning plays in promoting language competency. Overall, this study supports the usefulness of mobile learning for improving English communication abilities, particularly when it is applied regularly. To optimize the effects of mobile learning on language acquisition, it underscores the necessity of customized techniques that take learners' past skill levels into account and emphasizes the importance of regular interaction. These results support the use of mobile platforms for language learning and offer suggestions for maximizing their effectiveness for students looking to improve their English.

VI. CONCLUSION

Optimizing students' outputs toward learning objectives presents both advantages and problems when it comes to mobile-aided learning, particularly in language acquisition. With mobile learning, we can easily manage learning experiences while on the go and have more flexibility in changing the way we approach learning than we have in the past. This study sheds light on the revolutionary potential of mobile learning for improving English language proficiency. The substantial body of data highlights the significant role that consistent utilization of mobile platforms plays in enhancing language proficiency. The results highlight how past proficiency levels, engagement frequency, and the direct effects of mobile learning on language abilities interact in a complex way. Comprehending these dynamics emphasizes how customized methods and ongoing engagement with mobile learning are crucial to optimizing its efficacy in improving English-speaking abilities. Teachers and students who are properly taught and motivated, as well as curriculum and methods that have been pedagogically altered to meet the new features of the learning-based mobile resources, are necessary for the successful development of the mobile learning strategy.

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Needs Analysis of English for Specific Purposes for Health Sciences Students: A Cross-Sectional Study at a University in the U.A.E.

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Abstract—This paper presents findings from a needs analysis survey to determine the extent to which the current English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for healthcare students meets the needs of this population. A structured questionnaire was shared with the students (N=180) from different healthcare departments to examine the preferability of different aspects. Many participants gave great value to ESP courses whose importance was mainly to learn medical or pharmaceutical terminology and communicative skills. Yet, the participants preferred the conversational content over the grammatical one. Most participants perceived the four English skills as important. The overall conclusion shows that the main objective of an ESP course is language fluency to be able to communicate and achieve any requirement in their career. Moreover, the study shows that the conventional methods of assessment are less preferred and that students prefer assessments where teamwork is involved. They also preferred to receive the learning materials via online or technological methods, and they preferred class activities and audio/video aids. Yet, a great number did not prefer using an English Language Laboratory. Finally, most of them agreed that being in a mostly English-speaking community at the university is convenient to enhance their communication skills in English.

Index Terms—English for specific purposes (ESP), English for Medical Purposes, English language teaching (ELT), needs analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

The workplace is becoming increasingly globalized and the need for English language skills is more important than ever. There is an increasing requirement for English language skills in any profession. In many industries, such as hospitality, healthcare, business...etc., English has become the common language. This means that the workers must be able to communicate efficiently in English to be able to perform their duties. English for specific purposes (ESP) can assist learners in developing the specific language abilities required for success in the field they have selected. It is a set of teaching methodologies and resources created for non-native speakers who use English to communicate in a certain domain. It is the language used by employees in public institutions and professions while dealing with the demands of their consumers, clients, or users. ESP studies how language is used in a range of different contexts, therefore, it is considered a subset of applied linguistics.

ESP courses give students the tools and methods they need to communicate effectively in English. Their main objective is to develop culturally genuine communication skills that will allow the learners to succeed in a variety of careers and professions in the international environment or English-speaking countries. ESP courses are also intended to satisfy the needs of non-native English speakers enrolled in credit-bearing courses at a college or university. The goal of ESP classes is for participants to develop fundamental conversational skills in English while focusing on a specific aspect of their language interest or academic goal.

There are many benefits to teaching ESP including the development of students' communicative competence and content knowledge. Yet, despite these advantages, there are some challenges associated with teaching ESP; these include meeting the needs of all learners. However, with careful planning and a focus on student-centered learning, these challenges can be overcome. ESP can help employees gain the language skills they need to be successful in their careers as ESP courses are designed to meet the needs of the learners based on their field of work. For example, a course for healthcare workers might focus on medical terminology and jargon, while a course for hotel staff might focus on customer service vocabulary, and another business course might focus on teaching business etiquette and email writing conventions.

ESP classes can help students improve their communicative competence in English which can lead to increased confidence and effectiveness in the workplace. In addition, ESP classes can help students learn content that is relevant to their field of work. For example, a course for hotel staff might include lessons on how to deal with difficult customers or handle complaints. ESP students most probably originate from a variety of backgrounds and have varying levels of English proficiency. Some of them may be native English speakers, while others may be non-native speakers, who need to improve their language for academic or professional reasons. ESP students typically have specific goals and needs when it comes to learning English. They may, for example, need to acquire vocabulary and grammar relating to their field of study or employment, or they may need to learn how to communicate effectively in English in order to participate in classes or give presentations.

The objectives of ESP courses vary depending on the needs of the students however some common objectives include developing communicative competence in English increasing vocabulary knowledge and improving grammatical accuracy. In addition, ESP courses often aim to prepare students for specific situations they are likely to encounter in their academic or professional lives. One of the most successful approaches to teaching English for specific purposes is to focus on communicative competence. This implies that students must be able to speak effectively in different settings to acquire communicative competence. Students must participate in a variety of real communication assignments and activities. An additional effective method to teach ESP is through (CLIL) which is “Content and Language-Integrated Learning”. This is a teaching approach where students learn both academic content and a foreign language at the same time. This approach is effective in helping students develop both their linguistic and academic skills.

Moreover, the internet is a wealthy means of resources that can be used to teach English for specific purposes. These include online dictionaries, translation websites, grammar guides, websites with practice exercises, and chatbots that can help in constructing a tailored curriculum. Many of these internet resources are free, making them accessible to a wide range of teachers and learners. Furthermore, various online courses may be utilized to teach ESP. These courses frequently include videos and interactive activities that engage students and assist them in developing the required skills.

Mobile applications can also be used to teach English for specific purposes. There are many applications available that provide practice exercises for specific skills such as grammar or general vocabulary development, medical or pharmaceutical vocabulary development, business vocabulary development ...etc. In addition, many applications allow users to track their progress and set goals motivating learners as they work to improve their general English or professional English language skills.

There are several challenges when teaching English for specific purposes; one of them is finding the appropriate materials. When selecting resources, various factors must be considered, including the student's level, the type of the course, and the course's aims. Another problem is ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the requirements of the learners. This may be challenging, especially if the students come from diverse backgrounds. Another challenge of teaching English for specific purposes is meeting the needs of all the learners. This can be challenging because each learner has unique requirements. Some learners may want more assistance with grammar, while others may require assistance with pronunciation, listening, and spelling. It is critical to strike a balance so that all students may study and enhance their English abilities.

From the above, it is clear that teaching ESP courses and preparing curricula and content is a challenging task, therefore, it is mandatory to use a needs analysis as part of this task to be able to achieve satisfactory results from the courses. But what is a needs analysis and its purpose and how to conduct it for ESP courses?

A needs analysis is performed to identify training and development needs and difficulties or areas for improvement in establishing programs and assessing their efficacy. The needs analysis results can be used to improve performance within a company or an organization and determine whether current methods are adequate or if changes are required. To create an ESP program that meets the needs of the students, a needs analysis must be conducted to determine the gap between the current situation and the desired situation and identify what needs to be improved or changed. “The concept of Needs analysis has been different over the decades. In the initial stages of ESP (the 1960s and early 1970s), needs analysis consisted of assessing the communicative needs of the learners and the techniques for achieving specific teaching objectives. Nowadays, the tasks of needs analysis are much more complex: it aims at collecting information about the learners and at defining the target situation and environment of studying ESP” (Otilia, 2012, p. 54).

The best time to conduct a needs analysis depends on the specific purpose for which it is being done. For instance, if the goal is to identify training and development needs within an institution, it might make sense to conduct the needs analysis at regular intervals, such as once per year. On the other hand, if the purpose is to evaluate the effectiveness of existing methods, it may be more suitable to analyze needs after any significant changes have been made, like for example, after introducing a new training program. It is ultimately up to those who will be using the needs analysis data to decide when it should be carried out. Although it might seem like an easy operation, it is necessary to spend some time considering the goals of the needs analysis. Is it operated to specify training requirements, create a new curriculum, or assess an ongoing program? After establishing the goals of the needs analysis, the participants in the process are decided upon.

Choosing the participants in the process is the second stage in conducting a needs analysis. Depending on the requirements, analysis objective, and the particular situation in which it will be done, several persons could be engaged.

Students, instructors, administrators, staff members, or other stakeholders may take part. However, it is crucial that people who will make use of the needs analysis findings participate in its design and implementation. This makes it easier to guarantee that the information gathered is pertinent and helpful and that any findings and suggestions are doable and practical. It can therefore involve both people who will be giving information (such as students) and those who will make use of the findings of the needs analysis such as managers, teachers, or developers. To get a comprehensive understanding of the situation, it is better to involve all stakeholders.

Data collection is the third phase in the needs analysis. Data may be gathered in a variety of ways, but the popular methods are surveys, interviews, focus groups, and observations. It is crucial to pick a strategy that works well for the participants and the intended goal. For instance, surveys may be more suited than interviews if your goal is to identify training requirements because they can reach more individuals in less time. After collecting the data, it should be analyzed to find patterns and trends. The findings of the needs analysis can be used to draw conclusions and suggestions. Finding themes in interview transcripts or sifting through survey results are also examples of this phase. Making sense of all the data you have obtained and starting to seek patterns or trends are the objectives here.

After analyzing your data, you should develop conclusions and recommendations based on your findings. This may include identifying specific training needs or developing goals and objectives for a new program. Once you have developed your conclusions and recommendations you can share them with stakeholders and begin planning how to implement them.

The first step in using the results of a needs analysis is to set clear goals and objectives to help guide the development of the curriculum or training program these should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. For example, if the needs analysis indicates that employees need help with writing emails the goal could be something like within three months of completing the training program all employees will be able to write an email that is clear concise, and free of grammatical errors.

Once you have set your goals and objectives, you can begin developing a curriculum or training program to meet them this step will involve designing activities materials, and assessments that are aligned with the goals and objectives it is important to keep in mind that the needs of your participants may change over time so it is important to build in some flexibility into your curriculum or training program. After developing your curriculum or training program, it is time to implement it. This step will involve putting all of your plans into action and delivering the program to your participants. It is important to make sure that you are delivering the material in an engaging and effective way.

It is critical to assess the outcomes following the implementation of your program to determine whether it was effective in achieving its intended goals and objectives. This evaluation can be performed in several methods, but it must integrate the assessment of participants' learning as well as their feedback. After developing the ESP program, it should be employed with careful planning and monitoring. After the program is completed, it is vital to evaluate its efficiency to be able to make improvements for future programs.

This paper analyzes the concept of need analysis and attempts to give a set of recommendations to ensure that students achieve success in their language learning journey. It is based on the results based on responses to a questionnaire. The purpose of this study is to have a better understanding of the needs and requirements of health sciences students of a university in the UAE, who are from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and who are learning English as a second/foreign language. These learners are also required to analyze their perception of what they see as their needs to achieve success in learning English and professional English. In addition, they need to reflect upon the factors that might be hindering them from achieving success in their coursework. Moreover, from the results, ESP courses can be developed by taking into consideration what the students feel is important and what they feel is not important or required as ESP "is a very important genre of English that requires periodical development that is occurring in any of the potential fields. Moreover, constant alteration of the curriculum in every field is crucial and mandatory" (Ibrahim et al., 2022, p. 35). As such, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the aspects of language that need improvement from the perception of health sciences students?
2. What are the students' perceptions of their needs in an ESP course that they think will be useful in their future professional careers?
3. What are the suitable components that need to be implemented based on the results of the study?
4. What is the students' perception of the effective teaching pedagogies and assessment methods of ESP?
5. What is the preferred language skill that is prioritized among the students in their ESP course?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have discussed ESP courses whether it is content, teaching methods as well as needs analysis. For example, Demiray (2016) conducted a study to examine the needs analysis of Turkish students of the School of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Arts and Sciences and Engineering. She used a series of qualitative (interviews with students) and quantitative (questionnaires) instruments to analyze. She used questionnaires and interviews for undergraduate, and intermediate-level preparatory class students (N=75) to find out the needs required for effective professional skills of participants and analyze the existing instructors' content and their pedagogical knowledge. Descriptive statistics have been provided in the findings and results. The results of the study showed that

the majority of the participants expressed that preparatory class is necessary for them but except for writing, grammar, and vocabulary teaching, instructors should give more importance to listening, speaking, and reading skills.

Another study investigated the communicative needs of doctors at academic and professional levels in survey-based research. The data was collected, analyzed, and interpreted quantitatively by administering questionnaires among medical students and doctors. The findings revealed that there is a huge gap between the acquired competencies of doctors with their desired level of English proficiency skills. The majority of the respondents stressed the need to introduce English language courses and workshops for medical students and doctors respectively, so that they may effectively fulfill their communicative needs (Lodhi et al., 2018).

Channa et al. (2013) conducted a study to investigate the needs of engineering students to use English and to examine the problems of these students in using English in their academic and professional studies. Another purpose was to explore the students' needs regarding the content and methodology of engineering students to use English at a Pakistani university. This research theoretically tends to develop ESP courses regarding different engineering fields to be successful. It also discusses the important principles related to engineering learners' needs within teaching-learning methods that include curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation. ESP courses are underway to be developed if the learners' needs are to be fulfilled. This research offers different ways to carry out more research in this genre.

Khalil (2020) did not discuss the students' needs but her study was teacher-oriented as she discussed the teaching methodology of ESP as well as General English which was an attempt to share experienced English Teachers' methodology for teaching General English (GE) and ESP to Saudi EFL learners. The paper discusses the conventional methods for teaching GE and ESP. It also discusses the teachers' perceptions of these effective teaching pedagogies and the practical measures to improve students' efficiency in learning English. The sample of the study was $n = 63$ English teachers randomly selected at different universities in Saudi Arabia. For collecting the quantitative data, 63 native and non-native experienced English teachers were requested to fill in a semi-structured questionnaire. The results show that 73% of English language teachers prefer to use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) along with other teaching methods. The findings shed light on some highly useful teaching methods that have proved successful in GE and ESP classes.

Chovankova (2014) conducted a study on needs analysis as one of the most important sources of inspiration in syllabus design. First, needs analysis is situated within the methodology of ESP. Then, the rationale for a needs analysis survey among pre-service students in current legal English courses is presented and, finally, the findings are interpreted with respect to the actual target situations that students are likely to encounter after graduation. The article concludes by pointing out that although pre-service students may have vague ideas about the use of English in their future jobs, course instructors should consider their needs and wants because they are crucial for increasing the students' motivation. Instructors and course designers should, however, obtain information from professionals and graduates as well because that will enable them to address the actual target situations most effectively.

Another evaluation of the ESP program was conducted at a language center established in a government university in the Republic of Cyprus. The purpose of the project was firstly to determine whether the courses, which were designed and implemented based on a combination of theoretical considerations, methods, and approaches are relevant to the needs and interests of the students. The evaluation process was carried out to diagnose possible weaknesses of the courses so that the courses could be further developed and improved. The most important conclusion highlighted by the survey is that course content is directly relevant to students' studies; topics are more familiar and often studied in other courses from their discipline, which makes students feel more motivated and engaged in the learning process. Therefore, it is recommended that ESP courses be offered to university students not only in their first but in their subsequent years of study as well. In addition to that, needs analysis has proven to be a key factor in the development and implementation of the courses and especially in the improvement of specific skills. Moreover, it is evident that continuous evaluation of ESP courses should be a practice and should be conducted by all stakeholders involved to ensure quality control. (Papadima-Sophocleous et al., 2013).

Donesch-Jezo (2014) discussed teaching medical vocabulary in ESP courses for students of the medical college as it is a vital part of English language teaching at the university level. The first part of the study provides a theoretical basis for the presentation of a variety of exercises aiming at the teaching of Medical English. The second part presents examples of activities designed for their students and performed in ESP classes conducted by them. These exercises effectively help the students in the acquisition and long-term memory storage of the scientific vocabulary related to their field of study. The author concluded several basic principles regarding teaching new words: 1) The words should be presented in a context that shows how they are used. 2) The words should be practiced and consolidated through a variety of exercises, such as blank-filling, multiple choice, categorization, providing synonyms, antonyms, crossword puzzles, collocations, word formation, and studying concordance lines. 3) Receptive tasks should be combined with creative ones. 4) The strategy of deducing the meaning of words from context is one of the indispensable strategies used in vocabulary learning. 5) Vocabulary exercises should offer new information grounded in the students' knowledge of mainstream subjects. These exercises should be interesting, useful, and enjoyable.

Chonjnacka (2017) attempted to optimize the Process of Teaching English for Medical Purposes with the Use of Mobile Applications She used the Memrise language application to improve the teaching of English for Medical

Purposes (EMP) through an innovative pedagogical methodology. She touched upon three important topics in the fields of Applied Linguistics; namely, ESP pedagogy, learner autonomy, and technology-assisted language learning. The results were that Memrise-based mobile applications can improve English for Medical Purposes teaching by enhancing learner autonomy, ESP pedagogy, and technology-assisted language learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

The sample of the study is all registered students from different medical departments; College of Medicine (MBBS), College of Dentistry (BDS), College of Pharmacy (B-Pharm), College of Nursing (BSN) as well as the bridge program of Nursing for registered nurses (RNBSN) who had an English for specific purposes course in the first year of their academic education.

The method was random with a total population of estimated sample size of 289 students based on a total population of approx. 1158 students, 5% margin of error, 95% confidence level and 50% response distribution. Yet the actual size of the sample was 180 participants from all colleges.

The actual sample that participated was 58.3% Arabs, 22.8% different Indian languages (Malayalam, Urdu, and Hindi), and 18.9% other languages. The colleges that participated in the study were 43.3% from MBBS, 35% from BSN, 12.8% from B-Pharm, 7.2% from BDS, and 1.7% from RNBSN. More than half the sample was from first-year students with a percentage of (58.9), and the rest were from the second year onwards. 70.6% were females, whereas the males were only 29.4% only.

IV. PROCEDURE AND INSTRUMENTS

A self-administered closed-ended questionnaire was sent online to all registered students from the first year to the final year. A cross-sectional study was conducted to evaluate the needs of the members who were willing to participate.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The participants' answers were analyzed to examine what are their preferences and their priorities in an ESP course. The first question was a general question trying to figure out if they were interested in the course in general or not. As it is obvious in the below chart many of the participants were very much interested with a percentage of 41.1 % and others were interested with a percentage of 32.2% which shows that almost ¾ of the sample were interested in such courses with a total percentage of 73.3%. The rest of the sample which constitutes around 25% of the sample were either not much interested or not interested at all in taking an English course that focuses on professional English in their major.

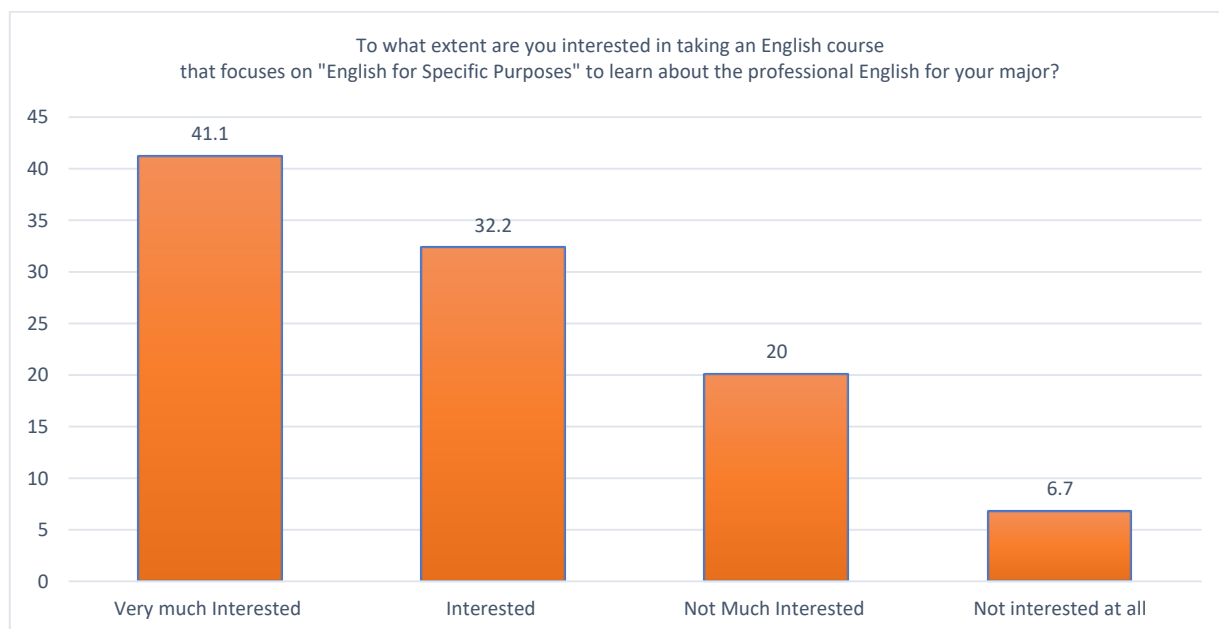


Figure 1. Interest in Taking ESP Course to Learn Professional English

In section two, the students were asked about the purpose of learning ESP from their own perspective and whether this purpose is to study other medical subjects, to interact with people in the healthcare field, to read medical articles, to perform some activities related to their study, to write medical reports, or to use in their future career. The following results are shown in the below figure.

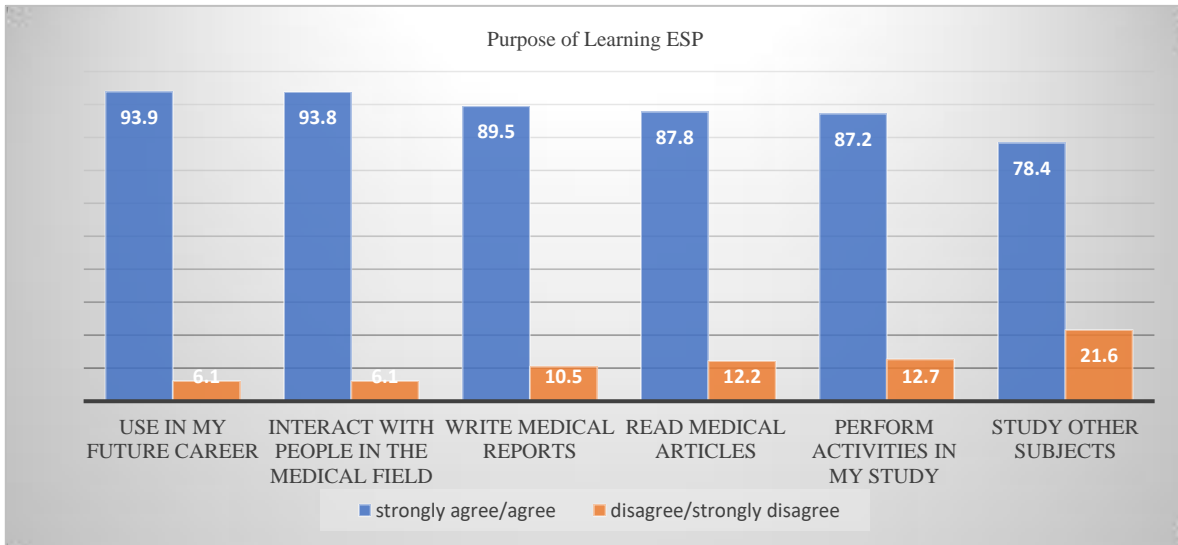


Figure 2. Purposes of Learning ESP

From the above figure, it is clear that students’ objective from learning ESP is for all the above-mentioned purposes. But the objective that came first between agree and strongly agree was because they want to use it in their future career with a percentage of 93.9% and to interact with other people in the health care field with a percentage of 93.8%. These were the main two objectives for wanting to attend an ESP course. The third objective is writing medical reports with a percentage of 89.5% followed by reading medical articles with a percentage of 87.8%. Then lastly, the final two objectives, which were still high in percentage yet came the last were their desire to perform activities in their study with a percentage of 87.2%, and studying other subjects with a percentage of 78.4%.

In section three of the questionnaire, the students were asked about their language preferences. In other words, what they prefer to learn the most in the ESP courses and the results were as follows:

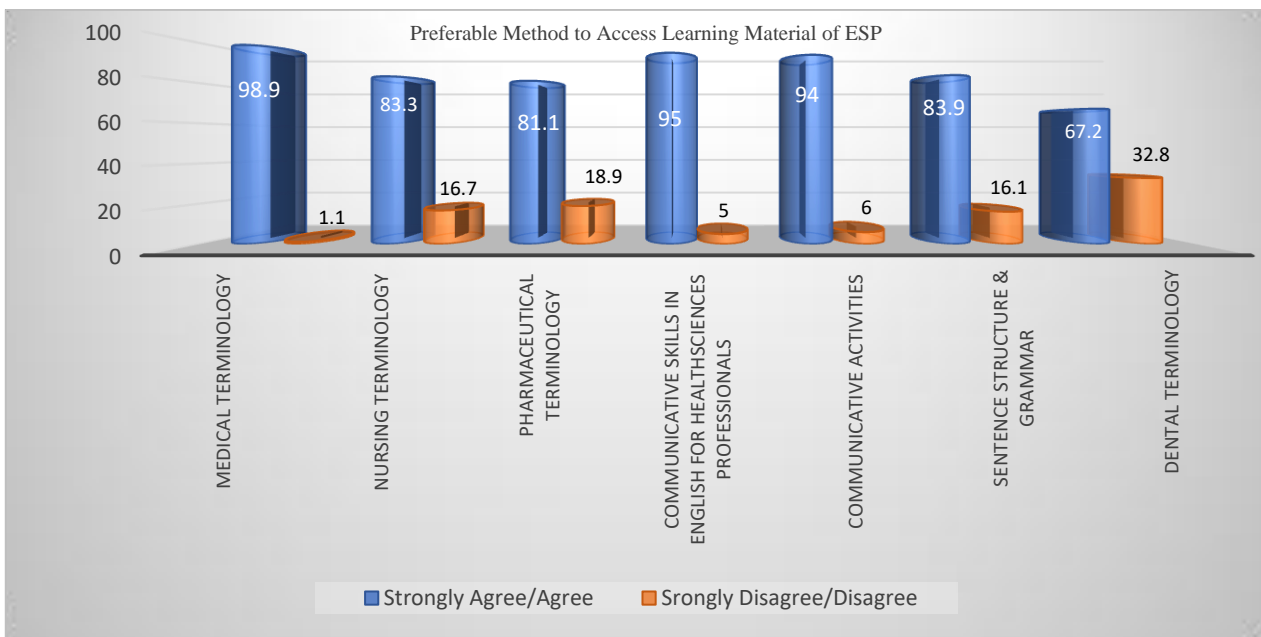


Figure 3. Language Preferences

From the above chart, it is evident that learning medical vocabulary has priority over all the other objectives. 98% of the sample consider learning medical vocabulary as their priority. The second objective behind attending an ESP course is for communicative skills in English for health sciences professionals with a percentage of 95% and general communicative activities with a percentage of 94%. Although grammar is not one of the preferred topics in English language courses, yet, medical students consider it very important as 83.9% of the sample put it as the fourth objective. Learning nursing terminology and pharmaceutical terminology followed with very close percentages of 83.3% and 81.1%. The Dental terminology came last with a percentage of 67.2%. Yet, this percentage may not be accurate due to the difference in the number of participants from each college. The dental terminology percentage is lower because the number of participants from this college was apparently lower than other colleges, not because it is the least preferred.

In section four, the participants were asked about the methods of assessment that they preferred or agreed to be used in their evaluation of the ESP courses. The results are represented in the pie chart below:

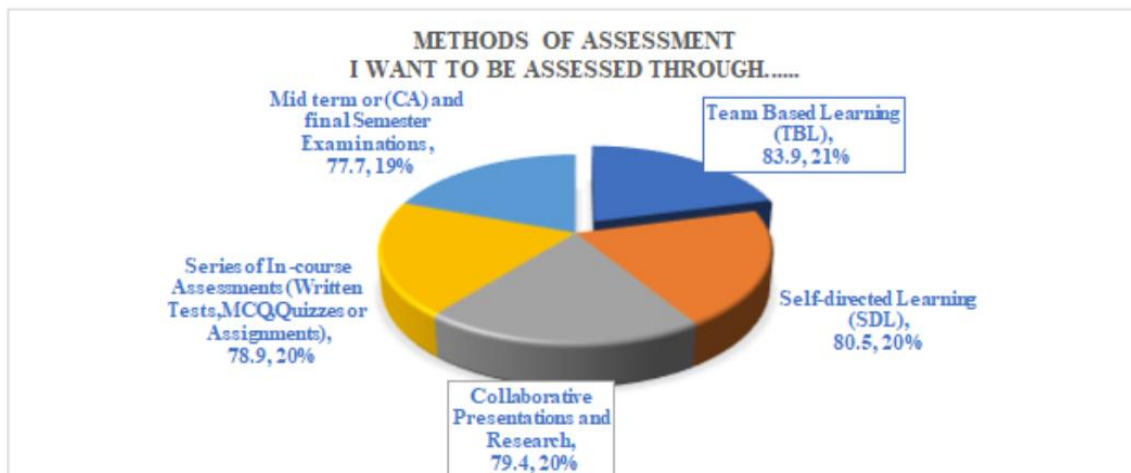


Figure 4. Methods of Assessment

It is obvious in the pie chart that it is almost divided equally between all types of assessment with an extremely slight escalation between the percentages. The highest is Team Based Learning (TBL) with a percentage of 83.9% followed by Self-directed Learning (SDL) with a percentage of 80.5%. Collaborative presentations and research followed with a slight decrease of 79.4%. Lastly was the conventional type of internal assessments like written tests quizzes, or assignments (78.9%), and with a slight decrease in percentage (77.7%) for the conventional types of examinations like mid-term, In-course assessment (ICA), and final exams.

Section five of the questionnaire discussed the four language skills and to what extent every skill is required by the participants in the ESP course. This section is divided into four parts and every part questions the objectives behind learning every skill. The results are shown in the bar chart below:

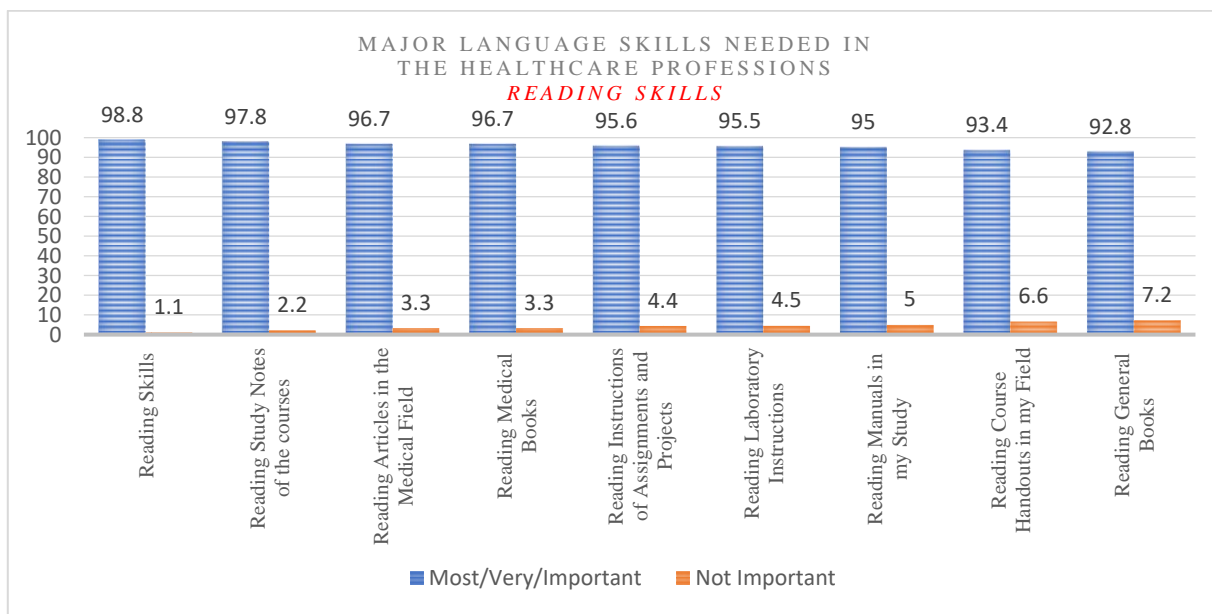


Figure 5. Major Language Skills Needed in the Healthcare Professions (Reading Skills)

The first group of questions in this section was an evaluation of the reading skills in general and their importance to the participants. Most of the participants perceived that reading is a very important skill to learn as the percentage of importance reached 98.8%. Then they were required to evaluate what are their priorities in reading or, in other words, the reasons why they need to learn reading skills. The main objective for the importance of reading skills in an ESP course was for reading study notes of the courses with a percentage of 97.8%. Then with a decrease of only one percent was reading articles in the medical field and reading medical books with the same percentage of 96.7%. Another decrease of only one percent was reading instructions of assignments and projects (95.6) followed by almost the same percentage with just a decline in a decimal or five for reading laboratory instructions (95.5%) and reading manuals (95%). Lastly, came reading course handouts (93.4%) and reading general books (92.8%).

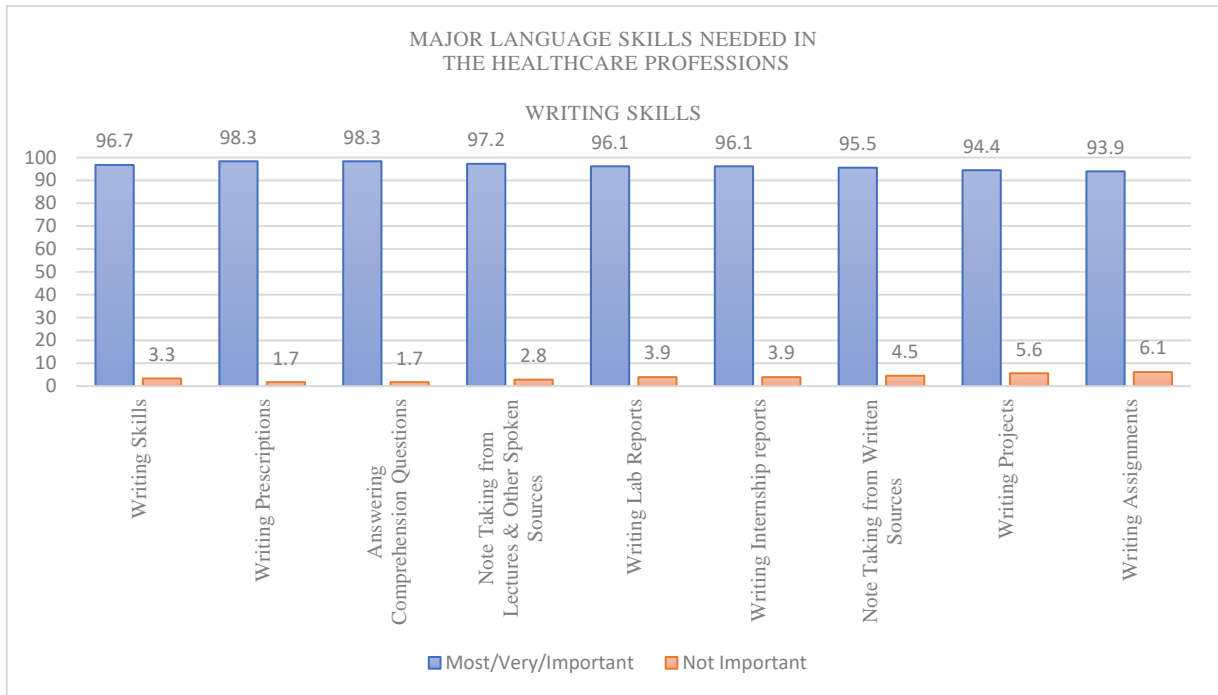


Figure 6. Major Language Skills Needed in the Healthcare Professions (Writing Skills)

As with the reading skills, when the participants evaluated the importance of writing skills in an ESP course, they perceived it as a very important skill with a percentage that reached 96.7%, almost two percent less than the reading which was 98.8%. From the perception of the participants, they needed the writing skills the most for writing prescriptions and answering comprehension questions with the same percentage of 98.3%. Taking notes from lectures and other spoken sources came next with only one percentage drop to reach a percentage of 97.2%. The percentage drops another one percentage to reach 96.1% importance to writing lab reports and writing internship reports. This was followed by the importance of note-taking from written sources with a percentage of 95.5%. Finally, writing projects and writing assignments came last in importance with percentages of 94.4% and 93.9%.

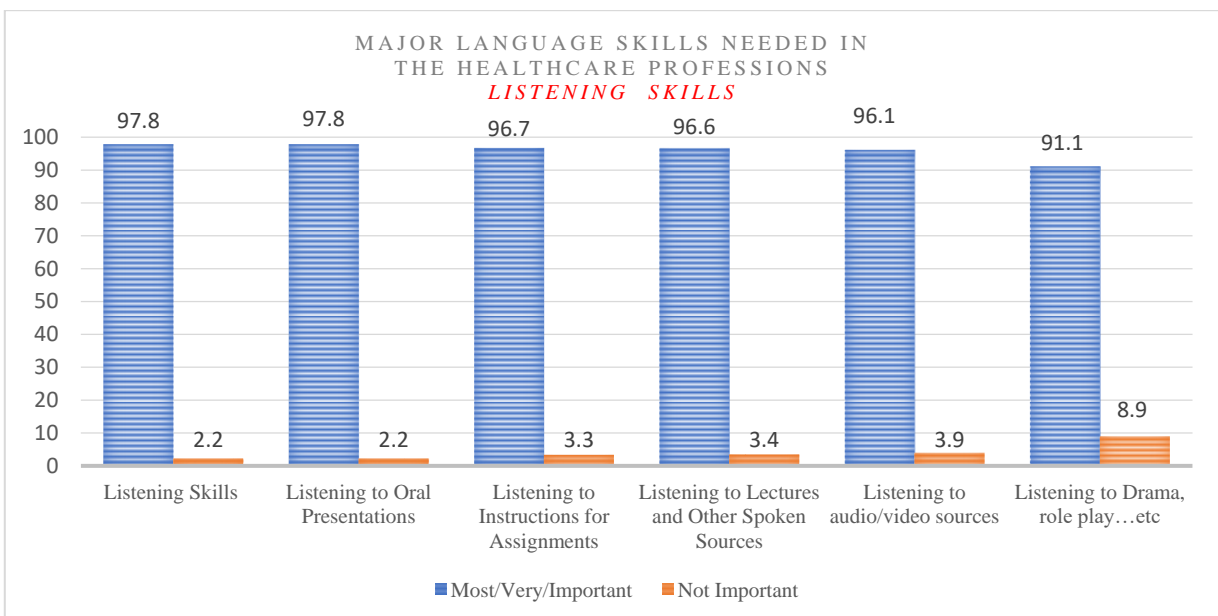


Figure 7. Major Language Skills Needed in the Healthcare Professions (Listening Skills)

From the above chart, the importance of the listening skills fell between the reading and the writing skills with a percentage of 97.8%. The participants gave the most importance to listening to oral presentations (97.8%) followed by listening to instructions for assignments (96.7%), listening to lectures (96.6%) then with less importance listening to audio/video sources. Finally, with the lowest percentage of 91.1% was listening to drama and role play.

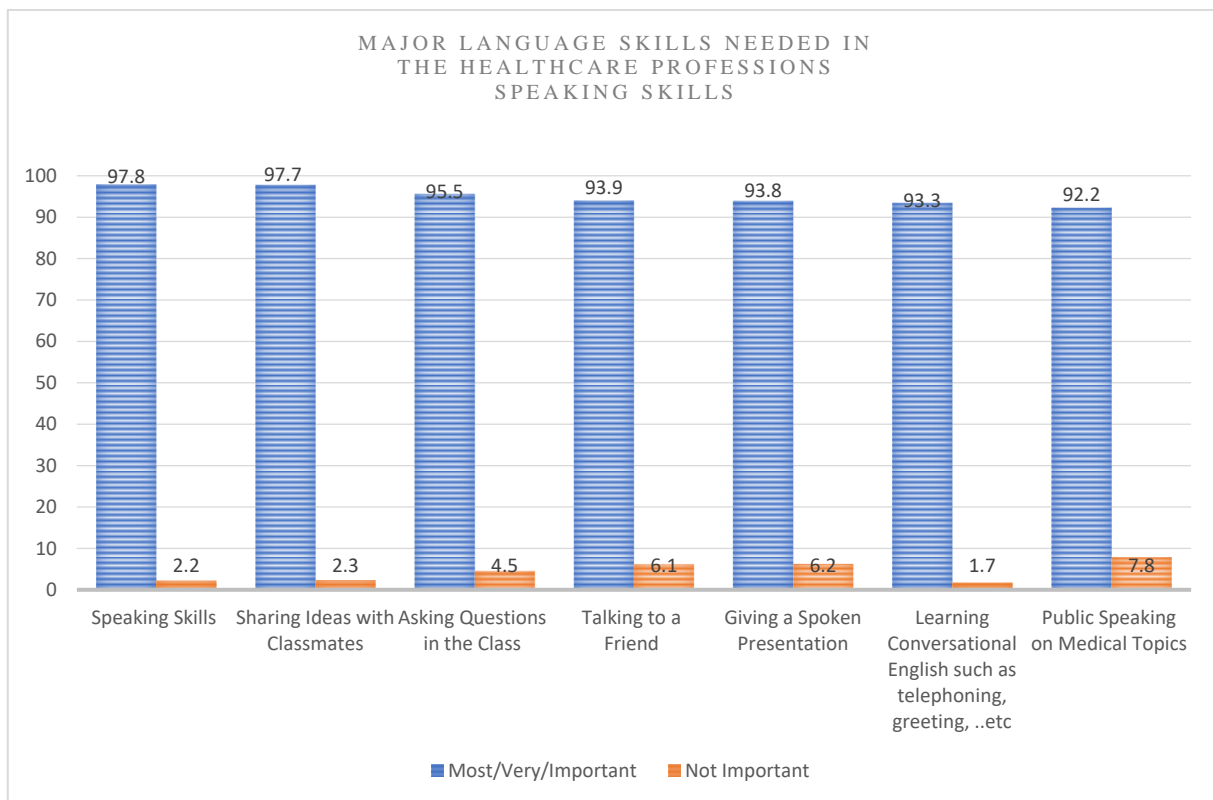


Figure 8. Major Language Skills Needed in the Healthcare Professions (Speaking Skills)

To the participants, speaking skills are of the same importance as listening skills as both are the same percentage of 97.8 %. The highest percentage of importance of speaking (97.7%) was for sharing ideas with classmates. The second in importance was asking questions in class with a percentage of 95.5%. Then the percentage of importance dropped with very close percentages between talking to a friend (93.9%), giving a spoken presentation (93.8%), and learning conversational English such as telephoning, greeting... etc. (93.3%).

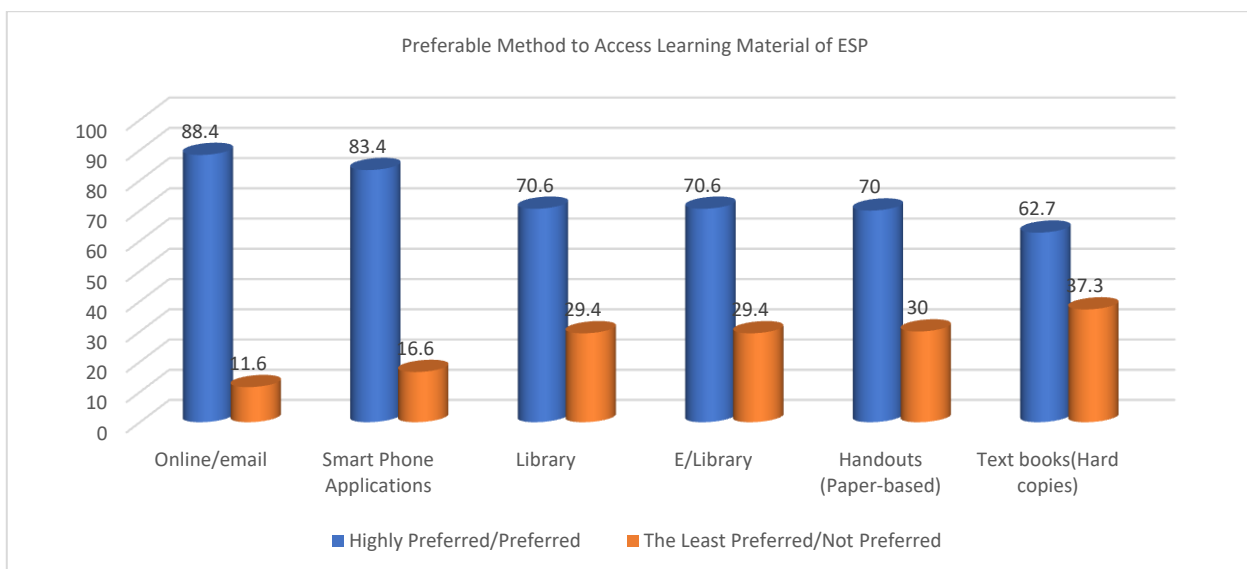


Figure 9. Preferable Method to Access Learning Material of ESP

In the sixth section, the participants were asked about the preferred method to access their learning material in the ESP courses. The highly preferred methods were the online or email methods with a percentage of 88.4% between highly preferred and preferred. The second highly preferred or preferred method was accessing the learning material through smartphone applications with a percentage of 83.4%. Using the library or the e/library to access the learning material was preferred with the same percentage of 70.6%. Finally, there was a great decline in preferability for conventional textbooks or hard copies to reach 62.7%.

In the seventh section of the questionnaire, the students were asked ten variable questions related to ESP courses in which they had to strongly agree, agree, or disagree with a certain statement. The ten questions are divided in Figures 10 and 11.

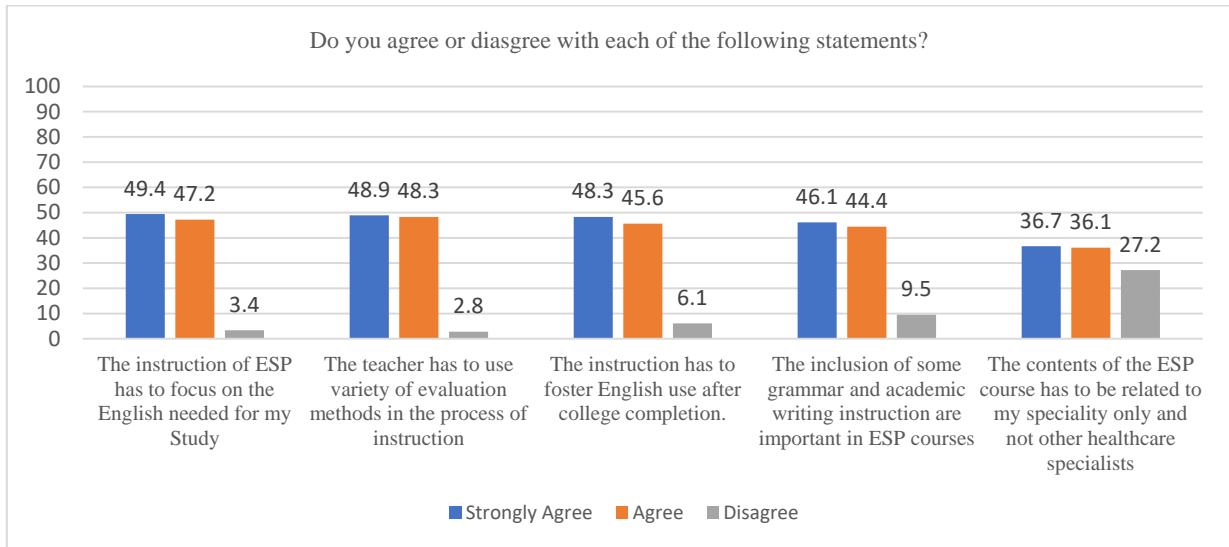


Figure 10. Do you Agree or Disagree With Certain Statements? (Part 1)

The first statement that the participants had to answer was to know their level of agreement with the fact that the instruction of ESP has to focus on the English needed for their study. Most of the students agreed with this statement with a general percentage of agreement of 96.6%. 49% strongly agreed and 47.2 % agreed with this statement. The second statement was whether they agree or disagree that the teacher of ESP has to use a variety of evaluation methods in the process of instruction. There was a total percentage of agreement that reached 97.2%, with 48.9% who strongly agree and 48.3% who agree. The third statement was whether the participants agreed or disagreed that the instruction in an ESP course has to foster English use after finishing college. 48.3% strongly agreed to this statement whereas 45.6% just agreed, with a total agreement level of 93.9%. The fourth statement asked about the level of agreement regarding the contents of the ESP course, whether they have to be related to the participant’s specialty only or whether they should include other healthcare specialties. In this question, the level of agreement decreased tremendously to a total of 72.8 %, which is 36.7% who strongly agreed and 36.1% who agreed that they should not be involved in other specialties. On the other hand, 27% of the participants wanted to be involved in other medical specialties and disagreed with focusing only on their specialties. In the fifth statement, which asked whether the participants agreed to the inclusion of some grammar and academic writing in the ESP courses, the level of agreement escalated again to 90.5% of the total agreement divided into 46.1% who strongly agreed that this inclusion is important and 44.4% who just agreed to its importance.

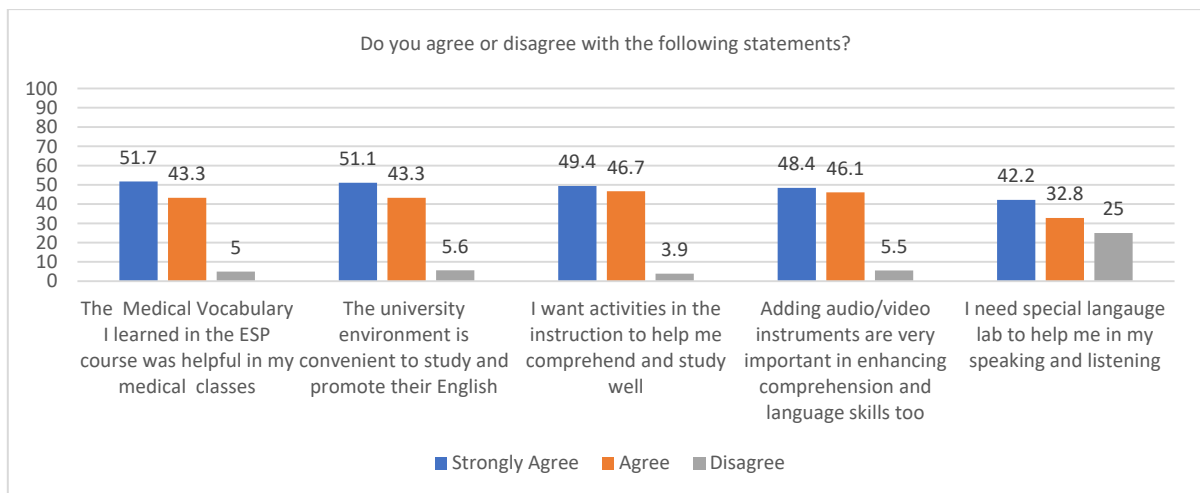


Figure 11. Do You Agree or Disagree With Certain Statements? (Part 2)

The second group of statements is illustrated in the above graph. The first statement asked whether the participants agreed or disagreed that they wanted activities in the instruction to help them comprehend and study well. Most of the participants agreed with a total percentage of 96.1% - 49.4% strongly agreed and 46.7% agreed to that statement. The

second statement asked their opinion on whether adding audio/video instruments is considered very important in enhancing comprehension and language skills. A total of 94.5% agreed with this statement with a percentage of 48.4% who strongly agree and 46.1% who just agree. When the participants were asked whether they needed a special language lab to help with speaking and listening, the level of agreement dropped as only 42.2% totally agreed and 32.8% agreed with a total of 75% of the participants. The percentage of agreement escalated again when the participants were asked whether the medical vocabulary they learned in the ESP course was helpful in their medical classes, as 51.7% strongly agreed to this statement and 43.3% agreed to it with a total percentage of 95%. Similarly, a percentage of 94.4% agreed that the university environment is convenient for studying and promoting their English, with a percentage of 51.1% strong agreement and 43.3% agreement.

VI. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is the development of the curriculum of ESP courses in an academic medical institution in the UAE. As previously mentioned, the development of a curriculum is an ongoing procedure in any academic institution. Therefore, to be able to evaluate the current curriculum of ESP courses and to add or remove it, a needs analysis has to be conducted periodically to achieve the best results from an ESP course. This is because “in ESP areas students need to learn how to enhance the accessibility of their future professional communication” (Ishihara et al., 2021, p. 641).

The questionnaire that was shared with the students from different healthcare departments attempted to gather and question all aspects of communicative English skills to examine their preferability to the students and to what extent they feel that certain content is beneficial or not. It was expected that a great number of participants would give great value to ESP courses and the expectation was correct since more than half of the sample perceived the importance of ESP courses in their professional studies, their careers, to study other subjects, interact and read or write material related to medicine.

The greatest percentage of the sample perceived ESP courses as a source to learn the medical, pharmaceutical, or dental terminology, as it is essential in their study and career. Yet, the preference for dental terminology was mainly restricted to the students of the College of Dentistry. Therefore, one of the reasons for the importance of ESP courses was mainly to learn medical or pharmaceutical terminology for the majority of the participants from all colleges. Furthermore, for the participants, communicative skills and activities also were preferred more than grammatical content which is quite similar to General English courses as most of the students in the General English courses prefer the conversation, listening, and speaking content over the grammatical one. This was mentioned in several papers. For example, Almekhlafi et al. (2011) mentioned that “the role of grammar instruction in an ESL/EFL context has been for decades a major issue for students and teachers alike. Researchers have debated whether grammar should be taught in the classroom and students, for their part, have generally looked upon grammar instruction as a necessary evil at best, and an avoidable burden at worst” (p. 69). Therefore, less preference for grammar was also expected in the survey and although some students perceive grammar and academic writing as important and preferable, yet some students do not perceive that importance. Similarly, almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the sample want the ESP course to focus only on their specialty. For example, pharmacy students do not want to be involved in much of medical terminology or dental terminology and vice versa. Furthermore, a great percentage considered the medical vocabulary that they learn in ESP courses as useful to them in their medical classes.

Regarding language skills in general, most of the students perceived them as all important. All four language skills surpassed 95% regarding their importance in an ESP course. Yet, the reasons for the requirement or the need for a certain skill in an ESP course varied among participants, although the requirements are also high in percentages. The overall conclusion about the four skills' importance and requirements shows that the main objective of an ESP course is language fluency to be able to communicate and achieve any requirement in their career. These requirements may include reading, writing, listening, or speaking.

Assessment is a very essential and fundamental part of any academic course since it is a sort of feedback for the course and it is an indicator of the retention and comprehension level of the new information that the students received in the course. It was expected that the majority of the students may prefer teamwork and that was reflected also in the survey in which the preference is higher when teamwork is involved in some cases as TBL. Whereas, the conventional methods of assessments are less preferred as written tests and assignments.

As for the learning material, the attitude of the students is similar to their attitude regarding the methods of assessments. In other words, the students consider conventional methods as less preferable. They prefer online methods and smartphone applications to hard copies and textbooks over paper-based handouts. Moreover, a huge number of the sample encouraged the instruction through class activities and audio/video. Yet, a quarter of the sample do not perceive the importance of an English language laboratory. The reason for that was not expected as mostly in General English courses students prefer using Language Labs that are equipped with the most sophisticated audio/video instruments as well as other facilities. Moreover, most of the sample agreed that being in a mostly English-speaking community at the university is convenient to enhance their English language and communicative skills in English.

Furthermore, it was concluded from the results that healthcare students are the least interested in using their language in comprehending other milieus than their profession. For example, reading general books or listening to drama or role-

play was the least of their interests. In other words, their main aim of learning language skills is not for such general interests. Even in speaking, the general use of English was the least in percentage. The majority want to use their speaking skills in their professional environment.

VII. CONCLUSION

A needs analysis is an important tool for any organization or individuals looking to improve their English for Specific Purposes skills. In other words, the purpose is to teach students how to use English as a means of communication in a specific occupational or academic situation and to improve students' written and oral communicative skills in English that are suitable for special fields, like sciences, economics, politics, business...etc., thus, enabling students to become competent users of English as a means of communicating in certain domains. By clearly defining the purpose of the needs analysis, identifying the participants, collecting data, analyzing the data, and developing conclusions and recommendations, a needs analysis can be an invaluable tool for setting goals, developing a curriculum or training program, and evaluating results.

The best way to teach English for specific purposes is by focusing on communicative competence and content and language-integrated learning. This will meet the needs of all learners and help them achieve their objectives. Technology can be used to support this approach, but some challenges need to be considered when using technology in the classroom.

It is essential to take technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) into consideration when dealing with learners in general whether it be school students, students at the tertiary level, or post-graduates. This is because technology has become the easiest and most convenient method to acquire any type of information. As previously mentioned, the needs analysis shows that a great percentage prefer assessments that use technology more than conventional assessments. To a great extent, this choice is a good choice as nowadays the majority of students at all levels tend to copy-paste from the internet or use Artificial intelligence to finish their tasks. Therefore, it is better to be realistic and not insist on the conventional methods because sometimes the younger generation are mentors of the older ones.

Technology and AI were pushed ahead several miles during the Covid-19 crisis. A study during the crisis about The Effectiveness of Internet and Mobile Applications in English Language Learning revealed that Internet applications have a positive impact on learning English as a foreign language and that students' attitudes towards using Internet applications for learning English scored very high in certain areas (Mohamed, 2021).

Finally, it is concluded from that research that the participants are mainly seeking fluency as healthcare professionals in the field. Therefore, ESP classes should focus on using more technological methods whether it be in the assessment methods or the learning material. The focus on grammatical content should be decreased, but not eliminated. More entertainment should be integrated into classes by using more audio, videos or any other activities that are not conventional.

Therefore, technology and artificial intelligence can be employed in ESP classes in a positive regard. That is, not only to copy and paste assessments but to make material more accessible or to make assessments less stressful for the learners. It can also be used for seeking resources and smartphone applications can also be used to practice in a more engaging manner. Finally, a periodic needs analysis is always recommended for the development of any ESP course.

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The Universal Culture of COVID-19 as Provoked by the War Against COVID-19 Metaphor

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Abstract—Previous studies tackling the subject of the COVID-19 pandemic found that most of the metaphors used in different genres on the subject are related to war. These war metaphors have been found to have the effects of raising awareness and creating a sense of urgency about the situation, therefore gaining support, bringing calm and stability, and promoting some emotional interaction. This study focused on the Arabic metaphors used during the different stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, i.e., from the time the pandemic began to emerge to the time of lockdown and curfew to the invention of the vaccine and of the suggestion of taking multiple doses. Data were collected from Twitter using its advanced search engine. The importance of this study lies in the fact that previous studies tackling the topic have not focused on metaphors using such a diachronic approach. Furthermore, the causes and effects of using COVID-19 metaphors in previous studies were found to be similar to the ones in this study. The resulting metaphors reflected some of the diachronic changes brought on by the COVID-19 global situation. These results are indicative of the match between the global situation invoked by the pandemic and the conceptualization of this situation as realized in language regardless of which language this is or to what culture it belongs.

Index Terms—COVID-19, conceptual metaphor theory, universalization, Arabic metaphor, diachronic metaphors

I. INTRODUCTION

Occurrences that affect humans globally are expected to be thought of globally. When an infectious disease is spread all over the world, it is common sense that people get different emotions about it, and these emotions are expected to reflect the language used (Yu, 1995; Kövecses, 2000, among others). This can be seen in conceptual metaphors such as “the world is at war against the coronavirus (COVID-19)” which was prominently used online since the announcement of the first outbreak of the virus by the World Health Organization (WHO) on January 5, 2020 (accessed 5/25/2020). In this study, metaphors of war about COVID-19 were conceptually analyzed adopting the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) framework.

The concept of war can be linked to an instance of fighting between parties. On one side there are allies, and on the other side, there is an enemy. We choose a side or stay neutral. Armies of both sides fight, and civilians stay away and support from afar. Furthermore, war can be divided into battles that end in victory for one party (the winner) and defeat for the other party (losers). Moreover, weapons and equipment are usually supplied by the governments of the fighting parties.

Each of these corresponding concepts was searched for with the keywords “coronavirus” or “COVID-19” online. Resulting examples were analyzed using the Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit (MIPVU), to systematically identify which of them is metaphorical and modify the list of the correspondences associated with the conceptual metaphor “the world is at war against the coronavirus (COVID-19)”.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers have found that COVID-19 is our enemy in the war that humanity has been experiencing. These researchers include Maierová (2020), Olimat (2020), Rajandran (2020), Wicke and Bolognesi (2020), Fernández-Pedemonte et al. (2020), Abdel-Raheem (2021), Chatti (2021), Gök and Kara (2021), Gui (2021), Atanasova (2021), and Schnepf and Christmann (2022), among others.

It is interesting that Taylor and Kidgell (2021) sent an invitation to researchers to find out how COVID-19 has been construed as an enemy of war. They sent this invitation in the form of an analysis of war metaphors used in different periods of history. They compared metaphors that were used as source domains mapped onto flu-like pandemics in four periods of time before COVID-19. They found the war metaphor was used in each of the periods; however, they also found other metaphors used in some, but not all, periods. For example, one metaphor that has undergone change over time is the “living entity” metaphor. They based this change on the usage of linguistic elements indicating the metaphor, examples of which are in the following list.

1890s: catch; reproduce
1910s: prey; rampant
2000s: mutated; evolve

Although war metaphors euphemize death as an acceptable loss, sports metaphors can be better alternatives since they do not involve lamenting defeat as claimed by Chatti (2021). Consider the following correspondences found by Chatti (2021):

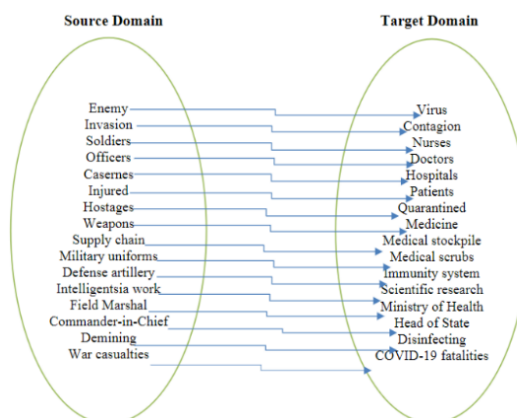


Figure 1. Cross-Domain Mapping of War Onto Disease Adapted From Chatti (2021)

The abundance and diversity of correspondences within the COVID-19 “war” metaphor indicate the seriousness of the situation and the need for narrowing down the target domain in different ways.

The reasons for which war metaphors are used in relation to COVID-19 are to raise public awareness, ascribe responsibility, and prepare the population as found in previous studies by Maierov á(2020), Moln á et al. (2020), Olimat (2020), and Schnepf and Christmann (2022).

On the other hand, some researchers found that using war metaphors for COVID-19 has a negative impact on people. For example, Sabucedo et al. (2020) claim that the COVID-19 war metaphors promote anxiety and downgrade solidarity. They suggest that the war metaphor should be replaced with another metaphor that promotes care for others and cooperation.

From 1946 to 2019, war metaphors were used in the *People's Daily*, a Chinese newspaper. Yang (2021) noted a general decline in the use of war metaphors associated with disease except during two periods: 1966-1975 and 1996-2006. He attributes the increase in these two periods to the cultural and social change in China and/or the sudden appearance of disease. The author also found that the use of offensive metaphors was more than the use of defensive ones due to the demonization of diseases in Chinese culture. He refers to the suggestion of Nie et al. (2016) that peace metaphors, including the journey metaphor, would be more effective in promoting positive attitudes, and which are used in cultures other than those of the Chinese (Yang, 2021).

War on COVID-19 metaphors were also found to be full of emotional language. Moreover, the author also claims that COVID-19 war metaphors have been highly criticized; thus, it is expected to lead to the avoidance of using the metaphor due to its negativity (Atanasova, 2021).

Considering seven languages, Panasenko et al. (2020) found several conceptual metaphors. The most prevailing of which is the metaphor “COVID-19 is an enemy”. Examples of other metaphors listed in that study are the following:

- COVID-19 is a plague.
- COVID-19 is an economic crisis.
- COVID-19 is ruining my business.
- The coronavirus is a natural disaster.
- The coronavirus is the destruction of old patterns.
- The coronavirus is a creation of new patterns.
- The coronavirus is a ferocious animal.
- The coronavirus is reaching/setting a record.
- The coronavirus is a supernatural power.
- The pandemic is a challenge.
- The coronavirus is the ultimate judgment/punishment (from God).

Examples of these languages and their metaphors are the following:

In Polish these metaphors are: fight against/battle against coronavirus, a joint attack of flu and coronavirus, coronavirus finishes off/kills transportation, the virus is retreating.

In Italian these metaphors are: silent war, World War III, invisible enemy, fight, front, incarceration, surround, doctors on the front line, victims, resist, etc. (Panasenko et al., 2020).

English (Maierov á 2020), Singaporean Mandarin, Tamil, Malay (Rajandran, 2020), Hungarian (Moln á et al., 2020), Spanish (Fernández-Pedemonte et al., 2020), Chinese (Gui, 2021) and other languages were the means of communicating the COVID-19 war metaphors. The diverse linguistic backgrounds of the users of the same metaphors indicate the universality of the metaphors which results from the universality of the COVID-19 situation. Notice that

this use of these metaphors is a shortcut to bring about the urgency of the situation, raising awareness of the self-responsibility to protect ourselves from the pandemic, and promoting the sense of fighting a collective, identifiable, and controllable enemy. In addition, using COVID-19 war metaphors may indicate emotional experiences and attitudes toward the target domain.

Considering the studies above, these war-related metaphors found in previous studies can be grouped into five categories as follows:

- Reasons/Influence for the metaphors
- Diachronic patterns of metaphors
- Correspondences of the metaphor
- Occurrence of the metaphor in different languages
- Criticism of using the WAR metaphor

As for the reasons and influences for using the war metaphors, they can be postulated based on contextual cues, which is the approach the researcher followed in this study.

The diachronicity of using the metaphors is also considered using a period of time that is compressed due to the sudden appearance and declaration of the pandemic. This is picked up later in the discussion of the findings. Moreover, the conceptual correspondences were found to be similar to some of those that the researcher found in the current study. (This is another point of discussion considered later in the current study.) Having the same metaphors, and several of the metaphorical correspondences occurring in different languages indicates the universal culture of the war as related to COVID-19 metaphors which were persuaded by the universal pandemic situation. Finally, criticizing war metaphors can be nonsensical when considering these metaphors were used unintentionally as they are ontological and structural.

Research Questions:

1. What are COVID-19-related metaphors that Arabic-speaking Twitter users use?
2. How similar are Arabic COVID-19 metaphors to COVID-19 metaphors used in other languages?
3. What are some reasons for using these metaphors?

III. METHODOLOGY

Before collecting the data, the following list of some concepts that are associated with war were logically established:

- Fight
- Parties fighting
- Army
- Battles
- Victory/winning
- Defeat/losing
- Arsenal/Weapons/ Fighting equipment
- People of parties

COVID-19 and a word that refers to one of the systematic correspondences of the metaphor “the world is at war against the coronavirus (COVID-19)” are used as keyword combinations to search for metaphors associated with the conceptual metaphor “the world is at war against the coronavirus (COVID-19)”. These keyword combinations were searched for using the Twitter advanced search engine. All the resulting examples were considered¹. Additionally, the Metaphor Identification Procedure Vrije Universiteit, (MIPVU) developed by Steen et al. (2010), was utilized to identify the metaphors in the resulting examples.

The dictionary the researcher used to identify metaphors in this study was the Almaany Arabic dictionary. The Almaany dictionary is a compilation of modern and classical Arabic dictionaries including: *Lisan Alarab*, *Alma'ani Aljam'i*, *Alghani*, *Alqamuus Almuhiit*, *Almu'jam Alwasiiit*, *Allughatu Al'arabiati Almu'asirah*, *Mukhtar Alsihah*, and *Ala'id*. The *OED* is an English dictionary that gives the current meaning of the word. Because both dictionaries give the current meaning and can trace the historical origins and changes in words, they were practical and efficient sources of information for the identification of metaphors.

After compiling a list of the metaphors to be investigated, the metaphors were categorized as systematic correspondences in two columns. To the left there were the source domains and to the right were the target domains. These conceptual metaphors and their correspondences did not always appear clearly in the metaphors found. For this, the implicit meaning of the metaphor was proposed based on contextual evidence. This approach is adopted from Kövecses (2008). For example, the conceptual metaphor “an organization is a plant” was presented in Kövecses (2008) as having an implicit metaphorical meaning. This metaphor was concluded by words such as: “branch”, “growing”, and “rooted”, as used in the following expressions:

1. The new branch of the company is under construction.
2. The organization is growing rapidly.
3. This company is rooted in this city.

¹ The resulted tokens ranged from 50 to 150 for each keyword combination.

The keyword “plant” in the conceptual metaphor “an organization is a plant” does not have an explicit match in any of the examples one through three. Despite that, these examples are linguistic representations of this conceptual metaphor.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

The “war” framework is indicated by some explicit and implicit metaphorical correspondences. The source domain to concretize COVID-19 has been occupied by several concepts. One of them is attributing COVID-19 to the aspect of volitional planning. This is done by conceptualizing COVID-19 as advancing toward humans on a “battlefield of war” which is reflected through using different verbs, each indicating a different manner of undergoing “the war”. “Taking precautionary measures”, “exerting efforts”, “using masks”, and “consulting social science”, to name a few, are used as different weapons conceptualizing “fending”, “confronting”, “challenging”, and “defeating”, also to name a few.

For instance, the word “تصدى” means to stand up to him while raising his face. This indicates a position where the person doing this action is prepared to fend off the opponent from progressing. Consider Example 1:

1. اتخاذ الإجراءات الاحترازية للتصدي للفايروس ومنع انتشاره... ناقش الاجتماع
 naqaf aliztimaʕ ʔit:ixað alizraʔat aD:arurijah
 discussed DEF-meeting taking DEF-measure-PL DEF-necessary
 lit:aSad:i lilfajrus wamanʕ intiʕaruh
 for-fending of-DEF-virus and-prevent its-spread
 The meeting discussed.... take precautionary measures to fend off the virus and prevent its spread.

Fending off the virus can be done by taking precautionary measures against it, responding to it, and exerting efforts to fight it.

Similar to the word for “fend”, the word “يواجه” in Arabic (meaning “confront” in English) indicates raising the face, as its root is “وجه”, which literally means “face”, indicates a situation where someone is raising his face or standing up against an oncoming opponent to deter them from advancing. Consider Example 2:

2. فريق المعمل يبذل اليوم جهوداً مضاعفة لإنتاج أكبر قدر من الكمامات وملابس العزل الطبية لمواجهة جائحة #كوفيد19
 Fari:q almaʕmal jab ʔul zuhud:an muDaʕafah liʔintaz
 Team-POSS DEF-lab exert effort-PL double-PST for-produce
 Akbar qadr min alkam:amat wamalabis alʕazl
 big-SUP amount of DEF-face mask-PL and-wears DEF-quarantine
 aTib:ijah limuwaʕahat zaʔihat kufidnainti:n
 DEF-medical for-DEF-confront-GER pandemic-POSS COVID-19

The lab team is exerting doubled efforts to produce as many masks and quarantine clothing (scrubs) as possible to confront the COVID-19 pandemic.

The act of confronting is conceptualized to activate using masks, medical clothing (or scrubs), social science, women on the frontline, vaccine/medicine, and projects.

COVID-19 has also been conceptualized to be defeated. Consider Example 3:

3. تعهد الرئيس ترامب في كلمته أمام الأمم المتحدة بهزيمة كوفيد19
 taʕah:ad alraʔi:s tramb fi kalimatah ama:m
 pledge-PST DEF-president Trump in word-SG in-front
 alʔumam almut:ahidah bihazimat kufidnainti:n
 DEF-nation-PL DEF-united with-defeat COVID-19
 Standing in front of the United Nations, President Trump has pledged to defeat COVID-19.

This defeating and overcoming the virus have been conceptualized to be done by a president, a medicine, or immunity. The virus is conceptualized as an enemy against whom these weapons can be used to defeat or overcome.

A person was conceptualized to challenge COVID-19 by going outdoors. Consider Example 4.

4. أحد السياح في #الصين يتنقل بأريحية متحدياً #كورونا الجديد
 Aʕad as:uʕaʕ fi aSi:n jatanaq:al biʔarihijah
 One-of DEF-tourist-PL in DEF-China move-around with-ease
 mutaʕad:ijan kuruna alʕadi:d
 challenging corona DEF-new
 A tourist in China is challenging the new coronavirus by moving easily around.

In this example, this tourist was conceptualized as going to the battlefield unafraid of the enemy, COVID-19. This is taken as a conceptual act of challenging the virus, and going outdoors is conceptualized as the means/weapon used to challenge COVID-19.

Being infected with COVID-19 was conceptualized as being directly engaged with the virus, and the amount of time this virus takes is mapped onto the duration of the battle. Consider Example 5:

5. اليوم چودھري طلع من العزل ١٤ يوم اللي كان فيهم في اشتباك مباشر رجال يتصارعون مع #كوفيد19 وانتهى الاشتباك بانتصار چودھري

Aljom	zodahri	Talaʕ	min	alʕazl	arbaʕTaʕf	jom
Today	Djodahri	went-up	from	DEF-quarantine	fourteen	day-PL
il:I	kan	fihum	fi	iftibak	mubaʕir riʕal	jataSaraʕun
which were	in-them	in	contact-GER	direct	man-PL	fight
maʕ	kufidnainti:n	wantaha	aliftibak	bintiSar		zodahri
with	COVID-19	end-PST	DEF-engage-GER	with-victory-POSS		Djodahri

Today, Jodahry was released from a 14-day quarantine during which there was a direct clash with COVID-19 which ended with Jodahry's victory.

In the above example, the fighting parties are the patient and the virus. This battle took place during the time of the infection. No longer being infected after the virus took its course is the victory after the engagement.

In a similar example, human beings are conceptualized as engaging in several battles at the same time. See Example 6, below.

6. المملكة العربية السعودية تخوض عدة معارك في وقت واحد في ظل تهديد وباء عالمي خطير ، وتنتصر بعون الله ،

Almamlaka	alarabijah	as:uʕudijah	taxu:D	ʕid:ata	maʕarik
DEF-Kingdom	DEF-Arabic	DEF-Saudi	gets-engaged-in	several	battle-PL
fi	Zil	tahdi:d	wabaʕ	ʕalami	xaTi:r
in	shade	threat	epicemic	global	dangerous
biʕawn		aʕah			
with-the-help-POSS		Allah			

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is fighting several battles simultaneously under the threat of a serious global epidemic, and God willing, will be victorious.

The conceptual mapping of the metaphor in Example 6 equates the battles to dealing with COVID-19. This is done by referring to multiple battles at the same time by using one referring expression to refer to both the actual and the figurative battles.

While referring to some awful scenes, the “war” metaphor was highlighted by encouraging people to not surrender, as seen in Example 7.

7. ... هذه المشاهد تاكلني "وتُدمي القلب ولكن يجب أن لا نستسلم

Ha ʕhi	almaʕahid	taʕkulni	watudmi	alqalb	walakin
These	DEF-scenes	eat-me-up	and-bleed	DEF-heart	and-but
jaʕib	ʕan	la	nastaslim		
should	that	not	surrender		

These scenes eat at me and bleed the heart, but we should not surrender.

This example indicates a war going on between mankind and the virus where some terrible aftermath is being seen. In Example 8, a throne is conceptualized where several enemies, the reason for all of the deaths, are implied.

8. كوفيد١٩ يسعى جاهدا ليتربع على قمة أسباب الوفاة على مستوى العالم

kufidnainti:n	jasʕa	zahidan	lijatarabaʕ	ʕala	qim:at
COVID-19	seek-3 rd	strive-ADV	to-be-square(of sitting on a throne)on		top-POSS
ʕasbab	alwafah	ʕala	mustawa	alʕalam	
reason-PL	DEF-death	on	level-POSS	DEF-world	

COVID-19 is trying hard to assume the throne as the leading cause of death worldwide.

In this example, the war concept does not include humans as taking part in this war but uses COVID-19 as the enemy that causes death and fights with other causes of death (i.e., other “enemies”) for the “throne” – or the number one cause of death in the world.

The conceptual context of “war” also created the use of “battle formation” and “gathering for battle” agreements such as “alliance”, “lines of defense”, and “resistance”, as seen in Examples 9 and 10 below.

9. الموجة الثانية من هجمات فيروس "كوفيد19" أستطاعت #البحرين صد وهزيمة الموجة الأولى بتماسك رائع بين الحكومة والفريق الطبي القائد للمقاومة و الناس بوعيهم وسلوكهم المنضبط و التقيد بالتوجيهات الطبية والتباعد الاجتماعي

Almawjah	aθ:Anijah	min	ħazma:t	fairus	kufidnainti:n	astaTaʃ	albahrain
DEF-wave	DEF-second	from	bundle	virus	COVID-19	was-able	DEF-Bahrain
Sad	wahazimat	almawjah	alula	bitamasuk		raʔiʃ	bain
fend	and-defeat	DEF-wave	DEF-first	with-	stick-together-GER	great	between
alhukuma	walfariq		aT:ib:i	alqaʔid		lilmuqawama	
DEF-government	and-DEF-team-POSS	DEF-medical	DEF-leading			to-DEF-resistance	
wan:as	biwaʃjihim		wasulukuhum			almunDabiT	wat:aqaijud
and-DEF-people	with-their-awareness		and-their-behavior			DEF-disciplined	and-sticking
bit:awʒihat	aT:ib:ijah		wat:abaʃud			aliʒtimaʃi	
by-guidance-PL	DEF-medical		and-DEF-distancing			DEF-social	

Before the second wave of COVID-19 attacks, Bahrain was able to defend and defeat the first wave with a great collaboration between the government and the medical team, the leaders of the resistance, in addition to the people's awareness, good conduct, and abidance to medical instructions and social distancing.

10. على مستوى إستراتيجيات مقاومة " كوفيد19" وتحوارته فإن الإقبال على أخذ اللقاح من قبل المواطنين والوافدين هي واحدة من أهم المعارك التي يخوضها المجتمع البحريني

ʃala	mustawa	ʔistirazijat	muqawama	kufidnainti:n	wataħawuratuh		
on	level	strategy-PL	resistance	COVID-19	and-mutation-PL-POSS		
faʔin	aliqbal		ʃala	ʔaxð	al:aqa:h	min	qibal
so-that	DEF-going-forward		on	taking	DEF-vaccine	from	front
almuwaTini:n	walwafidi:n		hija	wahidatun	min	aham	almaʃarik
DEF-citizen-PL	and-DEF-expats		is	one	from	important	DEF-battle-PL
al:ati	jaxuDuha		almuʒtamaʃ	albahreini			
DEF-which	get-involved-in		DEF-community	DEF-Bahrain-ADJ			

On the level of the strategies of resisting COVID-19 and its strains, moving forward and getting citizens and expatriates to take the vaccine is one of the most important battles the Bahraini community is fighting.

In Examples 9 and 10, the conceptual “war” resulted in a party of resistance standing up to the advancing enemy. The resistance in Example 9 is led by the medical team, conceptualizing them as commanding officers, with the government officials and their citizens also being members of the resistance party.

In Example 10, the willingness to take the vaccine is one of the strategies of resistance. Such conceptualization divergences highlight the different periods of the pandemic and vaccine development, both of which are discussed in detail in the next section of the analysis.

Examples 11 through 14 represent the alliance of COVID-19 with other “enemies”.

11. #حقتر تحالف مع #كورونا وواجبنا محاربتهما :

ħaftar	tahalaf	maʃ	kuruna	wawaʒibna	muħarabatuhuma
ħaftar	allied	with	Corona	and-duty-POSS	fight-them(DUAL)

ħaftar is allied with COVID-19, and it is our duty to fight them.

12. الإمارات روسيا الصين تحالف سياسي اقتصادي قوي وفعال ازداد تضامنه في محاربة كوفيد 19

Alimarat	rusia	aS:i:n	tahaluf	sijasi	iqtiSadi	qai	wafaʃ:al
Emirates	Russia	China	alliance	political	economical	strong	and-effective
izdad	taDa:munah	fi	muħarabat		kufidnainti:n		
increase-PST	solidarity	in	fighting		COVID-19		

The UAE, Russia, and China are a strong and effective political and economic alliance that has increased its solidarity in the fight against COVID-19.

13. أضحى التتائي بدبلا عن تلاقبنا

و أصبح العبد لا رحنا ولا جبنا
كوفيدُ والدولار تحالفُ ننتُ
قد أفسد الأعباد اغتالها فبنا

aDħa	at:anaʔi	badilan	ʃan	talaqina	waʔaSbaħ		
became(forenoon time)	separation	replacement	from	meeting	and-become(morning time)		
alʔid	laruħna	walaʒina	kufid	wad:u:la:r	taħalufun		
DEF-Eid	NEG-go-1 st PL	and-NEG-come-1 st PL	Covid	and-DEF-dollar	alliance		
natinun	qad	afsad	alʔaʃjada	artalaha	fina		
foul-smelling	which	cause-to-rot-PST	DEF-Eid-PL	killed-them	in-us		

Splitting apart replaces being together.
The holiday came and we stay still.
COVID and the dollar make a nasty alliance
Which ruined the holiday and has murdered us within.

14. جهاز المناعة قد يزيد فيروس كورونا شراسة تحالف مميت " #كورونا #كوفيد_19 #المناعة"

Tahaluf	mumi:t	kuruna	kufidnaiti:n	almanaʕa	zihaz
alliance	lethal	Corona	COVID-19	DEF-immunity	device
almanaʕa	qad	jazi:d	fairus	kuruna	ʕarasah
immunity	may	increase	virus	Corona	fierceness

"The immune system may increase the ferocity of the coronavirus, making a deadly alliance." #Corona #Covid_19 #Immunity

In Example 11, the tweeter refers to an alliance between a leader and the virus. This alliance occurs because of the hardship this leader and the virus impose.

Another example that indicates alliance is Example 12. During the pandemic, a political and economic alliance is referred to as being strengthened by the additional medical agreement between the parties of the alliance to fight COVID-19.

Example 13 also indicates an alliance between the coronavirus and the dollar, implying the increased exchange rate and the hardship the virus imposes on people.

A "lethal" alliance between the immune system and COVID-19 was indicated in Example 14. The news speaks about the immune system increasing the fierceness of COVID-19 which invites this feeling of a conceptual alliance.

Certain groups of people have their share of war-related concept usage. They are referred to as a "white army". This use of "army" conceptualizes this group of people as being engaged in a "war" against COVID-19, as seen in Example 15.

15. ليلاً نهارًا يقف الجيش الأبيض ببسالة في مواجهة جائحة كورونا (كوفيد-19) مخاطرين بحياتهم من أجل إنقاذنا

lailan	naharan	jaqif	alzajf	alʔabjad	bibasalah	fi muwazahat
at-night	in-morning	stand	DEF-army	DEF-white	with-valor	in confront-GER
zaʔihat	kuruna	kufidnaiti:n	mxatTri:n	biʕajatihim	min	ʔaʕl inqaʕna
pandemic	corona	COVID-19	resking	with-life-PL	from	sake safe-us

Day and night, the white army stands up valorously against the corona pandemic (COVID-19), risking their lives to save us!

In Example 15, a battlefield scene is laid out by using the words "يقف، ببسالة، مخاطرين"، meaning "standing valiantly, risking".

In Example 16, the immune system was conceptualized as collapsing due to COVID-19 attacks.

16. فيروس #كوفيد19... شرس

في أغلب المصابين يتمكن الجهاز المناعي من دحر الفيروس الغازي و تطهير الجسم منه، لكن في حالة انهيار الدفاعات الفيروس سياسة تدمير لكل أجهزة الجسم تقريباً. المناعية... يتبع

Fairuscovidnaiti:n	ʕaris					
Virus COVID-19	fierce					
Fi	aʕlab	almuSabi:n	jatamak:n	alzihaz	almanaʕi	min
In	most	DEF-infected-PL	is-able	DEF-device	DEF-immune	from
daʕr	al	fairus	alkazi	wataThir	alzism	minh
defeat-N	DEF-virus	DEF-invader	and-disinfect	DEF-body	from-it	
lakin	fi	ʕalat	inhijar	ad:ifaʕat	almanaʕijah	jatbaʕ
but	in	case of	collapse	DEF-defenses	DEF-immune	follow-3 rd SG
sijasat	tadmi:r	likul	aʕhizat	alzism	taqriban	DEF-virus
policy-PL	destruction	for-all	device-PL	DEF-body	almost	

COVID-19 is ferocious. In most infected people, the immune system is able to defeat the invading virus and cleanse the body of it, but in the event of a collapse of the immune defenses, the virus follows a policy of destroying almost all bodily systems.

A structural metaphor of "the war against COVID-19" is set in Example 16. The structure includes the following correspondences:

- The virus is a fierce attacker.
- The immune system is a defense system.
- The way the virus infects human bodies is a destruction strategy.

- Getting well is defeating the virus.

In Examples 17, 18, and 19, below, the source domain “first line of defense” was mapped onto different target domains.

17. شُكْرًا لَكُمْ خِطِّ الدِّفَاعِ الْأَوَّلِ،، أَجَارِكُمْ اللهُ مِنْ هَذَا الْمَرَضِ وَأَعَانَكُمْ عَلَى تَأْدِيَةِ الْأَمَانَةِ
 fukran lakum xaT ad:ifaʕ alʔaw:al ʔʕarakum al:ah
 thanks to-you line DEF-defense DEF-first may(he)give-refuge-to Allah
 min ha ʕa almaraD waʔaʕanakum-ʕala taʔdijat alʔamanah
 from this DEF-disease and-may(he)-help-you-on perform DEF-fidelity
 Thank you, the first line of defense. May Allah protect you from this illness and help you to carry out this responsibility.

18. اللقاحات لا تزال فعالة ضده، وهي خط الدفاع الأول لدينا اليوم.
 al:aqah latazal faʕ:alah Did:ah wahia xaT ad:ifaʕ
 vaccination-PL still active against-it and-it line DEF-defense
 alʔaw:al ladina aljaum
 DEF-first in-our-possession today
 The vaccine is still effective against it (COVID-19), and it’s our first line of defense.

19. كوفيد . نفسية المريض خط الدفاع الأول
 Nafsiat almari:D xaT ad:ifaʕ alʔaw:al kufid
 Psychology-POSS DEF-patient line DEF-defense DEF-first Covid
 The psychological state of the patient is the first line of defense against COVID-19

Example 17 indicates that the first line of defense is the group of medical workers. However, in Example 18 it is indicated that the first line of defense is the vaccines. Likewise, Example 19 posits that the third target domain of “the first line of defense” is the psychological state of the patient. The different choices of target domains of the first line of defense indicate the message intended to be delivered. This choice also reflects the appropriateness of the point of time of the pandemic, which is picked up in detail later in this paper.

Some nicknames were used to refer to people involved in COVID-19 situations. For example, medical workers were referred to as “champions” and “heroes”, as seen in Examples 20 and 21:

20. ..! انهض يا بطل
 #كوفيد19 في الكويت #كوفيد19
 inhaD yabaTəl kruna fi alkuwait
 get-up VOC-hero Corona in DEF-Kuwait
 Get up, hero!
 #CoronaInKuwait #COVID-19

21. !علمتم لماذا نحبيهم في كل مناسبة تحية الأبطال
 ʕalimtum lima ʕa nuhajj:him fi kul munasabah taʕijat alʔabTal
 INTERR-know-2ndPL why we-salute-them in all occasion salutation-POSS DEF-hero-PL
 Do you know now why we greet the heroes on every single occasion?

Example 20 is a call to get up indicating the little sleep someone got before and after which there is a heroic responsibility. Example 21 refers to virtual and actual occasions of honoring and greeting medical workers for being heroes during the pandemic.

The people taking the COVID-19 vaccine are referred to as fortified. This is an example of one of the correspondences of the structural metaphor “a vaccine is a fort”. Conceptual metaphor correspondences that are used on Twitter include the following:

- A vaccine is a fort.
- A person taking the vaccine is protected or fortified, to indicate the Arabic derivative.
- The fort protects against the enemy, the virus.

Consider Example 22:

22. (تقرير الأسبوعي للتحصين بلقاح #كوفيد19 في السلطنة (الجرعة الثانية)
 Taqri:r alʔusbuʕi lit:aʕSi:n bilaqaʕ kufidnainti:n fi
 Report DEF-weakly of-fortification with-vaccine-POSS COVID-19 in
 as:alTanah alʕurʕah aθ:anijah

DEF-Sultanate DEF-dose DEF-second
 The weekly report for fortifying with the #COVID-19 vaccination in the sultanate (the second dose)

Example 22 indicates the general vaccination situation.
 A person who died as a result of getting infected by COVID-19 was referred to as a martyr in Example 23:

23. أسأل الله ان يتقبلك شهيد بوفاتك بهذا المرض.
 #كوفيد
 asʔal at:ah ʔan jataqab:alak fahi:d biwafatik biha ĉa almarad kufid
 I-ask Allah that he-accept-you martyr with-you-death with-this DEF-disease Covid
 May Allah accept you as a martyr for dying from this disease.
 #COVID

Example 23 indicates the metaphor “a deceased of COVID is a martyr”. This martyr concept follows the long-existent Islamic religious perspective where a deceased of an illness is a martyr.

Reconsidering the application of the “war on COVID-19” metaphor from a diachronic perspective shows some patterns. Table 1, below, highlights that the words “confront”, “hero”, and “fort/fortified” were used most often during the pandemic; likewise, the months 3/2020, 6/2020, 7/2020, and 4/2020 were the months with the highest number of metaphor varieties, also highlighted in Table 1, below:

TABLE 1
 THE USE OF THE SOURCE DOMAINS FOUND IN COVID-19 WAR METAPHORS DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE PANDEMIC BASED ON TWEET USAGE

	2020												2021												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Fend				*	*	*	*				*													5	
Confront			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*								5
Defeat			*						*		*													5	
Overcome							*			*														2	
Challenge	*																							1	
Direct engage										*														1	
Victory							*																	1	
Battles					*											*								2	
Surrender					*	*																		2	
Assume the throne							*																	1	
resistance						*										*								2	
Alliance			*				*	*									*							4	
(white) army						*	*							*										3	
Defenses			*																					1	
first line of defense																*		*						2	
Collapse			*																					1	
Destruction strategy			*																					1	
Hero			*		*	*		*		*			*	*		*								8	
Fort/fortified		*	*	*						*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	17	
Martyr			*								*													2	
	1	1	9	3	5	6	8	3	2	5	3	4	3	4	2	6	3	2	1	1	1	1	1		

According to Table 1, the words mentioned in only one month each are “challenge”, “engage”, “victory”, “assume the throne”, “defenses”, “collapse”, and “destruction strategy”. Moreover, the months with only one war metaphor each are 1/2020, 2/2020, 7/2021, 8/2021, 9/2021, 10/2021, 11/2021, and 12/2021.

The metaphors, “confront”, “hero”, and “fort/fortified”, which were each used in most months of the pandemic, are expected to be more entrenched in the language or more helpful in the understanding of the context than the metaphors used in fewer months. The metaphor “dealing with the pandemic is confronting the pandemic” was created by using the word لمواجهة [limuwazahat] “to confront”, as in Examples 2.

Notice how the diversity of means used to confront the pandemic indicates how this metaphor is entrenched in the language and reused with concepts related to COVID-19 for a better understanding of an expression referring to the pandemic. In addition to this, it is obvious that this metaphor is ontological since it concretizes the abstract pandemic to serve the purpose of making the pandemic easier to refer to.

The metaphor “a medical worker is a hero” which is created using the word بطل [baTal] “hero” was considered above in Examples 20 and 21. The use of the metaphor “a medical worker is a hero” in these examples was used to indicate acknowledgment and appreciation of the service provided during a dangerous situation. Such acknowledgment and appreciation are economically referred to using this metaphor by referring to each medical worker as بطل [baTal] “hero”.

Derivatives of the root حصن [hiSn], or “fort” and its derivatives “fort/fortified” were used to refer to vaccination. Reassess the fort/fortified metaphor tokens considered above in Example 22. This creates the metaphorical structure in which we have a fort, people protecting within the fort, the process of being protected in the fort, and an enemy beyond

the walls of the fort as some of the metaphor correspondences of the vaccine, people protected after receiving the vaccine, the process of administering the vaccine, and COVID-19 as the enemy beyond the walls. There is also ontological utilization of the metaphor since the vaccination is an abstract concept made concrete by metaphorically mapping the “fort” concept onto it.

The questions “Is this a matter of coincidence? Or is/are there (a) reason(s) for such a pattern?” arise when considering the source domains “confront”, “hero”, and “fort/fortified” as being the ones used most in of the months of 2020 and 2021 and more than any other source domains.

To answer these questions, the researcher considered the availability of Twitter tokens where all of the source domains considered in this study are used and found except for the most related of 9, 6, 8, and 6 different metaphor results, respectively.

To answer these questions as part of the methodology, the researcher repeated the search previously done to obtain the COVID-19 metaphors but this time by using the source domain’s Arabic words as the keywords instead of كوفيد-19 or كورونا “COVID-19” or “corona” respectively. The use of the same methodology helped in controlling the respective factors.

The researcher found that most of the one-word source domains were used every month of the years 2020 and 2021 except for the source domain شهيد “martyr”. The most commonly found conceptual metaphors with these source domains were:

- “love is war”
- “a football match is a battle”
- “being emotional is being at war”
- “keep on behaving is fighting a war”

Considering these conceptual metaphors is, however, beyond the scope of this paper.

Finding all the one-word source domains except for شهيد “martyr” indicates that all the one-word source domains are appropriate for a general structure of the “war” metaphor. A proposed reason for the source domain شهيد “martyr” being an appropriate correspondence within the metaphorical structure of “COVID-19 is an enemy of war” is that in real war death can be the result, thereby making it similar to the conceptual “war against COVID-19”.

The phrase size source domains were not searched for as it was infeasible due to the low probabilities of finding derivatives of each word in a group of words. In other words, to get such probability, researchers would need to multiply the numbers of potential derivatives of the individual words in the phrase by one another.

Moreover, this excludes the possibility of these source domains being generally more common than the others, which calls for a different explanation. As all the one-word source domains are entrenched in the language, the source domains “confront”, “hero”, and “fort/fortified” have semantic advantages over the rest according to the following:

First, the word “confront” indicates the initial stage of dealing with the virus physically such as by using masks and sanitizers, conceptually using science, and being psychologically ready for it, for example. After the development of the vaccine, this confrontation indicates using the means of getting vaccinated as a weapon against the enemy. As for the word “hero”, it is different from other source domains that are used to refer to entities and people in our examples such as “ally” and “martyr” in that it has a meaning that can be generalized to any admired person. This is the part that implies conceptual entrenchment and linguistic usage generality. Finally, the word “fort/fortified” being commonly used can be attributed mainly to the vaccination process as it was the word most often used to refer to vaccination. Consider the data in Table 2.

TABLE 2
THE NUMBER OF GOOGLE RESULTS OF THREE OF THE MOST COMMON EXPRESSIONS TO REFER TO THE PROCESS OF VACCINATION IN ARABIC

words	The number of results
تحصين	123000
تلقيح	120400
تطعيم	205300

The three most commonly used expressions to refer to the process of vaccination were تحصين [taħSin], تلقيح [talqih], and تطعيم [taṭʕim]. The word تحصين [taħSin] is a result of a metaphorical mapping using the source domain حصن “fort” [ħiSn], as discussed above. The word تلقيح [talqih] is a derivative of a common name of the vaccine, i.e. لقاح [laqlħ]. And the word تطعيم [taṭʕim] is the official word used for this process.² Although the word تحصين [taħSin] is neither an official term nor a derivative of the word for “vaccine”, it is used a little more than the derivative and about two-thirds of the total number of times the official term is used. This goes against the expected usage of the word تحصين [taħSin] indicating that this source domain is being established in the language due to being entrenched in the minds of the users. Once a metaphor is entrenched, using it is more economical to promote a better understanding of the concept.

The months with more varieties of metaphors are proposed to be the ones when stages of the pandemic were more in more of expressing meaning than other months. Those months are March, June, and July of 2020, and April of 2021. Consulting the World Health Organization (WHO) website and the Macmillan Learning timeline, the researcher posits

² The label “official” indicates the use of the term in official websites such as the Arabic ministries of health for vaccination in general.

that, in March 2020, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the WHO. These occurrences aroused the emotions of Tweeters as reflected by the number of different metaphors used. In June 2020, infection rates had started to go down before rising again as U.S. borders prepared to reopen. This is also proposed to have been a motivating factor for the use of a variety of metaphors about the “war on COVID-19”. In July 2020, the United States broke the record of daily cases and large-scale testing started. April 2021 was the period³ when millions of vaccine doses were administered throughout different Arabic-speaking countries.

In January and February of 2020, the number of metaphors was only 1. This can be attributed to the period before the declaration of the pandemic. Furthermore, after June 2021 the metaphors used were only derivatives of the root *حصن* [hiSn] “fort”. This is attributed to the situation when vaccination was the means of “defeating”, “confronting”, and “overcoming” the virus for months.

Consider Table 3 for a general summary of situations during the first two years of the pandemic.

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF THE MAIN SITUATIONS PER MONTH IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF THE PANDEMIC

2020	1	1	Virus outbreak	2021	1	3	Vaccines available to first responders
	2	1	Announcement of the official name		2	4	
	3	9	WHO declares COVID-19 a pandemic/Border sealed		3	2	
	4	3	One million cases worldwide		4	6	During the stage of vaccination
	5	5			5	3	
	6	6	Infection rates start to go down but then climbed up as borders prepared to reopen		6	2	
	7	8	U.S. breaks records of daily cases, large scale of testing begins		7	1	Delta variant in 65 countries
	8	3			8	1	
	9	2	One million deaths worldwide		9	1	4.5 million deaths/5.8 million doses of the vaccines administered
	10	5			10	1	
	11	3			11	1	Omicron as a new variant
	12	4	Emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine		12	1	

As for March, April, August, September, October, November, and December of 2022 in addition to January, February, March, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December of 2023, consider the following:

- The pandemic situation was about numbers, i.e., the number of infected cases or deaths and the number of countries where a variant is recorded, which might not be very surprising as they gradually reached these numbers.
- The situation was about the non-public use of the vaccine.
- There were new variants identified during the respective period.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study reiterates what many of the previous studies found – the war conceptual metaphor in relation to COVID-19 is the most prominent one. Those previous studies concluded that using this war metaphor is to indicate being relieved of responsibility, holding people responsible for getting infected, legitimizing measurements, euphemizing implications, or de-emphasizing the situation (Olimat, 2020; Molnár et al., 2020; Chatti, 2021; Schnepf & Christmann, 2022, and others). Those conclusions were claimed to carry respective illocutions. However, claiming this indicates that conventionalized metaphors, as figured by the very common use of the metaphor, are introduced to language intentionally as opposed to naturally and gradually. This perspective goes against the characteristics of conceptual metaphors that need to be used over and over to become conventional (Kövecses, 2010). In our case, the war metaphor in relation to COVID-19 is an extension of the already existing mapping of the war metaphor in relation to situations of struggle. This extension theory was proposed by Lakoff (1993) and later reintroduced by Kövecses (2002). This explains the abrupt conventionalization of “war” in relation to COVID-19 metaphors as all components of the metaphor except for the target domain have already been conventional (Cameron & Deignan, 2006). This is not to contradict some conclusions of the previous studies that the war metaphor serves the purposes of raising awareness of the urgency of the situation and bringing about a sense of responsibility, for example.

In the current study, the researcher found many war metaphor correspondences in relation to COVID-19. These correspondences are:

When comparing these correspondences to the ones found in other studies, the researcher found some similarities and some differences. Wicke and Bolognesi (2020), for example, listed the source domains used in the mapping as “fight”, “war”, “combat”, “threat”, “battle”, “frontline”, “military”, “peace”, “attack”, “enemy”, “defeat”, “violence”, “army”, “attack”, “struggle”, “resist”, “soldiers”, “weapon”, “victory”, “troops”, “defend”, and “destruction”. Most of these

³ During other months, the vaccine doses were also given; however, I mentioned this in the analysis due to lack of other reasons for this pattern that could be proposed instead.

metaphors are found in the current study, either explicitly or implicitly, except for “threat”, “peace”, “violence”, “attack”, and “struggle”.

In another study, Chatti (2021) proposes some metaphorical correspondences. Several of the correspondences Chatti found were also found while looking into the data at hand. The matching correspondences are: “enemy”, “invasion”, “soldiers”, and “weapons”. The rest of them are not found in Tweets which can be attributed to them referring to specific people, things, and places and are not expected to occur in such a limited space as in the case of Tweets.

A few previous studies were found to indicate diachronic representations of metaphors. For example, Gui (2021) found that “war” started to be conceptualized as a “preventive war” and eventually as a “total war” due to the development of the pandemic situation.

In another study, Taylor and Kidgell (2021) found that viruses in different decades were structured as reproducing, rampant, and evolving in the 1890s, 1910s, and 2000s, respectively.

In the current study, the researcher found some patterns with regard to the months and the source domains of the war metaphor. During January and February of 2020, the metaphors used that related to war were not varied, i.e., one metaphor was used during each month. This can be because the pandemic situation had not been declared yet. This brings us to the drastic increase in the number of metaphors used during March 2020. Being the month when the pandemic was declared, nine different metaphors were used then. This is significant because it is the highest number of metaphors found in one month throughout 2020 and 2021. During June 2020, the number of infected cases started going down in addition to being the month when the U.S. borders were about to open. Nonetheless, in June 2020, the United States broke the record for the most infected cases and large-scale testing was in full swing. Finally, in April 2021, the COVID-19 vaccine was administered to millions.

Moreover, three of the source domains about war in relation to COVID-19 were used in more than five months, and they are “confront”, “hero”, and “fort/fortified”. The researcher proposed that the reasons for using them in more months than any of the other metaphors were used is that they are one-word source domains and their meanings are not expected to be limited to a certain stage of the pandemic but generalized to all the stages of it.

Finally, considering the war metaphor and its related concepts throughout recent history will be a rich source of conceptual/linguistic patterns for future researchers.

Note:

Glossing and Transcription appendices can be found online at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yk04DkWelBatnvQe61whAj5rJO99b0dMmnyFpPCGnP8/edit?usp=sharing>

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Translanguaging for English Language Education: Uncovering Thai EFL Students' Insights

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Abstract—Translanguaging pedagogy has gained attention in recent years in language education; yet, there is limited research on how it is utilized and perceived by university students in Thailand. This study therefore examines the translanguaging practices and perceptions of Thai university students regarding incorporating such practices in classrooms with strict language boundary policy. The mixed method study analyzes questionnaire (N=77), observation and interview (N=10) data from students using descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis, respectively. While this study participants are only those observed to practice translanguaging in the classroom, however, the results indicated that only 84% of the students found translanguaging (i.e., using their L1 and other repertoire resources) in the classroom for content learning and meaning-making beneficial, while the others (16%) still prefer a strict English only practice. Moreover, the results showed the students' overall positive views on incorporating translanguaging in different classroom situations to assist low proficiency students' learning and enhance classroom interaction and participation since most of Thai teachers frequently use their L1 with students. Some students further highlighted challenges in implementing this strategy in Thailand, despite its practical benefits for English language education in Thailand. The study also highlights the implications of this practice for Thailand and beyond.

Index Terms—translanguaging, English language education, Thai EFL context, students' insights

I. INTRODUCTION

Translanguaging is an approach to language learning and teaching that encourages the use of all the languages a learner knows, including their first language (L1) and/or home languages, in the classroom (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Zhang-Wu, 2022). This approach challenges the traditional monolingual ideology that promotes the separation of languages, which has been common in bilingual education in Thailand (Ambele, 2022; Chukwumeka & Ambele, 2022; Chaisiri, 2022). In English as a medium of instruction (EMI) classrooms, communication can be a challenge for learners of English as an additional language. Translanguaging thus proposes that incorporating bilingual practices into the classroom can actually benefit both students and teachers in achieving learning and teaching goals (Ambele & Watson Todd, 2021; Garc á et al., 2016). Researchers and scholars have proposed this approach to EFL (English as a foreign language) classrooms, suggesting that it can facilitate language learning and course content comprehension (Flores & Garc á, 2013; Otheguy et al., 2019). Therefore, the recognition and integration of learners' L1 in EFL classrooms can enhance language learning outcomes and help learners utilize their entire linguistic repertoire.

Translanguaging is a concept that promotes the use of the learners' first language (L1) as a resource to support their learning of a second language (L2). The idea is that learners' linguistic repertoire can be used to aid their understanding and communication, rather than being seen as a hindrance or interference (Ambele, 2020; Otheguy et al., 2015; Pastushenkov et al., 2021). This approach recognizes that “language is open” (Ambele, 2022, p. 872), and that learners can draw on all of their language resources to make sense of new concepts and content. By deploying aspects of their L1 (i.e. Thai language, in the context of the current study), students (e.g. Thai EFL students) can make connections between their existing knowledge and the new content that they are learning in the L2. This serves as a strategy for both students and teachers to ‘tap into both their L1 and L2 resources, spanning from their linguistic background to their personal history and knowledge acquired at home, to where they can produce meaningful communication’ (Pastushenkov et al., 2021, p. 53). Thus, ensuring that the learning experience is more engaging and effective, as well as promoting collaborative interactions between students. Translanguaging challenges traditional notions of language separation and encourages a more fluid and integrated approach to language learning (Kleyn & Garcia, 2019). It recognizes that learners' linguistic backgrounds and personal histories can be valuable assets in the classroom, and that by tapping into these resources, learners can facilitate more meaningful communication and deeper learning (Poza, 2017; Maphalala & Mpofu, 2020).

The reluctance of some Thai EFL students to accept translanguaging in their classrooms may be due to a number of factors, including traditional beliefs about language separation and concerns about how the use of the L1 might affect

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their English language proficiency (Khonjan, 2021; Chukwuemeka, 2023). However, research has shown that when used effectively, translanguaging can be a powerful tool for promoting language learning and supporting students' overall academic success (Ambele, 2022; Chaisiri, 2022). While research in other contexts has shown students and teachers support for translanguaging as a natural strategy (Otheguy et al., 2015; Hojeij et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2021), Thai EFL students and teachers have been seen to demonstrate hesitation when implementing this practice in the classroom. Given the potential benefits of translanguaging, it would be valuable to conduct empirical research to explore the perspectives of Thai EFL university students who have been observed to incorporate this practice in their classrooms since no such study exist for Thailand. This could help to shed light on the factors that support or hinder the adoption of translanguaging in Thai university EFL classrooms and provide insights into how best to implement and adopt this approach in this context. By conducting such research, it may be possible to identify strategies and best practices for promoting the effective use of translanguaging in Thai university EFL classrooms, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes for students. Additionally, this research could contribute to broader discussions around the use of translanguaging in language education and help to promote more inclusive and effective teaching practices in Thailand and other contexts around the world.

By examining insights from Thai EFL university students who have incorporated the translanguaging practice in the classroom, and how they perceive implementing such a practice at the tertiary level in Thailand, this study seeks to contribute in this regard. In other words, the study uses the students' own reflection practice to better understand the motivations behind their classroom translanguaging practices through the following research questions:

1. What are Thai university students' perceptions of their observed classroom translanguaging practices?
2. What are the students' insights on implementing translanguaging in Thai university classroom?

II. TRANSLANGUAGING IN THAI EFL CLASSROOM

Of the various definitions of translanguaging, Garcia's (2017) operationalization of the term has gained considerable attention and recognition in the literature. Garcia (2017) defines translanguaging as a process where multilingual speakers utilize their full linguistic repertoire to make meaning, not just switching between languages, but engaging in a holistic and dynamic process of communication. This definition emphasizes the dynamic and fluid nature of language use and highlights the fact that language learners use their full linguistic repertoires in a flexible and creative manner (Tian & Zhang-Wu, 2020). By doing so, they are able to draw on their prior knowledge and experiences to enhance their understanding of new information and concepts. This approach is seen as a valuable tool for scaffolding learning and supporting the acquisition of a new language and content knowledge (Hojeij et al., 2019).

Translanguaging is seen as a natural and necessary part of the meaning-making process for bilingual and multilingual learners in classroom interactions. According to Garcia et al. (2016, p. 12), "language is an ongoing process that only exists as translanguaging", emphasizing the fluidity and dynamism of language use. Translanguaging goes beyond traditional bilingual terms like code-switching or code-mixing, as it recognizes that learners use their entire linguistic repertoires (in this study, English, Thai and Chinese) to communicate meaning and understanding in the classroom. Therefore, the primary focus of translanguaging is on the holistic and dynamic process of communication, rather than on established patterns of language separation in the classroom (Li & Lin, 2019). This approach acknowledges that learners' L1 is intertwined with other semiotic aspects beyond the L2, and that fluid verbal and linguistic performances in a variety of interconnected classroom exchanges between learners and/or teachers and learners are necessary to facilitate meaningful learning (Rahman et al., 2021).

Translanguaging has become a common practice in English-medium instruction (EMI) classrooms at various levels, particularly where the learners' L1 is not the language of instruction. This approach has challenged the traditional teaching and learning models in EFL classrooms and has led to more inclusive and participatory learning environments. Garcia (2017), Otheguy et al. (2015) and Ambele (2022), emphasize the dynamic and fluid nature of translanguaging, which goes beyond the socio-political rules and boundaries that separate languages in the classroom. Translanguaging has been found to increase learners' inclusion, participation, and understanding in the learning process, as well as facilitating the conveyance of ideas and accomplishing lessons more easily (Li & Lin, 2019). In addition, classroom translanguaging emphasizes the "linguistics of participation," where both learners and teachers engage in the co-construction of knowledge. This approach recognizes the important role of learners' L1 in scaffolding their learning of a new language and content knowledge, and encourages them to draw on their full linguistic repertoire to facilitate the learning process.

While translanguaging has been widely recognized as an effective strategy for language learning and instruction, its use is still limited in Thailand, particularly in EFL classrooms (Ambele & Khonjan, 2023; Chaisiri, 2022; Chukwuemeka, 2023; Khonjan, 2022). The prescribed monolingual policy of language separation in Thai EFL classrooms may discourage students from incorporating translanguaging practices. However, some Thai EFL students have been observed to use translanguaging in their classrooms, in various ways, such as using texts in L2 and discussing them in L1, or using both (or all) languages available in the classroom flexibly. These approaches demonstrate the potential of translanguaging to support learners' language and content knowledge acquisition in EFL classrooms, even in contexts where a monolingual policy is the norm. Thus, this line of enquiry is the need.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The current research is grounded in Garcia's (2017) translanguaging theory, which challenges the traditional view that bilinguals have two or more separate linguistic systems. Instead, translanguaging theory proposes that bilingualism is a dynamic and fluid process that involves the use of multiple language resources to create meaning (Garcia & Seltzer, 2016; Li, 2018). When students are encouraged to use their entire language repertoires in the classroom, they can develop their knowledge and critical thinking skills beyond the limitations of a monolingual approach. Thus, translanguaging theory is used here to guide the interpretation of how Thai EFL university students incorporate this practice in their classrooms and their perceptions of its use at the tertiary level of education in Thailand. By exploring students' experiences and perspectives on translanguaging, the study hopes to shed light on the potential benefits and challenges of this practice in the Thai EFL context and to provide insights for future research and pedagogical practices.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study uses a mixed method design, a questionnaire for quantitative data, and a semi-structured interview for qualitative data to investigate Thai EFL university students' translanguaging perception in their classroom practices and their opinions of its use at the tertiary level of education in Thailand.

A. *Context of the Study*

The study aimed to explore the use of translanguaging approach in university classrooms in Thailand, where students were observed to use their L1 (Thai), L2 (English), and other resources during their learning. The study was limited to five classrooms across five universities in the center (N=2), south (N=2) and northeast (N=1) regions of Thailand. On numerous casual trips to their classes, the researchers, who are friends with the instructors at these five Thai universities, noticed that the students were freely using their repertoire resources during classes. It should be mentioned that the teachers and learners (undergraduate English major students) all use Thai as their first language. In order to obtain their perspectives on using their L1 and L2 as well as other languages in the classroom, contrary to the English-only policy that has been prescribed, and their perceptions of incorporating such a translanguaging practice in university classes, 77 students from across these universities who had been observed to practice translanguaging in class were recruited and interviewed as part of this study, along with a questionnaire administration. However, it should be emphasized that Thailand continues to teach its traditional bilingual curriculum in EMI classes (which most Thai teachers still strictly follow). So, as the researchers, we thought further investigation into the translanguaging practices of these 77 Thai university students would be interesting. This serves as the basis for the current study's focus.

B. *Participants*

The study collected data from 77 Thai students studying at five universities in Thailand. The participants had at least six months of experience living abroad and more than 16 years of experience learning English in Thailand. The universities were chosen because (a) the lecturers gave their students the freedom to utilize whatever learning approaches that helped them learn, and (b) they are the host institutions of the study's participants. In addition, the participants (who are students belonging to teachers of the researchers' network) were chosen by purposive-convenience sampling (Selvi, 2020) because (i) they are Thai university students studying in Thailand, and (ii) they have been observed implementing the translanguaging strategy (i.e. using Thai, English, and Chinese) in their classrooms. These criteria were used in the study's sampling procedure to include participants who were familiar with both conventional and cutting-edge English-learning techniques with Thai and foreign instructors. The rationale for including participants who incorporate modern learning strategies like translanguaging in the classroom is that they are more likely to learn content and language faster than students who do not use such strategies (Ambele, 2022; Chukwuemeka & Ambele, 2022). By selecting participants who have experience learning English through both traditional and newer methods, the study hopes to provide more in-depth insights into the practical benefits of using learners' L1 and other repertoire resources in Thai ELT classrooms.

C. *Instruments*

A questionnaire, an observation and a semi-structured interview were utilized as the main instruments for data collection in this study. It is common for researchers to use online questionnaire surveys to collect data as it is a convenient way to reach a large sample of participants. Ambele and Watson Todd (2021) suggest that online questionnaire surveys can produce a representative sample of the population under study and can be used to draw conclusions about the entire population. Additionally, the sample sizes obtained from questionnaire surveys can be sufficient to generate meaningful findings. This study adapted Nambisan's (2014) questionnaire to suit the context, purpose, and participants of the current study. The questionnaire had two sections, with the first section gathering general information about the students' age, gender, years of learning and using English (L1) and other languages they know. The second section investigated the importance, frequency, support, and perceptions of using translanguaging in their classes and its implementation in Thai ELT classroom.

Class observation was also used as a method to collect data about the students' use of translanguaging in their classes. The critical incident technique was employed, which involves observing and documenting specific incidents that were

relevant to the research question. In this case, the incidents were related to translanguaging, such as using a text that is in one language and discussing it in another language; moving from a text in one language to another text in another language; and flexibly integrating their entire repertoire resources. The observations were limited to incidents of translanguaging during the lessons and recorded data from about 10 lessons out of 15 in one semester. The data gathered from these observations served as a representation of the students' translanguaging practice in their classes.

To complement the classroom observation, the researchers also conducted individual semi-structured interviews with 10 randomly selected students. The interviews aimed to probe into the students' reasons for using their L1 and other resources in an English-only classroom. The interview questions were prepared based on the ongoing classroom observation, allowing for openness and versatility in the final interviews. The data gathered from the classroom observation served as a common reference during the interview and aided in the discussion of the results. Thus, the use of class observation and individual interviews allowed the researchers to collect rich data about the students' translanguaging practice, as well as their perceptions and reasons for using different languages in the classroom. The combination of these methods provided a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

D. Data Collection

Before data collection started, the participants whose classes had been informally observed were contacted by Facebook and LINE, with all ethical procedures for data collection observed. During each class observation (10 classes in total, each about 45-50 minutes), the researchers sat at the back of the class and did not participate in any way. They took notes during the observations and prepared potential interview questions based on the observed critical episodes. After the observations, the randomly selected 10 students were contacted immediately for interviews. Each interview lasted for approximately 30-35 minutes and was recorded using a mobile phone recorder to avoid the loss of words and phrases during a note-taking session. Conducting the interviews in English was important, as the participants were all English major students. It was also crucial for the participants to feel at ease and be able to express themselves openly. To ensure this, the students selected the location and time for the interview.

For the questionnaire, it was designed and administered online to all 77 students whose classroom translanguaging practice was observed during the period of conducting the face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the selected 10 students. Administering the questionnaire online through social media platforms was an efficient way to reach all the participants and collect the necessary data.

E. Data Analysis

A mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques to explore the research questions was employed. The quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools, such as frequency, percentages, and mean while the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and observations were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Selvi, 2020). The qualitative content analysis involved a systematic process of categorizing content based on subjective perception and taking into account the occurrence of categorical content (Ambele, 2022; Selvi, 2020). The interviews were transcribed and validated by the students' participants before being analyzed. The transcripts were then read numerous times, and sections that stood out in regard to the research aims were highlighted. To have a clearer understanding of each interview's contents, summaries of each one were eventually written. The content of the interviews and observations were organized in a table, and similarities and differences were identified. The notes from each class's observations were then evaluated. The notes concentrated on instances in which students used their first language (L1) and other languages during lessons. To pinpoint key trends in the students' perceptions of translanguaging in the classroom, the contents of the interviews and the notes obtained during observation were compared. Finally, the data were consolidated into similar contents, and themes were deduced from the data to achieve the research objectives.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data from the 77 students are presented and discussed in this section as three overarching themes related to: (i) their perceptions of classroom translanguaging practice, (ii) their situational contexts of classroom translanguaging usage and (iii) the students' views on implementing translanguaging in classroom. Codes were utilized for each participant interview to anonymize the data (e.g. S-1 for student 1). Excerpts of related contents from the observation and interview were used to support data interpretation from a translanguaging perspective.

A. Students' Classroom Translanguaging Perceptions

It should be noted that all the students' participating in this study were those observed to use the translanguaging strategy in the classroom. The results showed the students' overall positive perception of classroom translanguaging. In the questionnaire survey, the Likert scale was used to assess the frequency of the students' use of their linguistic repertoire in the classroom. Analyzing the responses using descriptive statistics provided insights into their attitudes and beliefs about translanguaging, and how they perceive the usefulness of employing both Thai and English in the classroom.

With regards to the students' overall perception of their translinguaging practice, most of them (over 84%) agreed that translinguaging (in this case, using Thai and English in the classroom) fosters, rather than hinders their language and content learning since it allows them to process thoughts in their L1 before producing them in the target language. Meanwhile, some of the students, although observed to be deploying available linguistic resources in the classroom when interacting with peers, still maintained that translinguaging was detrimental to their English language learning; however helpful in their content learning (see Figure 1).

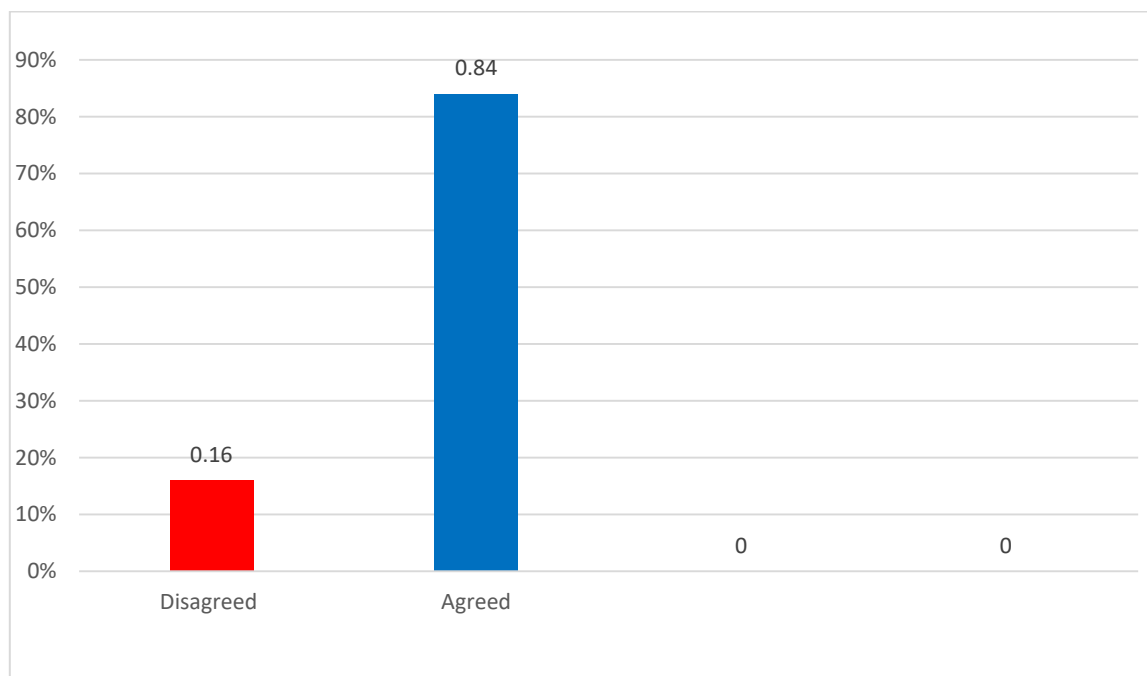


Figure 1. Students' Classroom Translanguaging Perception

The students' mixed views on classroom translanguaging from the questionnaire results are corroborated by the interview data as illustrated in Excerpts 1 and 2. These mixed views suggest that using both Thai and English in English classes can be an effective and inclusive teaching approach, but it is important to consider the specific context and needs of the learners.

Excerpt 1

Using both Thai and English in class can create a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment for students. This practice acknowledges and values learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and encourages them to bring their whole selves to the learning experience, in understanding the L2 and developing content and language knowledge (S-5).

Excerpt 2

I find using the translanguaging strategy in the classroom very useful when I have to discuss with my classmates on assigned tasks by the teacher. We normally use Thai to talk about the assigned contents because it feels comfortable and helps us to understand each other and the topics better. However, when it comes to improving my English language skills, I still feel like using my L1 to do so is detrimental (S-2).

Research has shown that using learners' native language (L1) can enhance their learning experience and aid in the acquisition of the target language (L2) (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Garcia & Seltzer, 2016). It can help learners understand the structure and grammar of the L2 more easily, and provide a better foundation for developing vocabulary and comprehension skills (see Excerpt 1). However, it is important to ensure that the use of L1 does not become a crutch or hinder the development of L2 skills (see Excerpt 2). Teachers should use a balanced approach and gradually reduce the amount of L1 used as learners become more proficient in the L2 (Ambele, 2022; Pastushenkov, 2021).

Globalization today has brought about linguistic diversity in ELT classrooms even in monolingual countries like Thailand. Thus, classroom language practices for learning and teaching have been altered to cater for such diversity (Tian & Zhang-Wu, 2022). Similar to Excerpt 1, Participants S-8 and S-10 observed that 'by allowing students to use their L1 alongside English, teachers can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves and engaging with the material'. S-8 echoed this view in Excerpt 3.

Excerpt 3

Translanguaging is very important in our classroom because it helps students who cannot speak English fluently to understand better. When they are allowed to use their L1, they feel more comfortable and can express themselves better. Therefore, incorporating translanguaging practices in the classroom can lead to more effective and equitable language teaching and learning, even in a monolingual county like Thailand (S-8).

The data highlight the students' positive view of translanguaging in the classroom to accommodate the linguistic diversity of students. The excerpts suggest that the students have a clear understanding of the linguistic diversity of today's Thai EFL classroom and the importance of adopting new methods to support their learning since translanguaging builds on students' prior knowledge and linguistic resources, which can enhance their overall language learning experience (Otheguy et al., 2019). They recognize that traditional monolingual teaching methods may not be effective in today's EFL classroom, which is characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity. By incorporating translanguaging practices and allowing students to use their entire linguistic repertoire in the classroom, most of the students in this study showed a willingness to adapt their learning methods to better suit their learning needs (Garcia & Seltzer, 2016; Poza, 2017). The students understand that their L1 can be a valuable resource for learning and can support their comprehension and engagement with the material (S-1, S-3 and S-9).

The result of the study, which showed that all participants used their L1 in the classroom, supports the idea that creating a translanguaging space can facilitate language learning (Li, 2018). From the observation, the students were permitted by their teachers to use both Thai and English in the classroom, which is a form of translanguaging that allows for the seamless integration of both languages. According to S-5, by creating a translanguaging space, "teachers can help students to utilize both their L1 and L2 resources to facilitate their learning, which can lead to faster and more effective language acquisition". The students' overall positive perception towards translanguaging is consistent with research that suggests that 'the use of both L1 and target language in the classroom can facilitate language learning' (Otheguy et al., 2019).

In another light, research has shown that a translanguaging approach can lead to improved academic outcomes and language proficiency, especially for students from linguistically diverse backgrounds (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Tian & Zhang-Wu, 2022). Translanguaging can be particularly important in monolingual contexts such as Thailand, where students may have limited exposure to English outside of the classroom (Pastushenkov, 2021). Using Thai to translate or clarify English terms or concepts can help students better understand the material and make connections between their L1 and L2. However, it is important to note that "the use of L1 should not replace or undermine the development of L2 skills. Instead, it should be used strategically and purposefully to support students' language learning and comprehension" (Ambele, 2022, p. 5).

B. Situational Contexts of Classroom Translanguaging Usage

As part of exploring the students' perceptions of their classroom translanguaging practice, their classroom situational contexts where they employed Thai in class were further investigated. In rating the frequency of the different situational contexts where the students used translanguaging in the classroom, the results showed that the students employed translanguaging (using their L1) to assist and facilitate their learning in many contextual situations, including responding to a teacher's question, allowing students with lower average competency to participate, clarifying non-content-related issues, requesting permission, discussing topics or activities in small groups, brainstorming during class activities, and assisting classmates during tasks (see Table 1).

According to Table 1, the majority of the participants (36.73%) revealed that they frequently use their L1 in small group discussions. According to the table the most striking finding from the data is that the students usually employed their L1 to assist their learning in varied situational contexts, such as, with weaker students so that they can participate in the class (44.9%), as well as to facilitate peers responses to questions (40.28%). Furthermore, the results showed that 37.5% of the students usually to their native language for explanations of contents-related problems. Moreover, 32.65% of them frequently deployed their L1 resources in requesting clarifications for unclear contents.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCY OF L1 USAGE IN CLASSROOM SITUATIONS

Classroom situations	Frequency of occurrence (%)				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Usually
Enable participation by lower proficiency students	0	2.04	20.41	32.65	44.9
Respond to teacher's question	0	10.2	26.53	22.45	40.82
Explain problems not related to content	0	8.33	27.08	27.08	37.5
Provide assistance to peers during activities	0	6.12	24.49	32.65	36.73
Discuss contents or activities in small groups	0	4.08	24.49	36.73	34.69
Brainstorm during class activities	0	6.12	30.61	34.69	34.69
Ask permission	14.29	14.29	14.29	32.65	32.65

From the interview and observation data, the students had varied but complementary reasons for employing the L1 (Thai) in the classroom for the different situational contexts in Table 1 (see Excerpts 4, 5 and 6). This suggests that they had a nuanced understanding of how and when to use the L1 in the class. Additionally, the fact about the students using the L1 in different ways indicates that they were responsive to the needs and abilities of their individual learning.

Excerpt 4

In our classes, this innovative translanguaging strategy is essential and highly productive. When teaching new

concepts, such as grammar, maintaining classroom discipline, and working with students who appear to be having trouble, our teacher makes use of our L1 in the classroom (S-1).

Excerpt 5

I purposefully use Thai with my peers during conversations to make my points understood quickly as well. For instance, during class debates, our teacher permitted us to speak Thai before presenting in English. Thai and English are used interchangeably in our classes in this way (S-3).

Excerpt 6

In order to understand the material and respond to questions in English, our teacher just permits us to utilize any resources from the languages we are familiar with. This actually helps us out in class because sometimes we explain to our classmates in Thai, then later to the teacher in English. According to my observations, this method works really well in our classes because this makes it easier for us to understand the material and pick up new vocabulary (S-10).

From Excerpts 4, 5 and 6, it is clear that the students saw value in incorporating their L1 in the classroom and were intentional about how they and their teachers did so. This highlights the importance of understanding students' and teachers' perceptions and practices regarding translanguaging, as it can have a significant impact on language learning outcomes for multilingual students (Ambele, 2022; Ambele & Watson Todd, 2021; Garc á, 2017; Li, 2018). Therefore, teachers need to provide flexible opportunities for students to use their L1 alongside English in the classroom, as this can help support their language learning and keep them motivated. This observation is supported by researchers (e.g. Garcia, 2017; Conteh, 2018; Kleyn & Garcia, 2019; Galante, 2020), who emphasize the benefits of translanguaging and using students' L1 in the classroom to support their language learning. In this light, Littlewood and Yu (2011) highlight the potential negative impact of completely depriving students of their L1 support in the classroom, particularly for those with limited proficiency in the target language as this can lead to feelings of disorientation and powerlessness, which can ultimately demotivate students from learning.

The observation that the students and teachers in this study were not complacent with strict adherence to only English in the classroom (see Excerpts 4, 5 and 6) is not surprising, given the challenges of teaching bi/multilingual learners. As S-2 opined, "there are no clear modalities on how to teach English in English-only classrooms in Thailand, which can make it difficult for teachers to effectively support their students". In order to address these challenges, it is important for teachers to be flexible and adaptable in their teaching approaches (see Excerpts 1 and 2). This means being able to adjust their teaching methods to meet the needs of the diverse learners in their classroom, which may involve incorporating students' L1 as needed or finding other ways to support their learning. Chukwuemeka and Ambele (2022) emphasize the importance of teaching 'flexibility' and 'adaptability' in the context of multilingual classrooms. This requires teachers to have a deep understanding of their students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and be able to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that meets their diverse needs (Pastushenkov, 2021; Tian & Zhang-Wu, 2022).

C. Students' Views on Implementing Translanguaging in Classroom

Here, the students reported an overwhelmingly positive perception of implementing translanguaging as a pedagogic strategy to assist Thai students in learning English language and contents better and faster (see Excerpt 7).

Excerpt 7

As Thai students, it is necessary for us to pass the admission exam in order to enroll in a university, yet, some of us still have very poor English skills and find it difficult to follow instructions given in solely English. Therefore, allowing students to use both their L1 and L2 should be promoted, if doing so would results in a successful outcome (S-4).

The students also held positive perceptions regarding the use of translanguaging within the university to promote bi/multilingualism for educational and social purposes (see Excerpt 8). This aligns with the growing recognition of the importance of multilingualism in a globalized world, and the potential benefits of being proficient in multiple languages for both academic and social purposes (Hojeij et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2021).

Excerpt 8

Unquestionably, the majority of Thai colleges are now multilingual environments where students use their L1 to further their academic and social objectives. Given that bilingualism and multilingualism are now the norm, a tertiary setting could benefit from a strategy called translanguaging to encourage both students and teachers to fully utilize their entire linguistic repertoire for a better environment for teaching, learning, and socializing (S-8).

The data describe the students' perception of translanguaging as an effective tool for social practice in in-and-out of classroom interactions. The students believe that using both the learners' L1 and L2 in the classroom "creates a safe atmosphere for students with low L2 proficiency" (S-6), "reduces anxiety with speaking L2 in an EFL context" (S-7), and "scaffolds new information" (S-5). From observation, the students' belief in the effectiveness of translanguaging may be attributed to their experiences with using this strategy with their peers and teachers in the classroom (see Excerpts 4, 5 and 6). These positive reactions from the students' interview data reflect the reality of bi/multilinguals and are in line with previous research (e.g. Adamson & Coulson, 2015; Carstens, 2016). For Adamson and Coulson (2015), the participants perceived translanguaging as a useful tool for classroom management and task clarification. Similarly,

in Carstens' (2016) study, the participants believed that implementing translanguaging by instructors would facilitate understanding of classroom teaching and learning. These studies highlight the cross-cultural relevance and potential of translanguaging as an effective pedagogical tool in diverse educational contexts. The positive perceptions of students and participants in these studies suggest that implementing translanguaging in language teaching and learning can create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for students of all language backgrounds.

From another perspective, the educational field in Thailand typically enacts strict language boundary policies, which heavily influence the beliefs of teachers and students towards new paradigms like translanguaging (Khonjan, 2021; Chukwuemeka, 2023). Despite this challenging context, the students in the current study held positive beliefs towards translanguaging and its potential benefits for language teaching and learning in EFL settings like Thailand (see Excerpt 9).

Excerpt 9

I would consider translanguaging at the tertiary level in Thailand to be credible, useful, and consistent with current trends in English education. Translanguaging has slowly acquired acceptance in higher education as a practical and competent technique deserving of implementation in ELT classes and in EFL contexts as well (S-9).

This result suggests that the positive impact of translanguaging in language education can transcend cultural and institutional barriers, and underscores the importance of continued research and advocacy for this pedagogical approach (Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Otheguy et al., 2015; Wei, 2011; Hojeij et al., 2019; Rahman et al., 2021). Moody et al. (2019) study corroborates the positive views on the implementation of classroom translanguaging in higher education, which suggests its potential as an effective pedagogical tool in the Thai context. Translanguaging scholars (Conteh, 2018; Galante, 2020; Maphalala & Mpofu, 2020; Almusharraf, 2021) emphasize the coexistence of languages and advocate for the use of learners' first languages in the classroom to support the learning of a target language and clarify meanings of words. For Otheguy et al. (2015), Pastushenkov (2021) and Ambele (2022), this approach can enhance learners' development and leverage their multilingual repertoires as a resource for learning.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study highlights the importance of investigating Thai students' perception of translanguaging pedagogy in tertiary education, given the paucity of research in this area. The study contributes to the existing literature by revealing the students' positive views on the use of learners' L1 in the classroom to support L2 development and content learning. The students acknowledged the difficulty of ignoring the use of L1 and L2 together in a Thai classroom context, where English is used as the medium of instruction. The findings of the study suggest that there is a need for a shift towards translanguaging in Thai tertiary education, which would allow learners to strategically deploy their L1 to achieve various teaching/learning tasks and outcomes (Flores & Garc ía, 2013; Otheguy et al., 2019). However, the results call for further research to be conducted with more Thai students across Thailand, including those who do not support translanguaging or are not observed to utilize their L1 in the classroom. This would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the perspectives and attitudes towards translanguaging in the Thai context and inform the development of effective pedagogical practices that leverage the multilingual repertoires of learners.

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Using a Technology-Enhanced Active Learning Classroom to Teach English: A Help or Hindrance?

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Abstract—Educators view active learning as a pedagogical enabler for preparing students for the demands of today's workplaces and equipping students with 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and teamwork. However, there seems to be a noticeable incongruity between the eagerness on the development of 21st century skills and the learning spaces where these skills are intended to be acquired. The significance of learning spaces and their potential for facilitating or impeding students' active engagement should not be overlooked. Considering the indispensability of technology in today's world, its integration becomes crucial not only in today's pedagogy and curriculum but also in the design of learning spaces. This study aims to investigate teachers' perspectives of teaching in a technology-enhanced active learning (TEAL) classroom by exploring their experiences of using the TEAL classrooms, the factors affecting their experiences, and how these factors shape teaching experiences from the viewpoint of teacher participants. This study adopts a mixed methods approach where quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis are incorporated to address the research questions. Findings of the study suggest that the majority of classroom users had a positive overall impression of the TEAL classrooms with some discussing the challenges they encountered. Analysis of the data shows both classroom-related and non-classroom related factors influencing teachers' teaching experiences. Classroom-related factors encompass aspects such as classroom layout and the technology embedded within the classroom environment. On the other hand, non-classroom related factors are classified into course-related, teacher-related, and student-related factors.

Index Terms—active learning, learning space, TEAL classroom, higher education, Oman

I. INTRODUCTION

Active learning is commonly defined as an instructional approach that engages students in the learning process (Prince, 2004). It is a dynamic approach where students take responsibility for their own learning and assume an active role during this process (Kane, 2004). Studies emphasise that students' active engagement significantly contributes to improved learning outcomes (Hake, 1998; Hung, 2014; Kusumoto, 2018). Educators have long attempted to incorporate active learning in higher education institutions (Meyers & Jones, 1993) as a pedagogical enabler for preparing students for the demands of today's workplaces (Carlos et al., 2023; Hernández-de-Menéndez et al., 2019; Hui et al., 2021; Nealy, 2005). The emphasis on the development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and teamwork in today's higher education is for this purpose. However, there seems to be a noticeable incongruity between the eagerness on the development of 21st century skills and the learning spaces where these skills are intended to be acquired (Welsch, 2007; as cited in Holec & Marynowski, 2020). Research findings indicate that the physical learning environment is instrumental in enhancing students' learning outcomes (Brooks, 2010; Oblinger, 2006). Thomas (2010) describes learning environments as integral to the learning process claiming that they are “capable of influencing students in powerful ways long after the physical learning space has been left behind” (p. 503). Thus, the significance of learning spaces and their potential for facilitating or impeding students' active engagement should not be overlooked.

Considering the indispensability of technology in today's world, its integration becomes crucial not only in today's pedagogy and curriculum but also in the design of learning spaces. A technology-enhanced active learning (TEAL) classroom is a learning space designed to foster engagement and collaboration (MIT iCampus, 2016; Poorvu Center for

Teaching and Learning, 2021). Use of technology as well as strategic furniture arrangement in a TEAL classroom environment aims to facilitate student engagement. Therefore, a TEAL classroom should be an ideal classroom setup to facilitate the incorporation of active learning and technology into education.

While the importance of learning spaces has started to gain momentum, there remains a dearth of research on the learning spaces, especially in higher education (Carlos et al., 2023; Vercellotti, 2018). The present study intends to contribute to this under-researched field by examining the impact of a TEAL classroom on the teaching experiences of teachers and the factors that support or prevent the effective use of the space.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There is no consensus on a definition for active learning spaces, and the variety of terms such as ‘Innovative Learning Environment’, ‘Active Learning Lab’, ‘Technology-Enhanced Learning Space’ and ‘Future Learning Space’ suggest a lack of consistent nomenclature in the literature. However, they all indicate a learning space enhanced with technology to support student learning through social interaction and collaboration (Carlos et al., 2023). Technology-enhanced active learning classrooms are designed to facilitate student engagement, collaborative active learning, and interaction between faculty and students within an environment enhanced with technology (Lee et al., 2014). One of the main objectives of a TEAL classroom is to foster active learning by enhancing interaction between instructors and students, as well as among students to encourage hands-on learning experiences (Lee et al., 2018).

A number of design features are commonly found in TEAL classrooms. Powers et al. (2022) describe a TEAL classroom as a learning space featuring flexible arrangements where tables are positioned in circles around a central place for the teacher to project content. Additionally, each student table is equipped with its own screen that can help facilitate content projection. Students can use the provided setup in their tables to use their own devices. They add that this arrangement ensures clear visibility for a large group, allowing everyone to actively participate and view the shared content in real-time. Lee et al. (2018) state that TEAL classrooms commonly feature flexible and mobile furniture, as well as adaptable writing surfaces to facilitate a dynamic learning environment. In the TEAL classroom, technology plays a prominent role, with students encouraged to collaborate in small groups using shared laptops, conduct data-based experiments, and engage with media-rich visuals and simulations as well as personal response systems that foster engagement between students and teachers (MIT iCampus, 2016).

In a study by Ge et al. (2015), it was revealed that both instructors and students acknowledged the benefits of an active learning classroom; however, the extent of technology integration depended on instructors' perceived purpose and significance, influenced by course content and context. Focusing on the effectiveness of an active learning space in the improvement of students' communication skills, Marchiori and McLean's (2022) study findings indicated that an active learning space had a significantly greater influence on group work, collaboration, and student-student interactions compared to the traditional fixed-row classroom. These findings highlight the significance of the physical learning space in nurturing students' communication and collaboration skills. Xu et al. (2019) carried out a study on the effects of technology-enhanced learning spaces on postgraduate students' learning. The findings indicated that student engagement can be facilitated by the three factors of academic motivation, extension of time and space, and externalisation and expression using multimedia elements. They concluded that both student characteristics and the employed pedagogical approaches had a significant influence on student engagement and the effectiveness of these spaces. In another study aimed to explore the effects of a TEAL classroom on students' engagement and their learning experiences, Lee et al. (2018) reported active participation, effective teaching, and technical skills as the benefits of the classroom. Gordy et al.'s (2018) study indicated that their active learning classroom enriched with technology positively impacted teaching and learning experiences of a group of teachers and their students by increasing enjoyment, enhancing engagement, promoting interaction, improving group activity efficiency, and fostering creativity. The outcomes of the study suggested that the synergy of these factors had a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Another similar study conducted by Avidov-Ungar et al. (2018) examined the factors that facilitate or impede teaching in an active learning classroom. The results of the study revealed that teachers' strong pedagogic knowledge was a contributing factor facilitating teaching in the active learning classroom, whereas teachers' limited technological knowledge was a barrier to effective teaching in the classroom.

The review of pertinent literature highlights a research gap regarding teachers' perspectives on the TEAL classroom, particularly when they experience both a traditional classroom and a TEAL classroom in the same semester. This emphasises the importance of the present study, which aims to investigate teachers' perspectives of teaching in both a TEAL classroom and a traditional classroom in one semester.

III. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study was conducted at the Centre for Preparatory Studies (CPS) at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), Oman, where English is taught as a foreign language. The CPS plays a crucial role in preparing students for university life by providing the Foundation Program (FP) courses. These are prerequisite courses in English language proficiency, mathematics, and information technology along with a study and life skills course. The CPS also offers credit courses in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in various fields of sciences and humanities to support students in their

undergraduate journey.

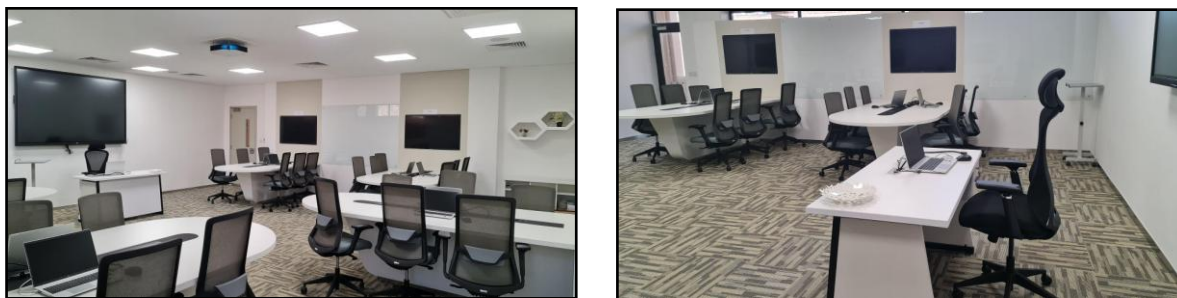


Figure 1. CPS TEAL Classroom

The present study uses two new TEAL classrooms at SQU with similar designs intended to facilitate active learning through their technological and design features. The TEAL classroom in the CPS (Figure 1) includes five D-shaped tables, accommodating six students each, with corresponding screens and glass boards for interactive learning; each table is equipped with two student laptops. The second TEAL classroom, located in a common teaching block, includes the same combination of student tables, screens and boards; however, the room is larger with seven tables and each student desk has only one laptop. Unlike some active learning spaces mentioned in the literature (e.g., Lee et al., 2018; Powers et al., 2022), the student desks are fixed. Both classrooms have a teacher's station consisting of a desk, a laptop and either an interactive screen in the CPS room, or a 3D projector in the common teaching block. The devices in both rooms are linked with *NetSupport School* software, a classroom management program which the teacher can control from their laptop. This software offers various functions such as screen sharing, monitoring and interactive tools, enhancing the integration of technology in teaching practices.

Training was provided for teachers who expressed interest in joining the study and teaching in the room. The training focused on familiarisation with the technological features of the room. Video-recorded training and a reference booklet were also provided to support teachers. Teachers were aware that the room had been designed for active learning; however, no methodology or classroom activities were imposed. Teachers were encouraged to make decisions autonomously regarding the most appropriate use of the rooms for their courses.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To explore teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the TEAL classrooms, the following research questions guided this study.

1. How do teacher participants describe their experiences of using the TEAL classrooms?
2. What factors affect experiences of teaching in the TEAL classrooms?
3. How do the identified factors affect these teaching experiences in the TEAL classrooms?

A. Research Design

This study adopts a mixed methods approach where quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis are incorporated to address the research questions. To obtain data for this study, surveys and interviews were conducted using a sequential method, beginning with the surveys and followed by interviews. A survey comprising structured and unstructured questions was developed for this study. The survey and research design underwent examination by the CPS Research Committee for ethical clearance and quality review, with their feedback incorporated to enhance the quality of the survey. Semi-structured focus-group interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data. The decision to conduct focus group interviews after the surveys was made to delve deeper into the survey responses and to allow teachers to provide new insights into their experiences. Each interview took one hour on average and was audio recorded.

B. Participants

(a). Survey Participants

Voluntary sampling was used for this study. An invitation email was sent to 211 teachers teaching in the CPS to teach in the new TEAL classroom and participate in the study. Out of the 211 teachers, 23 volunteered to teach in the new learning space. As shown in Table 1, 16 teachers completed the survey after teaching between two and six sessions in the TEAL classroom with a data collection window of two weeks. Among the respondents, 14 were English teachers, and 2 were from the Math and IT department.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS AND COURSES

Courses	No. of Teachers completing the survey
FP English	8
ESP of both Humanities and Sciences	6
FP Information Technology	1
FP Mathematics	1

The 16 teachers who completed the survey taught students of both genders, but according to the survey responses, their male students outnumbered the female students on average. Of the sixteen respondents, thirteen reported that they had no prior experience of teaching in a TEAL classroom. Three reported having teaching experiences in classrooms with smart boards and one teacher also mentioned having experience teaching in a classroom with island-style furniture arrangement. The majority of the survey respondents rated their technical skills as either good or excellent (Figure 2).

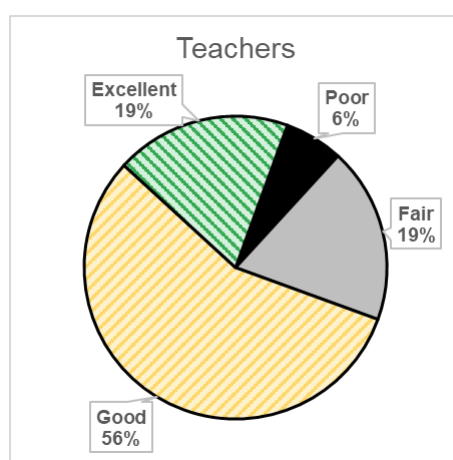


Figure 2. Level of Technical Skills Among Teachers

(b). Interview Participants

All survey respondents were invited to join interviews. The interview participants were exclusively English teachers. Two focus group interviews were conducted, and as Table 2 illustrates, the majority of interviewees were female. By the time of the interview, these teachers had completed up to ten teaching sessions in the new learning space.

TABLE 2
TEACHER INTERVIEWS

	Male Teachers	Female Teachers	Total Participants
Group Interview 1	1	1	2
Group Interview 2	-	5	5

V. FINDINGS

The findings of the study primarily represent the perspectives of English teachers on the TEAL classroom. However, it is noteworthy that the viewpoints of two participants from the Math and IT department have been incorporated in the analysis of the survey results. Any mention of their perspectives explicitly clarifies their identity as teachers from the Math and IT department.

A. Teacher's Descriptions of Teaching and Learning Experiences

(a). Quantitative Data

The data from the teacher survey (TS) suggested that the majority of classroom users had a positive overall impression of the TEAL classrooms. Of the sixteen respondents, thirteen indicated that they would like to have future lessons in the room, two were unsure and one indicated they would not. When asked whether they faced any major

challenges while using a TEAL classroom, a minority of five teachers indicated that they did, mentioning several issues related to layout and technology, with three specifying issues with the NetSupport software.

Two of the survey questions elicited opinions about the layout and technology in the classroom using a three-point scale (see Figure 3). For both questions, at least half of the respondents indicated that they were ‘completely satisfied’. Satisfaction was highest for layout with three quarters selecting the most positive option (completely satisfied). Seven teachers gave consistently positive responses for each of these questions, and one teacher selected consistently negative responses (not satisfied at all). The remaining eight gave a mix of positive and medial responses (somewhat satisfied) with one negative response. None of the teachers who reported experiencing major challenges in the room selected ‘completely satisfied’ for the technology question.

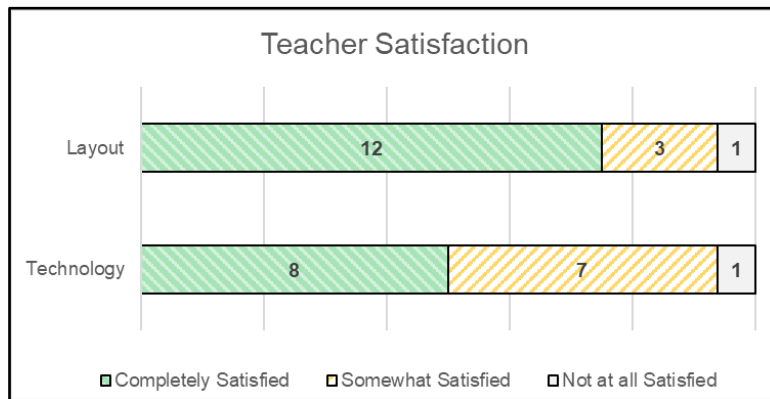


Figure 3. Levels of Teacher Satisfaction for Layout and Technology

One survey question explored perceptions of the effectiveness of the classrooms in enhancing the delivery of teaching content (see Figure 4). Responses tended to be split between medial (somewhat helpful) and positive responses (very helpful). However, there was a notable difference in the responses of the English teacher participants. Two-thirds of English credit-course teachers agreed that the classroom had a very helpful impact on the delivery of teaching content, while for the foundation teacher counterparts, only a quarter chose this positive response. English credit courses, which have higher proficiency students, are more content-based and include a problem-based learning (PBL) component; but the survey data alone is unable to indicate whether these factors influenced the teachers' responses. The two math and IT teachers were divided, with the former answering ‘very helpful’ and the latter selecting ‘somewhat helpful’.

Two other survey questions focused on the teachers’ perceptions of the effectiveness of the room in enhancing engagement and active participation (Figure 4). For each question, at least half of respondents selected the positive option (very effective) while the remainder selected somewhat effective. Teachers were most likely to agree that the room was effective in enhancing student engagement with ten respondents selecting the most positive response. There was a difference between the responses of English teachers compared to the math and IT teachers. The majority of English teachers selected ‘very effective’ for both the engagement and participation questions, while the two math and IT teachers both responded ‘somewhat effective’ to these questions.

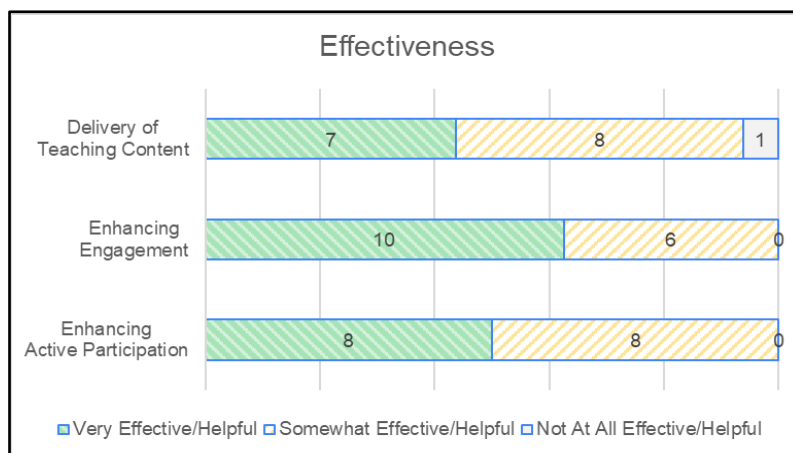


Figure 4. Teachers’ Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Classroom

(b). Qualitative Data

The general positive overall view of the classroom was reinforced by the teacher interview (TI) data. There was a combination of teachers who had an overall positive view of the room, those who liked particular features of the room, and one interviewee who was generally critical of the room. Interviewees consistently reported that their students had overall positive opinions of the rooms, with no participants stating otherwise; although one teacher suggested that students' positive opinions were merely due to the room being *'fancy'*. Thematic analysis of the coded data from the TS unstructured questions and the TI revealed a number of recurrent themes which linked classroom experiences to the TEAL classrooms' features of layout and technology.

1. Layout

Over two-thirds of the data extracts were coded as positive descriptions of classroom layout. Of these coded extracts, the most commonly co-occurring codes were collaboration, engagement and communication. The classroom layout was frequently referred to in descriptions of students engaged in collaborative group tasks including accounts of effective brainstorming, planning and editing. Teacher accounts often associated the seating arrangement, glass boards and student screens with an improved ability for students to see their groups' work clearly, which facilitated enhanced collaboration and engagement.

Some teachers believed that the classroom layout enhanced monitoring of, and interaction with, students. One teacher contrasted their monitoring of students in the TEAL classrooms with monitoring in standard classrooms, stating *"you can walk around easily, you can get behind students, you can get next to students, as opposed to in a classroom where often you are getting feedback from directly in front of them"* (TI1). In contrast, a few teachers described their monitoring being impeded by the seating arrangement as students often had their backs to the teacher or the smartboard.

2. Technological Features

Around two-thirds of the coded extracts were negative descriptions of the technological features in the classrooms. Negative accounts of technology were most commonly co-tagged as referring to barriers to teaching and learning (38%), and negative accounts of both planning (17%) and delivering teaching content (17%). The positive descriptions of classroom technology were also coded as discussing active learning strategies (13%), opportunities for teaching and learning (10%), descriptions of collaboration (5%) and monitoring students (5%). Several technological features of the TEAL classrooms were described as noticeably affecting the user's experiences of the TEAL classroom, while others were described as having a lesser impact.

Two English teachers described their students effectively collaborating and communicating while using the laptops with groups of students delegating roles effectively so that one member operated each laptop. Three others observed the students not operating the laptop as being left out of group work. Teachers gave mixed descriptions of their experiences with NetSupport. While some participants described using NetSupport as a tool for unobtrusively monitoring students or for enabling engaging activities, others described the software as either not user-friendly or not useful. Regarding the smartboard in the CPS TEAL classroom, teachers described sharing their screens, annotating documents and using the built-in timer; however, some teachers pointed out that the same can be achieved with a whiteboard, projector and pen. Teachers also reported a range of issues related to the smartboard including its position, the sound quality, and the impact of the university screensaver.

B. Factors Affecting Teaching and Learning Experiences

The analysis of the survey and interview data shows two overarching categories of factors affecting teaching and learning experiences: classroom-related factors and non-classroom related factors (Figure 5). Classroom-related factors encompass aspects such as classroom layout and the technology embedded within the classroom environment. On the other hand, non-classroom related factors can be classified into course-related, teacher-related, and student-related factors.

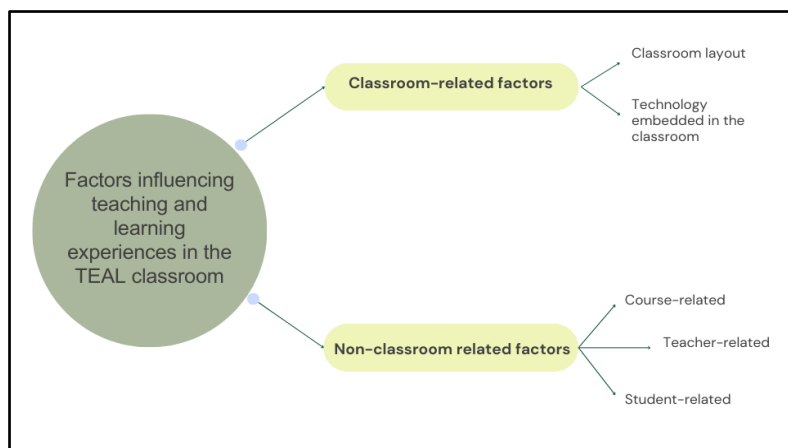


Figure 5. Factors Influencing Teaching and Learning Experiences in the TEAL Classroom

Participants extensively referred to the classroom layout in both the survey and the interviews. They highlighted the following feature of layout as affecting their experiences within the TEAL classroom: furniture arrangement, in particular, the seating arrangement, types of furniture, the immobility of desks, spaciousness, the position of the teacher's desk, as well as the presence of student glass boards. In addition to the features of layout, teachers linked their experiences to technological features of the room including student laptops, the individual screens allocated to each student table, the teacher's smart board, and the NetSupport software. The smartboard and NetSupport software were discussed in relation to their features and user-friendliness. The impacts of these features were mediated by the availability of similar tools on other platforms which were either more familiar or easier to use.

Teachers' experiences were not solely influenced by the features of the classroom, but also by the non-classroom related factors. The teachers' discussion in both interviews revealed that the courses being taught influenced their experiences; there were notable differences between teachers of lower- and higher-level English language courses. Additionally, the nature of the tasks and skills taught in the classroom had an impact on their overall teaching experience. Teachers highlighted the significance of course syllabi and the level of preparation undertaken, recognizing them as factors directly shaping their experiences. Teachers' feelings and assumptions about the classroom also seemed to play a significant role in shaping their experiences. Furthermore, the readiness of teachers to use and integrate the available technology in the TEAL classroom emerged as a critical factor for effectively utilising classroom resources. Another factor was related to students' technical skills, as well as their feelings of being in a new learning environment. Thus, the attitude of students in the class emerged as another factor.

C. Impact of the Identified Factors on Teaching and Learning Experiences

This section provides elaboration on the previously-identified factors and their impacts on shaping teaching and learning experiences.

(a). Classroom-Related Factors

1. Classroom Layout

The furniture in the room had both positive and negative impacts on the participants' teaching experiences. The large student desks were associated with greater comfort, and teachers noted that there was sufficient space for students' resources. The majority of teachers in the interviews and survey emphasised the significant impact of classroom seating arrangement on shaping teaching and learning experiences. Improved collaboration was frequently mentioned in relation to the seating arrangements. As one teacher reported: "*sitting in small groups makes every activity more centred and focussed. I could see how much more collaborative learners were when facing each other and in comfort*" (TS). Teachers also found that the arrangement was conducive to brainstorming and discussion tasks. Moreover, they reported that the seating arrangement facilitated peer feedback and communication. One interviewee suggested that the layout helped ensure that team members were included in the task, noting that "*shy and introverted students were given a safe space to be part of a team and work collaboratively with teammates*" (TS).

The furniture arrangement was also identified as a factor influencing engagement and teachers' ability to monitor and support students, with some adding that the classroom design improved their ability to identify the students who needed support or intervention. It was also noted that the furniture arrangement facilitated teachers' ability to provide quick assistance compared to standard classrooms. However, one teacher provided a contrasting account, suggesting that classroom management of her students was more challenging in the CPS TEAL classroom than in a standard computer lab in which students are seated in rows with individual computers. Interviewees also reported that the TEAL classroom's seating arrangement increased student engagement; however, one teacher stated that although the layout enables the teacher to move around easily and maintain students' engagement, students could become disengaged just as easily as in a standard classroom.

Teachers, however, highlighted the immobility of the furniture in the TEAL classroom. One teacher explained, "*It is great to have island tables around which learners can sit, but I would like to be able to rearrange these islands*" (TS). The teacher emphasised the need for a more modular table situation that can be configured to accommodate the specific needs of the student group. Several teacher participants drew attention to the position of the teacher's desk and questioned whether it was needed in a TEAL classroom. These teachers stated that the placement of the desk could draw both teacher and students back into more traditional, teacher-centred classroom roles. One issue specific to the Gulf-context of the study related to the need for male and female students to sit apart. One teacher described male and female students cramming onto a smaller number of desks to ensure that an empty desk separated them, and suggested that small, movable furniture that could be rearranged would help address this.

Most teachers praised the presence of student glass boards as a teaching and learning tool. The participants, including teachers who were most critical of the room, cited that the student glass boards encouraged collaboration and communication. Teachers described students using the boards for brainstorming, planning and note-taking, associating the boards with improved engagement and collaboration. Some teachers pointed to improvements in peer-support and peer-correction during group work; this was often in relation to the improved visibility offered by the glass boards, screens and seating arrangement. Interviewees also mentioned that students enjoyed working on the glass boards; one teacher even stated that his students had begun to use them autonomously during lessons stating: "*Just during an*

activity, they'd just get out a pen and be explaining something to the people on their desk" (T11). Two participants even suggested that the glass boards could be a relatively inexpensive way to enhance active learning in standard classrooms. The most critical comment regarding the boards was that students could become too active at times.

2. Technology Embedded in the Classroom

Several teachers found the smartboard to be unuseful, with a few teachers admitting to using the board solely as a projector. Teachers who had taught in the larger TEAL classroom, which has a whiteboard and projector instead of a smartboard, believed the whiteboard to be more useful than the smartboard. Another issue was the teacher's confidence in using the smart board in front of the students. They were concerned about making mistakes or appearing incompetent. It seems that understanding the functionalities of a smartboard requires time and training.

Many teachers identified the student screens as having a positive impact on learning with several praising them enthusiastically. In addition to the screens being used for group work and presentations, one teacher described how their class transformed into a walking gallery, with students naturally engaging with the work of other groups. The teacher explained, "without any prompting, but they would move around to see what other groups were doing" (TS). These teachers stated that the student screens greatly enhanced visibility, allowing for increased peer feedback and fostering collaboration among students. Students could get ideas from other groups by looking at the screens, which ultimately enhanced the quality of their own work. However, there were a few teachers who were unenthusiastic about the impact of the screens on teaching and learning. Some stated that they did not need them for the activities they had designed. Others felt technical issues with screen sharing affected group work and teacher monitoring.

Teacher participants expressed differing opinions about the classroom management software, NetSupport. Some found the software useful and believed that it offers a range of engaging activities; however, they emphasised the need for training to fully harness its potential. Teachers critical of the software highlighted the overlap between its features and those of the Google Workspace apps. Several teachers expressed a preference for sharing documents and monitoring student activities using Google Docs or Google Classroom.

(b). Non-Classroom Related Factors

1. Course-Related Factors

Participants in this study taught courses that varied according to subject, target skills and types of tasks, syllabus, and intended learning outcomes.

Teachers described conducting a variety of tasks in the TEAL classrooms, reporting that the TEAL classroom was better suited for some task types, including PBL or research-based projects. One teacher provided insight into the activities they had designed, stating, "they [students] do the research, I had them take notes on the glass boards and make an outline, and then I had them make slides and presentation, and I had them present it at the end for the whole class using the TV [student screens] for the slides" (T11). This teacher's account underscores how the classroom facilitated this project-based task. Similarly, another teacher explained the challenges faced when conducting research-based tasks in standard classrooms due to their seating arrangements and limited access to technology. Notably, a teacher of a PBL component highlighted that the TEAL classroom was an effective environment for applying research-based skills as students could immediately apply their knowledge using the available resources.

Some teachers perceived the course syllabus as a restricting factor dictating the work to be covered and thus preventing free experimentation. One teacher of an ESP course explained that they may have experimented more with the technological features of the classroom had they not been constrained by the content that they needed to cover. This issue could be exacerbated by technological glitches which slowed down the lesson, and could evoke feelings of anxiety in teachers leading them to resort to taking fewer risks. However, not everyone held the same belief. A teacher of a foundation English course had a different perception and used their participation in the study as an opportunity for experimentation with the features of the classroom by devising research-based activities that exploited the technology in the room. The classroom-related factors thus seem to have derived from an interplay between the nature of the course and teacher's personality and belief system.

2. Teacher-Related Factors

Participants in this study varied in technical ability, professional backgrounds and motivations for joining the study. The qualitative data provided some evidence that the unique personalities, beliefs and motivations of these teachers are likely to have contributed to differences in their classroom experiences.

Teachers' responses to the technology in the classroom varied. Teachers of varying levels of technical skills identified the need for ongoing professional development training; however, higher levels of technical skill did not necessarily lead to more positive attitudes to the classroom technology. One teacher stated "I didn't do much. It was the students...I watched the videos and I learned small things, but it didn't bother me that I didn't know much." The teacher identified the limits of their technical knowledge, but their account of teaching the PBL component of a credit course was very positive. In contrast, one of the most technically experienced teachers was most critical of some of the classroom's technological features and their impact on teaching and learning, most notably the smartboard. This demonstrates that the relationship between teachers and uptake of technology is not linear, and can be influenced by their personalities and motivations.

Similarly, teachers' individual motivations and personalities affected other aspects of their experiences in the classroom. The two participants in T11 described experiencing pressure to utilise the features of the TEAL classrooms, but with differing attitudes and actions. One teacher explained, "*whenever I wasn't using the technology there...[I] was always thinking am I wasting this opportunity? But I didn't want to...change my teaching style....*" (T11). This reflects the teacher's justification for joining the study, in which they mentioned the opportunities for collaboration presented by the classroom layout with no explicit reference to technology. The second teacher described a similar pressure stating "*at the beginning, yes, I had the pressure ...[of] what can I do to use the technology available for me to do this activity? How could I change each of those activities that I usually do?*" (T11). This teacher allowed the pressure to contribute to their teaching practice which included numerous tasks exploiting the technology of the classrooms.

Some teachers also mentioned that effective use of the TEAL classroom necessitated careful planning of specific activities, which some teachers found challenging. They explained that they had to plan tasks carefully ensuring that students had clear roles and responsibilities within their teams. Another teacher confirmed that teaching in the TEAL classroom was an additional workload and explained that to fully utilise different features of the TEAL classroom, they would have needed to invest a significant amount of time and effort in preparation. This teacher ultimately decided to adhere to their usual lesson plan in their subsequent lessons, regardless of the classroom environment. They explained that the TEAL classroom setting still produced more satisfactory results compared to the standard classroom setting, even when the lesson was not modified.

3. Student-Related Factors

Teachers explained their perceptions of teaching and learning in the TEAL classroom with reference to their students. A number of descriptions of students were relatively consistent across the teachers' accounts with some notable exceptions. This included students' excitement about the unique classroom which seemed to enhance their motivation and in turn their engagement. The behaviour of students was rarely cited as a problem; however, for one teacher it was a significant issue. The teacher described the students as a "low-level, low-maturity" group who had presented classroom management challenges throughout the semester. Indeed, they were the lowest level English group in the study. The class size was small, and the teacher described spreading the students out so only two were sitting at any table. This decision was made after the teacher had observed that students distracted one another when sitting in a group around a table. The students struggled to work together effectively, and the teacher described some students as browsing their phones while others worked on the laptops. The teacher expressed a preference for teaching these students in computer labs in which each student had their own computer and classroom management was easier. This shows how student-related factors can interact with features of layout with unexpected consequences.

Another factor influencing the effective use of the classroom was the students' level of technical skills. Some teachers noticed that students' proficiency in using technology affected the flow of their lessons. In classes where students had low technical skills, teachers described the experience as time-consuming, resulting in slow progress of the lessons.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the study suggest that the TEAL classroom environment had an overall positive impact on teachers' teaching experiences; however, the impact of the classroom appeared to be mediated by a number of factors related to the course, teacher and students. The significance of the learning space in enhancing teaching and learning experiences is an under-researched area. However, several studies have supported its impact and importance (e.g., Brooks, 2010; Byers et al., 2014; Granito & Santana, 2016; Mulcahy et al., 2015).

The findings of this study demonstrate that the TEAL classroom provides a range of opportunities from the perspectives of teachers, including enhanced engagement and active participation among students and the effective delivery of teaching content. These are in line with the findings of the study conducted by Lee et al. (2018) in which the student participants expressed higher levels of satisfaction regarding active participation and effective teaching in a TEAL classroom. Furthermore, the present study's findings on increased student engagement in the TEAL classroom environment are consistent with previous experimental research on student engagement in active learning classrooms, involving teachers or students of various age groups (Imms & Byers, 2016; Sawers et al., 2016; Xu et al., 2019). It is worth stating that numerous studies support the impact of increased engagement on the overall quality of learning (e.g., Bryson & Hand, 2007; Gonyea, 2006; Imms & Byers, 2016; Sawers et al., 2016). Thus, it can be inferred that a TEAL classroom environment has the potential to facilitate high quality learning experiences.

The TEAL classroom environment was also reported by teachers to encourage collaboration and communication and to enhance effective monitoring and peer feedback. This observation is congruent with the findings of Marchiori and McLean's (2022) study, which also highlighted the positive influence of the TEAL classroom in facilitating collaboration and student-student interaction. This finding also aligns with the underlying goal of a TEAL environment, which aims to promote learning through increased collaboration (Lee et al., 2018; Sawers et al., 2016). The participants in this study associated improved collaboration with the enhanced visibility provided by the classroom environment that helped ensure students' active participation in group work. This finding mirrors the findings of Powers et al. (2022) indicating that the improved visibility also seems to have led to easier and more effective monitoring.

The effectiveness of the TEAL classroom in the implementation of active learning strategies has been supported by a wide range of research studies (e.g., Marchiori & McLean, 2022; Sawers et al., 2016). Teachers in the present study also perceive the TEAL classroom design to be well-suited for a range of active learning strategies including project-based teaching and problem-based learning; and most described enhanced group interaction and collaboration among students. This mirrors the findings of Gordy et al. (2018) who identified improved group activity efficiency among students along with enhanced engagement and interaction. The majority of teachers observed improved group work among students, and reported their positive responses to the room, which is in line with Powers et al. (2022) who stated that TEAL classrooms are well-received by students, particularly for group collaboration and project-based learning.

Regarding teachers' behaviours in a TEAL classroom environment, Beery et al. (2013) demonstrated that teachers do not necessarily show a different teaching behaviour in this learning space. The present study substantiates this finding, as participants did not claim to increase the number of active learning strategies employed in their practices; however, their descriptions of classroom activities suggest that the TEAL classroom helped enhance the incorporation of active learning strategies that they already used. They described enhanced PBL and group activities in which there was increased student interaction and collaboration that drew upon the rooms' technological resources. This parallels the findings of Powers et al. (2022) which described a technology-enhanced active learning space as having a positive impact on the development of 21st century skills among students. These observations suggest that the TEAL classroom setup provides ample opportunities to cultivate skills which are essential for academic and professional success in the 21st century.

The findings of the present study indicate several key areas that pose potential difficulties for the successful use of the TEAL classroom. Technology has been described as a mediator in the learning process (Abraham, 2008; Bower, 2019; Kern, 2014); furthermore, according to Bligh and Crook (2017), technology-enabled learning spaces play a vital role in transforming learning. In the present study, teachers were provided with a number of technological features; however, various challenges emerged regarding the use of technological devices and software. The role of technology cannot be overlooked, given how strongly technology is prioritised in contemporary life and, subsequently, in higher education. One of the objectives of establishing the TEAL classroom was to integrate technology into teaching and learning to equip students with the skills required for modern workplaces. Similar to Ge et al. (2015) who reported that the extent of instructors' utilisation of technology varied, with some demonstrating minimal integration and others exploiting technology extensively, the teachers in the present study varied in the extent to which they incorporated technology into their lessons, and they had differing views regarding the integrating technological features into classroom practice.

As this study suggests, the choice not to use a technological feature could either be a judicious choice based on teachers' analysis of the learning situation, or a teacher's lack of confidence about the technology. Lee et al. (2018) argue for the importance of providing technological support and training to ensure the successful implementation of effective teaching in an active learning classroom. Avidov-Ungar et al. (2018) state that teachers' limited technological knowledge pose a barrier to effective teaching in the classroom. This highlights the need for structured and ongoing training on the use of devices and software as well as their pedagogical applications. Effective training will enable teachers to choose the technology best suited to support their teaching practices and facilitate student learning.

In addition to the challenges associated with technology, participants identified immobility of furniture as a barrier to collaboration in the TEAL classrooms. Moreover, the presence of the teacher desk within the TEAL classroom was reported as another challenge, as it hindered the intended objective for a student-centred classroom. This finding supports the growing trend in higher education to create active learning classrooms with adaptable layouts that encourage student engagement and collaboration, in contrast to the conventional fixed lecture-style setup (Kliever, 2022). However, the comments of teachers in this study regarding the sensibilities of students in the Arabian Gulf regarding gender and appropriate seating arrangements suggest that effective classroom layout can be culturally-specific. Future studies into learning spaces should explore such culturally-bound perceptions.

The collaborative and technological aspects of the TEAL classroom may necessitate thoughtful planning for lessons, which was difficult for some teachers. This is in alignment with Granito and Santa's (2016) finding that the learning space can influence the instructional approaches and teaching modalities that teachers employ. Powers et al. (2022) support this view stating that a non-traditional classroom layout may require teachers to adapt their lessons. It appears that considering learning space as an essential element of lesson planning is worthwhile.

Student-related factors can also be a barrier to collaboration in the TEAL classrooms. Xu et al. (2019) identified academic motivation as a key factor influencing the effective use of TEAL classrooms. Our data supports this view as a group with low academic motivation led to ineffective collaboration in group tasks and therefore reduced the effectiveness of the use of the TEAL classroom.

Overall, it seems that despite the opportunities that the TEAL classroom provides for effective collaboration, barriers can be imposed by the features and users of the classroom which should be accommodated in the design of the classroom and delivery of the lesson. Recognizing both the potential advantages and challenges presented by the new learning environment can enable educators to adopt a novel perspective on the learning space, perceiving it as an agent in the teaching and learning processes.

VII. LIMITATIONS

The limited number of teacher volunteers for the focus group interviews restricted the range of perspectives that this study could have captured. Furthermore, the small sample size of participants poses a challenge in generalising the findings of the study to a broader population.

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Students' Perceptions of Demotivating Factors in Learning English for Specific Purposes at a Military Medical University in Vietnam

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Abstract—English for specific purposes (ESP) is currently incorporated and categorized in Vietnamese tertiary curricula. This study was conducted at a military medical university in northern Vietnam. The aim of the study was to identify the factors that demotivate medical university students in the military environment from learning ESP. The demotivating factors were divided into four categories: (1) connected to teachers; (2) linked to students; (3) related to infrastructure; and (4) associated with university/faculty. In this study, data gathered from questionnaires issued to 454 third-year students and interviews with 40 students has been processed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. The results of the investigation demonstrate that demotivating variables are essentially unrelated to teachers. Actually, the factors that make the students demotivated to learn ESP are mainly associated with the university/faculty, the students themselves, and the infrastructure. Furthermore, the findings contribute to recommendations for how to enhance ESP learning for students both at the military medical university and other education institutions.

Index Terms—students' perceptions, demotivation, demotivating factors, English for specific purposes (ESP), military medical university

I. INTRODUCTION

In Vietnam as well as other countries, English for specific purposes (ESP) has become a rather popular subject in colleges and universities. Numerous fields, including science, technology, education, politics, economy, culture, medicine, etc., are related to this subject. People are learning ESP for their jobs and studies at an increasing rate. Having good ESP will make it easier to obtain materials from a variety of sources in specialized disciplines. ESP, which is a required subject at the university where the research project is carried out, presents several challenges for both teachers and students.

Student motivation is undoubtedly one of the most notable aspects that have a significant impact on language teaching and learning processes. Gardner (1985) defined motivation as the degree to which a person works to learn a language out of a desire to do so and the satisfaction that comes with it. Motivation, according to Asijavičiūtė and Ušinskienė (2014), makes learning achievements for ESP students more attainable and qualified. Human behavior may be attributed to motivation, which is why studies on second language acquisition in general and ESP motivation in particular emphasize the importance of analyzing the learner's desire to maintain their commitment to learning the target language. Distinctive writing norms and a limited vocabulary, which are referred to as demotivating factors in ESP language learning and teaching studies and are frequently disregarded in the study field, are only two examples of how the nature of ESP makes it difficult for people to become motivated to learn the language. Demotivation can be defined as essentially not having enough motivation to accomplish a particular task. According to Vaklifard et al. (2020), demotivation is a condition in which a lack of motivation is brought on by particular outside factors. Demotivating factors undermine students' desire to study and lead to their inability to succeed in ESP. Therefore, knowing what demotivates students in ESP teaching and learning helps teachers and students alike recognize the risks of low student motivation. The fact is that there are several factors that might demotivate students in ESP learning. These factors include those that are related to the students, teachers, infrastructure, and university/ faculty. It is likely that demotivation has a detrimental effect on students' ESP learning objectives. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021) contend that demotivation can adversely affect the attitudes and behaviors of learners, the achievement of ESP learning objectives, and the motivation of teachers. In other words, low achievement of desired learning objectives is the result of ESP

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teaching and learning in a demotivated environment.

Indeed, both teachers and students still have several unanswered questions about how to create a motivated English learning and teaching environment, particularly for university students who depend on English as a necessary instrument to advance their major knowledge. The majority of the students at the university where the study is conducted have been studying English since they were pupils at secondary or high schools, but this does not mean that they are motivated to learn ESP in particular or English in general. The study aims to improve the students' ESP. In order to obtain the aim, investigating the students' perceptions of demotivating factors in learning ESP is the objective of the study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *English for Specific Purposes*

ESP refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language in which the students' goal is to use English in a certain field. According to Robinson (1991), students typically learn English because they require it for academic or professional objectives rather than because they are interested in the language or English culture in general. Historically, the desire to communicate across languages in fields like technology and business has been a major driving force for the teaching of ESP. For the time being, this has spread to more areas such as English for academic purposes (EAP), English for occupational purposes (EOP), English for vocational purposes (EVP), English for medical purposes (EMP), English for business purposes (EBP), English for legal purposes (ELP), and English for sociocultural purposes (ESCP) (Canarana et al., 2020).

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) defined ESP as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning. According to Starfield (2016), ESP is presumably understood as an approach to English language teaching (ELT) in which the goals of the learners are taken into consideration while making judgments about the contents and techniques. Therefore, it is not about teaching specific English dialects, nor is it about grammar and vocabulary specific to scientists. Rather, it is similar to other forms of ELT in which it focuses on the goals of language learners and the range of skills and knowledge necessary to achieve those goals. Lebedev and Tsybina (2018) hold the same belief as Starfield (2016) that ESP is a method of teaching languages.

Additionally, by defining the absolute and variable aspects of ESP, Didenko and Filatova (2017) look at the definition of the phenomenon. Four absolute features and two variable traits are distinguished in their definition. English language teaching, in particular, makes up ESP. It is (1) tailored to the learner's specific needs; (2) content-related, meaning that its themes and topics are relevant to specific fields, professions, and activities; (3) focused on the language appropriate to those activities in terms of syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, and analysis of this discourse; and (4) distinct from general English. ESP might be, but it's not always: (1) limited in the linguistic skills that must be acquired; and (2) not taught in accordance with any predetermined methodology. According to Flowerdew (2012), ESP can therefore be summed up as the use of a specific English variety in a specific setting to meet the unique needs of the learners. In other words, the design of any course within the framework of ESP depends heavily on requirements analysis and curriculum.

B. *Demotivation in Learning*

According to Cambridge Dictionary (2023), the verb "demotivate" means "to make someone less enthusiastic about a job." It indicates that someone is not motivated to finish a task or is trying to accomplish it as quickly as possible. The reason for this is that, when engaging in that activity, they are only thinking about a few worthwhile or relevant ideas. Deci and Ryan (1985) defined "demotivation" as a deficiency in motivation resulting from an individual's feelings of helplessness and inadequacy when faced with an activity. Vallerand (1997) identified four factors that contribute to demotivation in learners: (1) Learners feel unworthy and incapable of completing a special task; (2) Learners believe that learning strategies are ineffective; (3) Learners conclude that the amount of effort and energy required, or the desired outcome, is excessive; (4) Learners begin to feel that their attempts are not meeting the requirements of the special task to be completed.

Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021) underscore that "demotivation concerns specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action" (p. 143). Consequently, the opposite of motivation, which is negative, might be demotivation. Moreover, an individual who has lost interest for whatever reason is a demotivated learner. There are several demotivating factors that can lead to a lack of interest. Dry materials or a teacher who lacks control over the class might demotivate students. Still, not every researcher accepts this definition. Mauludin (2021) contends that Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021) restrict the initial definition of demotivation to solely external influences. She also notes that demotivating variables in the ESP learning process are actually considered to be self-defeating and negative attitudes. Then, she recommends that the definition of demotivation (2021) by Dörnyei and Ushioda be expanded to include internal and external factors that lower motivation during the ESP teaching and learning process. Demotivation can come from a variety of sources, including textbooks, teachers and their approaches, students themselves, and physical learning environments.

C. *Demotivating Factors in Learning*

As ESP teachers must acquire topic expertise, they are actually frequently under pressure to teach. Even if teachers of English and specialist teachers have collaborated, there are occasionally still a lot of barriers to effectively communicating instructional information to students. Since teachers of English do not have extensive training in these particular majors, many of them are likely insecure and inactive when delivering specialized subjects to students. The same factors that make people less motivated to work and study also make them less motivated to learn. While it was once common practice to support unmotivated students, there are circumstances in which this no longer holds true. When someone is distracted or has another option, their motivation may be reduced. For instance, a student may opt to play video games at home rather than attend class. Demotivation, then, is the process of decreasing or weakening a learner's interest and motivation, and it encompasses both external and internal variables.

According to Harmer (2010), the following four factors might have a detrimental effect on students' motivation: physical conditions, teaching methods, the teacher, and success. Here's how they can be explained:

(1) *Physical conditions* refer to the spaces used for holding classes. Generally speaking, there is no issue with cleanliness standards; however, classrooms with internet-connected information technology equipment are more attractive and inspire students more;

(2) *Teaching methods*, or the ways in which students are instructed, have an impact on motivation as well. If students get disinterested in the techniques their teacher is teaching them, they are prone to losing motivation. Additionally, according to Harmer (2010), if a student loses faith in the teaching methods, the same outcome will occur;

(3) *The teacher*, the most influential factor in both motivation and demotivation, can have a significant impact on demotivating students. Therefore, a teacher should be aware of the following factors that encourage intrinsic motivation in students: setting a good example for the students through behavior; fostering a calm and pleasant environment in the classroom; properly presenting the assignments; building rapport with the students; personalizing the learning process; boosting students' linguistic self-confidence; making language classes engaging; encouraging autonomy; raising students' goal-orientation; acquainting students with the culture of the target language;

(4) *Success* is defined as the right amount of difficulty that the teacher has chosen. Students may become demotivated to learn if assignments and activities are either easy or too demanding.

Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) list a number of factors that demotivate learners from learning English in general and ESP in particular. Both internal and external factors may contribute to a learner's loss of interest in or enjoyment of learning. The demotivating factors investigated in this study primarily come from the students, the teachers, the infrastructure, and the university/faculty (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009).

D. Previous Research

Khasawneh (2023) looked into what influences Jordanian students learning English as a second language to get better at speaking the language. The results of his study showed that the students' errors and the teaching methods had a moderate effect on the students' ability to speak English. Ahmadi and Bajelani (2012), in their scheme, postulated that the teaching-learning environment and the course design would influence the study outcomes. This scheme outlines the human, intellectual, and material components of the teaching-learning environment. Scholars and practitioners in the field of higher education examine and discuss these components in an effort to determine how they affect study quality and suggest strategies to enhance it. The most important factors determining the study results and, ultimately, the study quality are the human aspect and the examination of the attitudes and learning motivation of the students. In 2017, Didenko and Filatova conducted a study on how teachers might alter a positive learning environment into one that is demotivating. The results showed that the nature of class activities, the teacher's mood, the personal connection between the teacher and the pupils, and the disparities in teaching styles all functioned as demotivating influences in the educational setting.

In Kikuchi's (2009) research project, it was discovered that there were five main demotivating factors that frequently occurred in university English courses. The factors that were identified were the teaching style, the application of the grammar translation method, university entrance exams, the focus on memorizing, and the course texts and resources used in English classrooms. Another research project by Soulimane (2015) identified two main causes for people's disinterest in studying ESP. Learners perceive comprehension of the English language as the first barrier. Many students find it challenging to write and communicate in English due to their lack of fluency in the language. Students' inadequate language skills, particularly in grammar and vocabulary, are the second factor contributing to demotivation. Students who perform poorly in English are less motivated to learn.

Several research studies have been conducted in Vietnam to determine the reasons for students' lack of desire to learn English. Hang (2010) examined the demotivation of tenth graders in English-speaking classes at a high school located in Hai Duong province. This study identified five factors that lead to demotivation when learning English: firstly, the quality of the teachers and their methods of instruction (poor pronunciation and intonation, ambiguous instructions, negative behaviors); secondly, the facilities and learning environment (distracting classmates, too many activities, outdated technology); thirdly, the evaluation of the students' speaking abilities; fourthly, self-assurance; and finally, a lack of intrinsic motivation (little interest or effort). Huyen (2012) conducted another research project at a college in Hai Duong province. The study set out to identify the reasons behind the first-year non-English major students' lack of willingness to acquire English-speaking skills. Five variables that demotivate learners were identified in this study: (1) a lack of intrinsic motivation; (2) a lack of self-confidence; (3) the learning environment; (4) the competency, actions, and

teaching techniques of teachers; and (5) the textbook and speaking time. Tin and Loan (2011) carried out an investigation into the factors influencing the learning attitudes of students at a university in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. The findings of the study show that teachers and their methods of teaching have the greatest beneficial influence on students' attitudes toward learning. In 2023, Giang, Tuan, and Minh published a paper detailing how students at a Vietnamese higher education institution became disinterested in learning ESP through a research project. Based on the results of student survey questionnaires, the article reveals that students are highly motivated to learn ESP for their future careers. However, they express disappointment regarding factors related to teachers, infrastructure, and university/faculty. Furthermore, the conclusions drawn from semi-structured interviews with teachers and students also state that the expectations they had for ESP language instruction and learning were not met.

It is evident that a large number of studies have been conducted to examine the factors that demotivate Vietnamese English language learners. Most of the survey respondents are college and high school students. Nevertheless, the students' demotivation to learn English, especially ESP, at military medical universities in Vietnam is still a research gap.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Setting*

The study was carried out at a military medical university where there is an eight-semester curriculum for English as a foreign language, with thirty sessions in each semester. For general English (GE) classes in semesters one through six, the course books are *Life* (levels A1–A2) and *Bridge to IELTS* (bands 3.5–4.5). GE assists in giving the students a foundational understanding of English. At this point, the teachers concentrate on helping the students improve their four foundational language skills in order to set them up for success in the next two semesters when they study ESP. *Career Paths Medical* is the textbook used for the ESP course. In order for the students to be able to use English for their studies and future jobs, the goal of teaching ESP is to provide them with the ability to read books and resources relevant to their major, medical work.

Nine of the fourteen teachers of English at this military medical university are qualified to teach ESP. They have all been teaching English for more than four years. Before taking jobs at the university, the majority of them had no experience with ESP and only had experience with GE. They have no training in ESP teaching. They must learn on their own and from other professors in order to teach ESP. Being a military university, it is subject to harsher rules regarding teaching methods and student management than other universities. Actually, the lesson plan is created roughly half a year ahead of time, and before teaching, teachers are required to do two practice sessions. Because of this, it will be challenging to quickly apply fresh ideas to enhance ESP teaching during class time.

Moreover, a class comprises 40 to 50 students. In addition to the teacher, each class has an officer whose job is to oversee the quantity, punctuality, and disposition of students in the lecture hall. A military doctor is trained to have a good professional understanding of medicine as well as strong leadership skills. In the mornings, students work as professionals in hospitals or study on their own. Students attend class with their teachers in the afternoons for their lessons. In addition to their studies, students are required to complete all soldier duties, including physical training, teamwork, night patrols, watching movies, reading newspapers, getting involved in political activities, etc. Students must follow the timetables that the unit establishes for eating, sleeping, resting, studying, and independent study. They are also prohibited from using mobile phones or other contemporary electronic devices that have internet connections. Specifically, it is forbidden for students or teachers to contact foreigners without permission at any time or for any purpose. Their ability to learn could suffer as a result.

The university has projectors and computers in every classroom. The classrooms that teach foreign languages, in particular, are equipped with air conditioning. None of the computers in the teachers' offices or in the classrooms have access to the internet.

B. *Participants*

To accomplish the aim of the research, 454 students majoring in medicine from 12 classes who had finished the university's ESP courses were selected to take part in the study. There are 434 male students (95.59%) among the third-year participants, who range in age from 21 to 23. These students are not on the same level of English proficiency.

For the purpose of conducting surveys and interviews, a random research time slot was chosen one day per week (excluding Saturday and Sunday). Meeting the selection criteria and being present for data collection are prerequisites for the students that were interviewed. For whatever reason, the researchers did not administer a follow-up survey to students who were absent.

C. *Data Collection Instruments*

Questionnaires and interviews served as the primary tools of data collection for the research.

(a). *Questionnaires*

Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) claim that there are both internal and external factors that contribute to demotivation during the learning process. Sakai and Kikuchi's (2009) theoretical framework and the actual circumstances at the university served as the foundation for the 34 questions that comprised the questionnaire employed in this study.

In addition to inquiries concerning personal details like gender, birth year, place of residence, and level of English proficiency, the questionnaire also asks about the reasons for the students' lack of interest in learning ESP. Five levels comprise the questions: strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The format of the questionnaire was as follows:

- (1) Personal information: 4 questions;
- (2) Demotivating factors related to students: 9 questions;
- (3) Demotivating factors related to teachers: 8 questions;
- (4) Demotivating factors related to infrastructure: 5 questions;
- (5) Demotivating factors related to university/faculty: 8 questions.

(b). *Interviews*

A combination of randomized (qualitative) in-depth interviews with 40 students was carried out in addition to the quantitative survey instrument to help elucidate the factors influencing the students' ESP learning at the university.

D. *Research Procedure*

It was deliberate in choosing the research sample since the intended participants in this study were third-year students who had finished the university's ESP program. The non-probability sampling (convenience sample) of all third-year students was actively used for the qualitative survey. Nonetheless, 40 out of 454 students were selected at random to participate in in-depth interviews. A list of the 454 students who participated in the quantitative survey was created. Every student was assigned a unique ID, which helped identify them throughout the entire research project. The research procedure consists of the following two steps:

Step 1: 454 students received survey questionnaires, and they were told to complete them by providing the requested information and answers. For roughly fifteen minutes, the participants received instructions on how to complete the surveys and were led through each step of the survey. The question would be read aloud to the students along with concise explanations of the possible answers if it were not clear.

Step 2: A random selection of 40 out of 454 students was made to perform in-depth interviews. To elucidate the variables contributing to students' demotivation in learning ESP, the interview questions were constructed in a semi-structured manner. Every interview was recorded.

Quantitative data was brought into Excel. The opinions of the students were totaled, converted to percentages, and displayed as tables. By playing the recording, qualitative data were verified. Following that, a descriptive and interpretive analysis was used to combine the data. In summary, in order to reach conclusions, the data were displayed, assessed, and interpreted.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Results and Analyses From Questionnaires*

Ellis (1994) asserted that a learner's desire for language acquisition influences their level of language proficiency, which in turn determines whether their language growth is successful or unsuccessful. As learning English, especially ESP, is a complex process, there are actually a lot of variables that might influence the process of language acquisition and development. Only the most prevalent demotivating factors for learning ESP were examined in this study.

(a). *Demotivating Factors Related to Students*

Encouraging students to articulate the reasons behind their lack of motivation to study ESP is crucial. The results of their interests are displayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DEMOTIVATING FACTORS RELATED TO STUDENTS
(N: NUMBER OF STUDENTS)

Demotivating factors	Students' opinions									
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Normal		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
I find it too difficult to grasp ESP because of my poor general English.	17	3.73	23	5.07	135	29.74	255	56.17	24	5.29
I have a lot of difficulties remembering ESP words and how to pronounce them.	37	8.15	41	9.03	115	25.33	123	27.09	138	30.40
The meanings of ESP words are incomprehensible to me because they are not the same as those in Vietnamese.	20	4.41	120	26.43	154	33.93	88	19.37	72	15.86
My insufficient background knowledge of ESP themes makes studying ESP extremely difficult for me.	25	5.51	21	4.63	272	59.91	105	23.12	31	6.83
The different general English proficiency levels of the students in ESP classes detract from the competitive learning environment.	19	4.19	38	8.37	73	16.08	272	59.91	52	11.45
ESP is not to my taste.	99	21.81	162	35.68	125	27.35	52	11.45	16	3.53
I'm not in need of using ESP.	121	26.65	189	41.63	108	23.79	21	4.63	15	3.30
I don't have smartphones or PCs to learn ESP.	15	3.30	47	10.35	57	12.56	212	46.70	123	27.09
There's not enough time for me to study on my own.	16	3.52	78	17.18	116	25.55	178	39.21	66	14.54

Table 1 illustrates the factors causing the students' demotivation. It shows that 61.46% of the students agreed that they find it too difficult to grasp ESP because of their poor general English, and 57.49% have a lot of difficulties remembering ESP words and their pronunciations. 30.4% felt that the meanings of ESP words are incomprehensible to them since they are not the same as those in Vietnamese. Furthermore, 29.95% of respondents claimed that they find learning ESP to be very challenging due to a lack of prior understanding of ESP themes. The students agreed with the factor "The different general English proficiency levels of the students in ESP classes detract from the competitive learning environment," accounting for 71.36%. Due to entrance exams and meeting requirements for three disciplines in each block, all students at the university under investigation have the same level of education and general knowledge. Nonetheless, the bulk of university students did not take the entrance exams in English, which accounts for the disparity in their starting English proficiency. Since the students are learning in different levels of groups in the classroom, their acquisition of knowledge varies as well.

Table 1 also reveals that 14.98% of students dislike ESP. This indicates that 85.02% of the remaining students had favorable opinions about ESP. Despite the fact that the majority of students believed ESP to be challenging, they learned ESP because they loved it, not because it was a required subject. Furthermore, a lot of students understood the significance of the subject in light of the argument that "I'm not in need of using ESP." 68.28% of the students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. 73.79% of agreements can be attributed to the students' lack of access to PCs or smartphones for ESP instruction. This is due to the university's policy on the usage of information technology devices with internet connections. As a result, this might have played a role in the participants' belief that learning ESP was demotivating. Furthermore, according to 53.75% of the students, one contributing issue was not having enough time for self-study.

In short, as shown in Table 1, there are numerous student-related factors that influence their motivation to learn ESP. The lack of smartphones or PCs to learn ESP (73.79%) and the different general English proficiency levels of the students (71.36%) are the two most significant factors. However, there are three more variables that are equally important and have an impact on the students' learning ESP: "I find it too difficult to grasp ESP because of my poor general English" (61.46%); "I have a lot of difficulties remembering ESP words and how to pronounce them" (57.49%); and "There's not enough time for me to study on my own" (53.75%).

(b). Demotivating Factors Related to Teachers

There is a positive correlation between the quality of a teacher's educational actions and approaches and the knowledge that students acquire during teaching and learning. It is a known truth that teachers have a big impact on what their students learn. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate teacher-related factors in order to determine what demotivates students to study ESP.

TABLE 2
DEMOTIVATING FACTORS RELATED TO TEACHERS

Demotivating factors	Students' opinions									
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Normal		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Before and after classes, teachers do not give out ESP handouts.	101	22.25	218	48.01	114	25.11	21	4.63	0	0.00
Throughout the learning process, teachers do not interact with students using their pertinent ESP expertise.	130	28.63	205	45.15	93	20.48	26	5.72	0	0.00
Teachers don't correct students' errors or their homework.	70	15.42	239	52.65	128	28.19	17	3.74	0	0.00
In addition to ESP terminologies, teachers do not assist students in developing their four fundamental English language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. They merely attempt to adhere to the predetermined curricula.	126	27.75	194	42.73	99	21.81	35	7.71	0	0.00
In ESP classes, teachers fail to adapt their lessons to the current circumstances.	76	16.74	216	47.58	121	26.65	41	9.03	0	0.00
In ESP classrooms, teachers only care about the students who perform well; they are not interested in the others.	158	34.80	212	46.70	84	18.50	0	0.00	0	0.00
During the course of the learning process, teachers do not respond to every query from students.	139	30.62	218	48.02	70	15.42	27	5.94	0	0.00
Due to a lack of understanding regarding the analogous reference, teachers frequently fail to convey the complex ESP terms.	99	21.81	209	46.03	108	23.79	38	8.37	0	0.00

It can be seen from Table 2 that the majority of the students rated the factors affecting learning ESP from the teachers at disagreeing and normal levels. However, there are still some opinions that the teachers affect the students' ESP learning. Table 2 shows that some respondents felt unsatisfied with what the teachers had done in the classrooms. For example, they did not assist students in developing their four fundamental English language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading, at the same time as introducing ESP terminologies; they failed to adapt their lessons to the current circumstances; and they frequently failed to convey the complex ESP terms due to their lack of understanding regarding the analogous reference (7.71%, 9.03%, and 8.37%, respectively). Additionally, a small number of the students shared that the teachers influenced their learning ESP: "Before and after classes, teachers do not give out ESP handouts" (4.63%); "Throughout the learning process, teachers do not interact with students using their pertinent ESP expertise" (5.72%); "Teachers don't correct students' errors or their homework" (3.74%); and "During the course of the learning process, teachers do not respond to every query from students" (5.94%).

According to the findings from Table 2, over 90% of students believed that their teachers were not the primary source of their demotivation. It indicates that most students value their teachers' extensive subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical experience, and communication abilities, in addition to their accountability, diligence, and assistance.

(c). Demotivating Factors Related to Infrastructure

Everything that is utilized in schools to enhance the quality of teaching and learning is referred to as "infrastructure." Consequently, the factors related to the infrastructure also directly affect the quality of the students' ESP learning.

TABLE 3
DEMOTIVATING FACTORS RELATED TO INFRASTRUCTURE

Demotivating factors	Students' opinions									
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Normal		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Projectors or teaching aids for ESP do not meet students' expectations.	51	11.23	205	45.15	117	25.77	54	11.90	27	5.95
The ESP textbooks that are used in the course are not updated frequently.	3	0.66	38	8.37	91	20.04	207	45.60	115	25.33
There aren't enough ESP textbooks available for students to borrow from the library.	133	29.29	225	49.56	63	13.88	33	7.27	0	0.00
There aren't enough ESP reference books, such as ESP dictionaries, at the library.	86	18.94	106	23.35	119	26.21	129	28.42	14	3.08
Modern equipment with internet connections is not allowed to be used in classes.	0	0	0	0	35	7.71	139	30.62	280	61.67

As can be seen from Table 3, most of the students (92.29%) felt that their lack of motivation to learn ESP stemmed from their inability to use contemporary electronic devices with internet connections. As for ESP textbooks, a rather high proportion of the participants (70.93%) concurred that they were out of date. However, only 7.27% of the students believed that the library did not have enough ESP textbooks for them to borrow, and 31.50% considered the lack of

reference materials to be the factor making them demotivated. There are 81 students (17.85%) who thought projectors or teaching aids for ESP did not meet their expectations.

Table 3 gives a summary that two factors, out-of-date ESP textbooks and a lack of modern equipment with internet connections, caused the students' demotivation in learning ESP, which would lead to unexpected learning results.

(d). Demotivating Factors Related to University/Faculty

The university offers services to cater to the needs of students while studying there. The faculty is the unit that directly manages the teaching and learning activities.

TABLE 4
DEMOTIVATING FACTORS RELATED TO UNIVERSITY/FACULTY

Demotivating factors	Students' opinions									
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Normal		Agree		Strongly agree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
The university/faculty does not really show interest and invest properly in ESP teaching facilities.	12	2.64	51	11.23	36	7.93	89	19.61	266	58.59
The university/faculty has not scheduled ESP courses properly.	12	2.64	16	3.52	35	7.72	123	27.09	268	59.03
There are no talks or orientations on ESP learning methods offered by the university/faculty.	6	1.32	31	6.82	32	7.05	99	21.81	286	63.00
The university/faculty does not change/improve the ESP textbooks to suit reality.	61	13.44	15	3.30	81	17.84	150	33.04	147	32.38
There are no extracurricular ESP practice activities that the university/faculty has organized.	4	0.88	58	12.78	71	15.64	126	27.75	195	42.95
The university/faculty does not have any exchange programme with international universities or higher education institutions.	22	4.85	135	29.74	146	32.15	139	30.62	12	2.64
The university/faculty does not invite outside experts to teach ESP.	7	1.54	62	13.66	106	23.35	104	22.91	175	38.54
The university/faculty does not send ESP students to take part in an internship course at a working institution.	9	1.98	63	13.88	91	20.04	106	23.35	185	40.75

As shown in Table 4, several participants rated university/faculty-related factors affecting learning ESP at the agreeing and strongly agreeing levels. In particular, for the factor "The university/faculty has not scheduled ESP courses properly," the percentage of the students who agreed or strongly agreed accounts for a very large proportion (86.12%). As for the "There are no talks or orientations on ESP learning methods offered by the university/faculty" (84.81%) and "The university/faculty does not really show interest in and invest properly in ESP teaching facilities" (78.20%) factors, these are indeed major contributing factors to the thought that ESP is not important for the present time and future careers. Furthermore, 27.75% agreed and 42.95% strongly agreed that no extracurricular ESP practice activities caused their demotivation to learn ESP. In addition, 65.42% stated that the university/faculty does not change/improve the ESP textbooks to suit reality, and more than half of the students felt that it was necessary to invite outside experts to teach ESP (61.45%) and send ESP students to take part in an internship course at a working institution (64.10%). Accordingly, there are a lot of factors related to the university or faculty that make the students demotivated to learn ESP.

B. Results and Analyses From Interviews

The quantitative results showed that the factors that primarily affected the students' ESP learning motivation included those from the university/faculty (seven factors), the students (five factors), the infrastructure (two factors), and a little bit from the teachers. In addition to questionnaires, in-depth interviews were used as a tool to gather detailed information from the students; 40 students were randomly selected from the participants to be questioned in-depth about the variables that cause demotivation to learn ESP.

(a). Influence Degrees of Demotivating Factors

Interviews were used to determine the factors that demotivate the students the most and the least in order to draw more trustworthy conclusions regarding the factors influencing their ESP learning.

TABLE 5
INFLUENCE DEGREES OF DEMOTIVATING FACTORS

Students' answers	N	%
The most influence		
Modern equipment with internet connections is not allowed to be used in classes.	37	92.50
The university/faculty has not scheduled ESP courses properly.	32	65.00
Students' general English knowledge is not good.	22	55.00
The least influence		
Demotivating factors related to teachers	40	100.00

It is revealed in Table 5 that there are three factors that had the most influence on the students interviewed. In the first place, “Modern equipment with internet connections is not allowed to be used in classes” was agreed upon by 37 students, accounting for 92.50%. This finding is similar to the result obtained from the questionnaires. This is a military university where modern devices with internet connections are banned. 65.00% of the respondents agreed that the university/faculty had not scheduled ESP courses properly. In the present case, all the students' learning periods are held in the afternoons after working hard as practice doctors in hospitals in the mornings, which makes them feel tired. Furthermore, their self-study hours have to be in the lecture halls, and at the same time, the study activities are controlled during the self-study time. The factor affecting the students' motivation to learn ESP is also internal. It is the students' general English knowledge that is not good. 55.00% of the students agreed with this factor. Table 5 also shows that all 40 in-depth interviewees (100%) said that teacher-related factors had the least influence on their motivation to learn ESP. It means that the students' ESP learning is not negatively affected by the teachers. This result is not different from that of questionnaires.

(b). Other Demotivating Factors in Learning ESP

Table 6 presents the perspectives of the students on demotivating factors that were not included in the questionnaires.

TABLE 6
OTHER DEMOTIVATING FACTORS IN LEARNING ESP

Students' answers	N	%
Some students' capacity for learning is still restricted.	24	60.00
Students have not realized the importance of ESP in their major.	27	67.50
After finishing university, students do not use ESP.	34	85.00

Table 6 demonstrates that 60.00% of the students' enthusiasm to study ESP was lowered due to their restricted learning capacity. The other two aspects, "Students have not realized the importance of ESP in their major" and "Students do not use ESP after finishing university," are related to each other since students will become less interested in this subject if they do not use ESP much in their future employment. As a result, 67.50% of the students agreed that they had not realized the importance of ESP in their major, and 85.00% of the participants said that they would not use ESP after finishing university.

The interviews took place at a military medical university with its own curriculum, textbooks, and stringent policies for both teachers and students. Since the participants, who are between the ages of 21 and 23, are still relatively young, they lack substantial real-world work experience. Because of this, even in their native speech, they sometimes have trouble understanding ESP terminologies. Through the interviews, a factor that was entirely different from the ones that caused the students' demotivation in the questionnaire to emerge was discovered. 34 out of 40 students, accounting for 85.00%, shared that the purpose of learning ESP was to finish the course and graduate, not to use it for their future jobs. This significantly affected their desire to learn ESP.

C. Implications

The following are some implications based on the primary findings that could help reduce the variables that demotivate students from learning ESP:

First of all, students are prohibited from using any contemporary electronic devices—such as laptops, smartphones, or iPads—while they are in a military setting. For this reason, when teaching ESP, visual aids should be utilized. By this, we imply that in order to help students learn ESP more effectively, teachers should incorporate the use of extra materials like models and pictures in addition to teaching a significant volume of ESP terminologies.

Second, the university ought to provide schedules that are more appropriate and fit the learning environments of the students in terms of trivial timetables. In addition, the university ought to send ESP students to participate in an internship course at a running organization or invite outside specialists to teach ESP.

Third, the English output standards according to the training process should be investigated and put into practice due to the variations in the students' general English proficiency. It is also recommended that the institution schedule ESP classes based on the general English proficiency of the students.

Fourth, the majority of students who participated in the interviews stated that they would not employ ESP in the future. In order to link ESP to the needs of foreign language output standards that the students must learn, the regulations on foreign language output standards should be reviewed. Additionally, in order for the students to understand the value of ESP for their future careers, it is imperative that they receive effective vocational advice.

Next, as ESP is a challenging subject, educators should come up with creative teaching strategies, utilize ESP more frequently in the classroom, and set up scenarios that will enable students to learn ESP as effectively as possible. Students should have opportunities to practice ESP within the teaching and learning process, such as by participating in ESP clubs, translating official documents, assisting foreign medical professionals, etc. The university should oversee the editing of ESP textbooks to ensure that the material is connected to reality and broaden the scope of teaching ESP knowledge in accordance with the model to pique students' interest. This will help to ensure that ESP is taught and learned effectively. To create an adequate curriculum framework and knowledge volume, the experts or teachers who compile the textbooks and develop the curriculum framework must take into account the real factors.

Finally, there are students who are unable to move past the ESP teaching style. To help the students get past this obstacle, the university and the faculty should work together to hold at least one session per semester with the students. The university should create more hours for students to study independently in order to make up for the loss of time they spend on activities unrelated to their studies, including watching the news, reading newspapers, doing gardening, participating in so many political events, etc. Additionally, a more logical organization of the pupils' individual assignments is required.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study lead to the conclusion that 14 factors are to blame for the students' lack of motivation to learn ESP. These demotivating factors fall into three categories: two that are related to the infrastructure, five that are related to the cadets themselves, and seven that are tied to the university and faculty. Out of these 14 variables, the participants deemed the following three to be the most significant: the students' poor general English proficiency, the unreasonably strict schedules, and the ban on electronic devices with internet connections. It is clear from interviews that the outcomes of both qualitative and quantitative analysis are comparable. Nevertheless, a new factor that is entirely distinct from the initial ones that the researchers found was responsible for the students' loss of motivation to study in the questionnaire. The majority of interviewees agreed that studying ESP is not intended for their future employment but rather for course completion and graduation. This factor has a great impact on their motivation in the process of learning ESP. The present findings on students' demotivation and difficulties learning ESP differ slightly from those of other studies, but they could still be useful in improving and supplementing ESP curricula and textbooks at a specific institution, such as the military medical university. As a result, students will have simpler access to the knowledge that will be essential to their future careers.

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Buffering the Effects of Students' Perceived Task Difficulty on Cognitive Engagement in EFL Writing Classrooms: The Role of Foreign Language Enjoyment and Growth Mindset

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Abstract—Submitted Currently, research on second language acquisition (SLA) and psychology of language learning has conceived foreign language learning as a complex system of beliefs, thoughts, emotions, and actions that contribute immensely to shape students' learning experiences. The significance of such research lies in the fact that they provide a holistic perspective of FL learning by considering the multiple and interrelated interactions of beliefs, emotional and cognitive factors, rather than examining any single variable in isolation. Therefore, this study seeks to provide such insights by examining the interaction between perception of task difficulty and cognitive engagement in an EFL writing classroom, taking into consideration the possible effects of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) and mindset on such relationship. Data were collected from 218 Saudi undergraduate students using a questionnaire. Results revealed that: a) students' perception of task difficulty is linked to their cognitive engagement; b) FLE acts as a buffer against the negative effects of difficult EFL writing tasks on students' cognitive engagement; c) growth mindset has no moderating role in the relationship between perceived difficulty and cognitive engagement.

Index Terms—perceived task difficulty, cognitive engagement, foreign language enjoyment, mindset

I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, English writing proficiency is mandatory for the prospects and academic success of students (Sun et al., 2021; Al-Asmari, 2013) and for enhancing their career opportunities as well (Naghdi-pour, 2021; Khadawardi, 2022). Thus, improving English writing education, especially in countries where English is spoken as a foreign language has become invaluable important. English is a veritable tool for effective communication as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the country needs a higher degree of proficiency in writing skills to bring this into reality. It must be noted that today, English has occupied the status of a world language and hence, has no boundaries. This is why it must be domiciled more among Saudi learning environments through various levels of engagements. A sound and formidable structure of the language will ensure international acceptability, domestic efficacy and efficiency of use and of course effective classroom teaching and learning in Saudi. However, one of the challenges faced by FL writing instructors, researchers, as well as students is its perceived difficulty. For example, mastery of FL writing prerequisites acquiring new writing conventions, a decent level of linguistic knowledge, grammar and vocabulary and demands the use of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies that facilitate expressing ideas and expressions in the other language (Javadi-Safa, 2018; Khadawardi, 2022).

Perceived task difficulty refers to the degree to which a learner believes that a task represents a challenge that requires an extra amount of cognitive and/or physical efforts in order to produce a greater level of competence (Nawaz et al., 2020; Awwad, 2019). It is the subjective evaluation of task difficulty that is based on circumstanced judgments. Thus, while it is true that FL writing tasks come at varying levels of difficulty, perception of task difficulty is learner-dependent. Therefore, individual learners' appraisals of the difficulty of a certain task differ from one performer to another and they are usually related to variations in their language skills, ability and/or their affective domain (Robinson, 2011). Some triggers of high perceptions of task difficulty that are reported in the literature are lack of familiarity with task types, insufficient clarity of task purpose (Nunan & Keobke, 1995), unstructured tasks (Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005), greater cognitive levels, linguistic demands and the amount of information needed to complete a task (Tavakoli, 2009). Based on Bandura (1977), students' personal beliefs and perceptions are major determinants of their cognitive engagement as they particularly affect the amount of effort they put into and their sustainable performance.

Cognitive engagement is often described as the level of mental effort and involvement that a student invests in the learning process. It is characterized by active processing and making sense of new information, relating it to prior knowledge and integrating it into their existing schema. Recent research (e.g. Li et al., 2007; Nuutila et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021) suggests that an increase in levels of task difficulty perceived by students typically contributes to a decline

in their self-efficacy, expectancy of success, intrinsic motivation, and interest which in turn leads to an overall decrease in students' cognitive engagement and motivation. Fulmer and Frijters (2011) observed that students given an excessively challenging reading task are more likely to disengage and not persist when given the chance to stop reading. They perceive themselves as failing due to excessive anxiety and worry. Only high interest in the reading topics heightens their enjoyment and diminishes the negative effects of very challenging passages.

This is in line with the recent findings from positive psychology research that state that positive emotions such as Foreign Language Engagement (FLE) as well as positive beliefs such as a growth mindset can buffer the enduring effects of negative learning experiences. Particularly, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012), stressed that the influence of positive emotions such as enjoyment in FL classrooms goes beyond a mere internal feeling of happiness. Frequent positive emotions boost learners' ability to absorb FL input, strengthen their resilience through challenges and promote their engagement. Prior studies have indicated a lack of interest in EFL writing among Saudi undergraduate students, their high levels of writing apprehension along with a negative attitude and weaknesses in EFL writing (Alshammari, 2020; Al-Khairy, 2013; Almuhammad, 2016). Students' perceptions of EFL writing task difficulty could influence their cognitive engagement and the extent learners are willing and able to take on the learning task at hand. Therefore, this paper aims at investigating the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in FL writing context among Saudi EFL learners and the role FLE and growth mindset plays in such relationship. We suggest that highly perceived task difficulty can cause a decrease in students' cognitive engagement. However, higher levels of FLE and growth mindset can help undo the negative effects of perceived task difficulty and spur more proactive reactions to promote resilience and engagement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Perceived Difficulty and Cognitive Engagement*

Levels of perceived difficulty can be estimated in students by measuring the disparity between their ability and the perceived challenge of a given task which is usually driven from previous experiences and outcomes of performing various tasks at varying levels of difficulty (Scassera, 2008). Although a student's perception of task difficulty is crucial in manipulating their cognitive processes while engaging in writing EFL tasks, it has long been neglected by researchers in SLA by considering it a mere realization of self-efficacy rather than an independent motivational variable (Nuutila et al., 2021). Eklund (2011), differentiates between the two constructs in which self-efficacy basic premises are one's beliefs and personal feeling about their capabilities and chances of success or failure to achieve a given goal. Perceived difficulty, on the other hand, is based on knowledge and feelings in regard to the task itself. For example, beliefs about the difficulty levels of the task and the amount of effort needed. Excessive task difficulty may pose negative effects on the flow and effectiveness of learners' learning experiences through engagement (e.g. Li et al., 2007; Nuutila et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). In Zhang et al. (2021), for example, for very difficult EFL speaking tasks, learners report experiencing anxiety, significantly low confidence and interest to tackle the tasks given. They also show lower cognitive engagement and lack of efforts to implement cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies to engage in these speaking tasks.

Students' decisions to withdraw from challenging tasks are adaptation strategies to lessen their feeling of inferiority but will likely result in missing out on great opportunities for acquiring and developing knowledge and skills (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011). While it would be logically possible to believe that difficulty is a hindrance for learning, there is a general consensus among SLA scholars that a certain amount of difficulty is required to amplify students' motivation and engagement as well as their performance (e.g. Brunstein & Schmitt, 2010; Namaziandost et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017). They insist that increasing the level of challenge slightly beyond students' competence level could prevent boredom, as students need to exert mental efforts and sharpen their concentration, knowledge and skills to meet the challenge. Therefore, a moderate level of challenge is associated with deeper engagement as well as enjoyment of learning. It also boosts students' sense of efficacy, success and control of their own learning development (Shernoff et al., 2003). Sulis and Philp (2021), on the other hand, argued that only high challenging tasks simulate students' engagement, trigger and sustain their enjoyment. Students tend to exert more efforts and focus only when they believe the materials are intellectually very challenging.

Noticeably, engagement is one of the constructs that has been repeatedly reported in the literature as related to students' perceived difficulty. However, reviewing literature regarding students' engagement reveals variations in its definitions and scopes (Bond et al., 2020; Hiver et al., 2021). Skinner et al. (2009), for example, conceptualized engagement as energized, directed and sustained actions. These motivational actions are initiated, guided and endured by learners' emotions, beliefs and goals. Reeve (2012) pointed out that engagement implies students' intellectual involvement, attentiveness and physical participation in learning activities. Accordingly, engaged students are more likely to take an active role in their learning, exert more efforts, persist longer in the face of difficulties, direct their attention to the task at hand, adhere to features of the language, gather and exploit resources, and ultimately perform better than their less engaged counterparts. Recently, SLA researchers advocate the conceptualization of students' engagement as a multidimensional construct which consists of at least three dimensions: cognitive; behavioral, and emotional (Fredricks et al., 2004; Hiver et al., 2021; Hiver et al., 2020). Cognitive engagement refers to students' mental investment in learning and their deployment of cognitive and self-regulated strategies in order to comprehend

knowledge and accomplish tasks (Zhao & Li, 2021; Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2021). Behavioural engagement pertains to students adhering to norms (e.g. presence, attendance and participation) while emotional engagement can be shown in students' interest and positive affects towards learning activities (Wang & Ye, 2021; Zhao & Li, 2021). These different facets of engagement capture related but separately distinct dimensions of students' language learning experience (Wang & Eccles, 2012; Pietarinen et al., 2014).

Cognitive engagement, which is the scope of this research, is highly dependent on the particular characteristics and demands of the learning tasks and environment (Pietarinen et al., 2014). According to existing literature on cognitive engagement in relation to FL writing, cognitively engaged students are more likely to demonstrate better academic outcomes (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2021; Quinto et al., 2021). Particularly, it is associated with better essay writing in terms of grades, essay's accuracy and lexical complexity.

B. Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE)

The concept of foreign language enjoyment (FLE) has been introduced recently into SLA literature by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014), as a potential positive counterpart to the excessively investigated negative emotion of foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) (Li et al., 2021). In fact, researching enjoyment in FL is still in its infancy and researchers (e.g. Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018; Hosseini et al., 2022; Fathi & Mohammaddokht, 2021) have contributed significantly in defining it, stating its sources and impacts on a domain general study of FL learning. According to Broaden and Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001), FLE promotes broadening behaviours such as engagement and attentive awareness to learning, and builds language resources and resilience to cope with difficulties (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Moreover, in his Control-Value Theory, Pekrun (2006), presented FLE as a positive achievement emotion that has a positive influence on FL overall learning experiences through increasing motivation, engagement, as well as enhancing learners' achievement (Dewaele & Li, 2020; Li et al., 2021).

When students think an activity is beyond their language abilities, they show a low level of engagement, enjoyment and display low efforts to learn (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Patall et al., 2018). Tulis and Fulmer (2013) found out that students' rating of the perceived difficulty of Mathematics and reading tasks is associated with lower levels of enjoyment and higher levels of stress and boredom. This is indeed a basic challenge for most users of FL as a tool for writing and reasoning. However, it has been found that high on-task interest and self-efficacy may mitigate such negative effect by boosting learners' enjoyment and strengthening their persistence (Fulmer & Frijters, 2011; Malmberg et al., 2013). Students who display positive attitudes towards the FL, like their FL teachers and are advanced language learners are more likely to enjoy their FL learning (Dewaele et al., 2018). Nuutila et al. (2021), on the other hand, found no significant connection between students' perceived task difficulty and their on-task interest and enjoyment. Yet, lack of appropriate challenge is associated with boredom and disengagement in FL classrooms (Kruk et al., 2021; Pawlak et al., 2020; Nakamura et al., 2021). Students who display low amount of interest and joy are demotivated to engage in activities that are perceived as being easy-to-grasp (Zhou et al., 2019).

C. Mindset

Bandura (1997) argued that individuals with fixed mindsets, who believe ability is an innate talent, perceive performance results as signs of the levels of their inherent capability and intelligence. Therefore, they tend to avoid difficult tasks and seek easier ones to demonstrate their ability and conceal their weaknesses even at the expense of learning development. Although one can easily assume a relationship between students' mindset and their perception of task difficulty, such a connection has not been empirically tested in SLA domain. However, Dweck (2015) asserted that although complex demanding tasks are more likely to cause disengagement in classrooms, a proper level of challenge abets students in developing a growth mindset. As students struggle to overcome challenges; as they realize that challenges and setbacks are a natural part of the process of learning, the need to make conscious efforts with their mind becomes seamless.

Learners' beliefs about the malleability of their language ability and academic skills can determine the levels of engagement, experience in language classes as well as how much they persist in the face of challenge (Bandura, 1977). EFL students with a more of fixed mindset tend to be quiet and disengaged when the task becomes harder because mistakes and failure are a result of lack of ability (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2021). On the contrary, growth mindset learners, who believe that there is a chance to intellectually grow and learn, are more likely to feel confident when using the language and more likely to positively reappraise challenges as opportunities rather than threats (Lou et al., 2022). Teimouri et al. (2022), pointed out that gritty students who believe that they can become more successful through dedication and hard work are more likely to feel less anxious and enjoy their FL learning process. Khajavy et al. (2022) noted that FL learners with a growth FL reading mindset report higher levels of enjoyment in FL reading classes than their fixed FL reading mindset counterparts. Finally, Wang et al. (2021), confirmed a positive relationship between a growth language mindset and an experience of joy and feeling of pride among EFL students. Fixed language mindset, on the other hand, is linked to feeling bored in English classes.

III. THE PRESENT STUDY

Although perceived difficulty is a major contributor in determining students' engagement or withdrawal from the learning process, its interactions in relation to FL writing have received little attention in the field of SLA. Additionally, to the best of our knowledge such relationship has not been studied in the Saudi context. Moreover, while the personal affects and beliefs of students in learning in general and FL in particular are crucial predictors for their persistence and outcomes (e.g. Alrabai, 2022; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), researchers often focus on positive or negative emotions and beliefs as a desirable end result rather than addressing their role in shaping the learning process (Hiver, 2022). There is paucity of literature investigating how perceived difficulty could affect students' cognitive engagement, and the role FLE and growth mindset could play to broaden people's thinking and vision to help undo the enduring effects of negative emotional arousal. Therefore, the primary purpose of the current study was to investigate the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in FL writing among Saudi EFL learners. Specifically, we had four research questions:

Research Question 1

In general, how can you describe undergraduate Saudi EFL learners' levels of perceived difficulty, cognitive engagement, FLE and mindset in relation to FL writing?

Research Hypothesis 1

Saudi undergraduate students perceive L2 writing as significantly very difficult and beyond their ability and hence, tend to cognitively disengage from completing their tasks, experience lower levels of FLE and endorse a fixed mindset about their ability to develop their writing skills and outcomes.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between perception of task difficulty and cognitive engagement among undergraduate Saudi EFL learners in writing classes?

Research Hypothesis 2

There is a significantly negative correlation between students' perception of task difficulty and their cognitive engagement. We assume that high levels of perceived task difficulty are linked to lower cognitive engagement. Prior research (e.g. Jiang & Dewaele, 2019; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000; Li et al., 2007) have indicated that FL students experience high levels of anxiety and become overwhelmed and discouraged when they perform highly challenged tasks. Anxiety can consume a large amount of cognitive resources that would be available for language learning and processing. Therefore, we expect students to cognitively disengage from performing difficult writing tasks.

Research Question 3

Does FLE moderate the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in FL writing classes?

Research Hypothesis 3

Enjoyment is one of the most common and noticeable positive emotions that language learners experience in various contexts (Jiang & Dewaele, 2019). Alrabai (2022) summarizes the role of positive emotions, including FLE, in L2 learning as to "broaden people's thinking and vision, help undo the enduring effects of negative emotional arousal, and spurs productive reactions to stressful experiences to promote resilience, build personal and intellectual resources, and promote individual well-being" (p. 1). Therefore, we argued that FLE can act as a buffer mitigating the negative effects of task difficulty on EFL learners' cognitive engagement.

Research Question 4

Does students' growth mindset moderate the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in FL writing classes?

Research Hypothesis 4

Positive beliefs about learning ability, particularly growth mindset, are predictors of student's mental efforts and their persistence in face of difficulty (Al-Horrie & Hiver, 2021). Thus, we hypothesized that even when students perceived a task to be beyond their actual ability, they still can engage cognitively because they believe that their ability can improve through hard work and perseverance.

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

Participants were 218 first-year undergraduate students in a university in Saudi Arabia. Their age ranged from 19 to 22. They have been studying English for at least 7 years. The students took part in the study as part of their unit on essay writing but gave consent for their data also to be used for research purposes. Data were collected using a 36-item questionnaire. The scale consists of 1 item to measure perceived task difficulty (Révész et al., 2016), 8 items to measure cognitive engagement adopted from Hiver et al. (2020a), 9-item FLE scale (Botes et al., 2021) and 18-item Language Mindsets Inventory (LMI) (Lou & Noels, 2017).

Three English language teachers agreed to help in this study and asked their students to choose a person, a place or something and write an essay consisting of four paragraphs for such description. Students developed their essays through the same sequential tasks. Firstly, students were engaged in pre-writing activities, namely brainstorming and

outlining. Then, they wrote their first drafts, and were given two weeks to write, edit and finalize their essays before submitting the final versions. During this period, they were asked to comment on one another's writings, utilizing a feedback rubric that facilitated the process and helped them to generate formative and specific comments. Peer feedback allows students to be aware of their own writing competence and to notice the gap between their inter-language and the target language (Balachandran, 2018). It also creates an interactive environment that increases students' engagement in the class as well as their enjoyment (Alsehibany, 2021).

B. Measures

The data were gathered through administering perceived task difficulty scale (Révész et al., 2016), cognitive engagement scale adopted from (Hiver et al., 2020a), short version of FLE scale (Botes et al., 2021) and Language Mindsets Inventory (LMI) (Lou & Noels, 2017).

(a). Perceived Task Difficulty Scale

The widely employed Révész et al. (2016) perceived task difficulty self-rating survey was used in this study. It includes a statement that participants need to judge on a 9-point Likert scale after completing a task. It measures their perception of task difficulty with 1 implying that the task is not difficult while 9 suggesting that the task is extremely difficult. Révész et al. (2016) stressed that self-rating surveys can yield valid and reliable outcomes, particularly when assessing an individual's perception.

not difficult at all	extremely difficult
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	

(b). Cognitive Engagement Scale

The scale consists of 8 items that is developed to assess learners' cognitive engagement in the language classroom. More recently, this questionnaire has been used in a sequence of studies and has proven its validity and reliability (e.g. Hiver et al., 2020b; Al-Horrie & Hiver, 2021). It includes items such as "I tried to understand my mistakes when I got something wrong", "I thought about different ways to solve problems in my work" and "I only studied the easy parts because the class was hard". Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The Cronbach's α for this scale was .91.

(c). Short Version of FLE Scale (S-FLES)

The scale introduced by Botes et al. (2021) is aimed at measuring positive emotions in language learning, with items such as 'I enjoy my class' and 'In class, I feel proud of my accomplishments'. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The scale has been used in several studies of FL learning and development in different contexts and provided valid and reliable results. Additionally, it can be easily integrated in any survey to assess students' differences in language learning (Botes et al., 2021; Dewaele & Proietti Ergün, 2020; Dewaele et al., 2022; Botes et al., 2023). The Cronbach's α for this scale was .81.

(d). Language Mindsets Inventory (LMI)

The scale introduced by Lou and Noels (2017), is aimed at measuring students' beliefs about the malleability of their language ability, with 18 items that measure FL aptitude beliefs, age sensitivity beliefs about language learning and general language intelligence beliefs such as 'It is difficult to change how good you are at foreign languages' and 'To be honest, you can't really change your language intelligence'. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The Cronbach's α for this scale was .91.

V. RESULTS

Data collected from 218 Saudi EFL learners were entered into SPSS for analysis. General descriptive tests, such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation, were run to explore the general characteristics of the research participants in regard to the investigated variables. Then, Pearson Correlation Test was used to test the relation between the studied variables along with Pearson's Chi-squared test (χ^2). Finally, to examine the direct and moderating effect among the researched variables, a simple and multiple regression analyses were implemented following a three-step approach outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986).

A. Statistical Result

Among the 218 participants in this study, results showed that the highest percent of Saudi EFL learners, around 88%, perceive EFL writing tasks to be of easy or moderate difficulty, while only 12% find them to be difficult or extremely difficult. The mean score was 4.16 with a standard deviation of 1.93. Additionally, the majority of Saudi EFL learners (76%) enjoy their English writing classes and engage cognitively in completing their tasks (77%). Around half of these Saudi students endorse a fixed mindset about their English writing abilities while the other half are growth mindsets. The mean score was 3.70 with a standard deviation of .454. Table 1 summarizes the mean and standard deviation for all the researched variables.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE STUDIED VARIABLES

	Mean	Standard deviation
Perceived task difficulty	4.16	1.93
Cognitive engagement	3.85	.601
FLE	3.85	.632
Mindset	3.70	.454

(a). *Relationship Between the Perceived Task Difficulty and Cognitive Engagement*

A correlation test was performed to answer the second research question by investigating the relationship between the two variables; perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement, see Table 2. It is important to stress that such a test gives indication on whether or not a relation exists between the variables and says nothing about the causation of the relationship.

The results of the correlation test revealed that there is a significantly negative correlation ($r = -0.176$; $p\text{-value} = 0.009 < 0.01$) between students' perception of task difficulty and their levels of cognitive engagement when performing EFL writing tasks. In other words, students are less likely to put in a lot of mental efforts and to persist when the task is perceived to be too difficult.

TABLE 2
PEARSON CORRELATION MATRIX FOR THE RESEARCHED VARIABLES IN THIS STUDY

		Perceived task difficulty	Cognitive engagement
Perceived task difficulty	Pearson Correlation	1	-.176**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	218	218
Cognitive engagement	Pearson Correlation	-.176**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	218	218

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(b). *FLE as a Moderator*

Both simple and multiple regression tests were performed to answer the third research question about whether an FLE can play a role in buffering the effect of task difficulty on students' cognitive enjoyment. A multi-collinearity test was carried out for all regression models, the results revealed VIF (the variance inflation factor) for all models were < 3 indicating the non-existence of multi-collinearity problem. Moreover, all models' residual were normally distributed. Thus, the assumptions for regression analysis were met.

Results of the simple regression indicated that cognitive engagement relates significantly to perceived task difficulty. The model was well fit. ($R = 0.176$, $F = 6.917$, $p < 0.01$) showed a negative significant effect ($B = -0.564$, $t = 7.567$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, there is a significant relationship between cognitive engagement and FLE. The model was well fit. ($R = 0.238$, $F = 12.942$, $p < 0.01$) showed a positive significant effect ($B = 0.250$, $t = 3.597$, $p < 0.01$). Finally, as illustrated in Table 3, in the multiple regression, model was well fit. ($R = 0.243$, $F = 6.761$, $p < 0.01$) showed a negative significant effect of FLE on the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement ($B = -0.527$, $t = -2.536$, $p < 0.05$), while cognitive engagement decreased from step two ($B = -0.564$, $t = 7.567$, $p < 0.05$) to step three ($B = -0.433$, $t = -1.984$, $p < 0.05$). It can be concluded that FLE moderates the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in EFL writing classes.

TABLE 3
REGRESSION MODELS RESULTS FOR FLE AS A MODERATOR

	R	F Value	p-value (F- Test)	Beta coefficient	T value	p-value (T- Test)
Cognitive engagement → perceived task difficulty	0.176	6.917	0.009**	-0.564	7.567	<0.001**
Cognitive engagement → FLE	0.238	12.94	0.009**	0.250	3.597	<0.001**
Cognitive engagement → FLE → perceived task difficulty	0.243	6.761	0.001**	-0.433	-1.984	0.049*
				-0.527	-2.536	0.012*

*: Significant at 0.05, **: Significant at 0.01.

(c). *Students Mindset as a Moderator*

To answer the fourth research question, simple and multiple linear regression tests were conducted. First, in the simple regression test, cognitive engagement has no significant relationship to perceived task difficulty. Model was well fit as ($R = 0.105$, $F = 1.117$, $p = 0.282$) revealed no significant effect ($B = -0.416$, $t = -1.082$, $p = 0.282$). Secondly, the simple regression test showed that cognitive engagement relates significantly to growth mindset. The model was well fit. ($R = 0.209$, $F = 4.819$, $p < 0.01$) showed a positive significant effect ($B = 0.125$, $t = 2.195$, $p < 0.01$). Finally, in the

multiple regression test the model was well fit. ($R = 0.263$, $F = 3.906$, $p = 0.023 < 0.05$) indicated no significant effect of the moderating variable and students' growth mindset on the relationship between cognitive engagement and perceived task difficulty ($B = -0.621$, $t = -1.621$, $p = 0.108$). However, the cognitive engagement remained significant ($B = 1.642$, $t = -2.565$, $p = 0.012 < 0.05$), as shown in Table 4. Therefore, it can be concluded that students' growth mindset does not moderate the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement in EFL writing classes.

TABLE 4
REGRESSION MODELS FOR STUDENTS' GROWTH MINDSET AS A MODERATOR

	R	F Value	p-value (F- Test)	Beta coefficient	T value	p-value (T- Test)
Cognitive engagement → perceived task difficulty	0.105	1.171	0.282	-0.416	-1.082	0.282
Cognitive engagement → growth mindset	0.209	4.819	0.030*	0.125	2.195	0.030*
Cognitive engagement → growth mindset → perceived task difficulty	0.263	3.906	0.023*	-0.621	-1.621	0.108
				1.642	2.565	0.012*

VI. DISCUSSION

The first research hypothesis is rejected, as the results contended that most undergraduate Saudi learners in this study perceive writing as attainable, not that hard, and show great willingness towards it. They express their great enjoyment in writing their tasks. This result is comparable to those by Alharbi (2022) wherein, the majority of his Saudi participants exhibited positive attitudes towards the English Language and its learning and find their English classes to be enjoyable. It is also in agreement with Jiang and Dewaele's (2019) who reported that EFL learners experience more enjoyment than anxiety in their English classes. Such a result is a promising finding as FLE is found to be a pivotal positive emotion that is associated with a good learning experience (Li & Wei, 2022; Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018). For example, it is linked to a lower FLCA (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2019), a greater willingness to engage in EFL communication (Khajavy et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2022), and a higher motivation, interest and persistence in face of difficulties in leaning EFL (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2016; Hosseini et al., 2022).

Learning necessitates learner action (Hiver, 2022). Fortunately, results demonstrated that the majority of Saudi EFL learners who participated in this study are cognitively engaged in writing their EFL tasks. This finding is in complete agreement with Yu et al.'s (2019) who reported that EFL learners are generally engaged in EFL writing classes. When EFL learners are cognitively engaged they are more likely to pay attention and invest more mental efforts in completing tasks at hands (Cho, 2019). As Christenson et al. (2012) asserts that cognitively engaged students are self-regulated ones. They participate actively in generating ideas, reorganizing sentences, planning their essays, monitoring their progress and evaluating their final outcomes.

A possible explanation of such positive results is the fact that these students were given the opportunity to choose their own topics based on their interest which fostered their enjoyment and engagement in the task at hand (Zhou et al., 2019). Additionally, students participated in pre-writing activities which eased their anxiety by focusing their attentions on what they had already known and built on their prior knowledge (Oishi, 2015).

Correlation tests supported the second research hypothesis that there is a significant negative relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement. Overall, these findings are in accordance with findings reported by previous researchers such as Li et al. (2007), Nuutila et al. (2021), Zhang et al. (2021) and Fulmer and Frijters (2011).

Although, a cause and effect relationship could not be confirmed, due to the inherent limitations of the statistical procedures, prior research in the fields of SLA and educational psychology has suggested that perception of task difficulty can influence learners' development through their effect on their expectancies and values (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000; Li et al., 2007). Believing that writing exceeds ones' ability can often create higher levels of anxiety and expectancies of failure which in turn lead to a greater withdrawal of efforts and disengagement. Once these negative thoughts occupy students' minds, they consume a great deal of cognitive and resources needed for on-task performance (Burmeister et al., 2022). As a result of such resource depletion, students face difficulties engaging cognitively as only fewer resources are left available to deploy attention towards task accomplishment, strategic learning techniques and progress monitoring. Thus, it can be argued that the levels of difficulty perceived by EFL students can predict their cognitive engagement in writing classes.

The third research hypothesis has been supported, too. Data analyses reveal that FLE plays a moderating role in the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement. That is, FLE is very effective in reducing the negative consequences of difficult tasks on the extent to which students are willing to focus on, invest mental efforts and persist in the learning tasks at hand. According to the Broaden and Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001), enjoyment works as a contributor to broaden students' attention, and enhance their resilience and hardiness which could affect both the rate and speed of learning (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020; Zhang et al., 2021; Fathi & Mohammaddockht, 2021). High levels of enjoyment can foster greater cognitive engagement (Hosseini et al., 2022; Alrabai & Alamer, 2022) which can in turn affect students' judgment of the learning difficulty. This was further confirmed by Dewaele and Alfawzan's (2018) findings that FLE facilitates attending to, processing and acquisition of EFL. It can be argued that learners who feel further enjoyment in EFL writing classrooms are more likely to embrace challenges, show greater involvement and

use strategies and tactics to overcome challenges. Enjoyment will fuel their enthusiasm to thrive through obstacles, leading to heightened cognitive engagement in the learning process.

Finally, the fourth research hypothesis has been rejected, as the relationship between perceived task difficulty and cognitive engagement is mostly not moderated by students' growth mindset. This may be due to the fact that Saudi students in this study experience more positive emotions. 76% enjoy their learning, and have good learning experience; 77% are cognitively engaged. Therefore, students' beliefs about their intelligence may not pose a great influence on their cognitive engagement when they encounter a difficult task. Another possible explanation of the lack of significant moderating role is due to a statistical deficiency. Since half of the research participants have fixed mindset, the number of participants with growth mindset was too small to show any significant effect.

VII. CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this study have contributed significantly to understanding how perceived task difficulty affects EFL learners' performance via its relationship with cognitive engagement, FLE and mindset. It adds to the dearth of literature that has adopted a holistic perspective through which language learning process is examined as it is affected by how people feel, think and believe. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first study that investigates such relationships in EFL context. Moreover, this study could be of considerable value as it fills a gap in the literature by demonstrating the moderation roles that both FLE and growth mindset play in buffering the negative effect of task difficulty on students' cognitive engagement.

The findings of this study could be of considerable value to EFL practitioners as well as teachers. First, the results showed the relationship between perceived difficulty and cognitive engagement. Teachers should design their learning material to meet a certain level of difficulty that promotes optimal cognitive engagement. A level that presents a challenge to their students' current capabilities but at the same time does not interfere with their learning leading to frustration and disengagement. Secondly, results showed the importance of enjoyment in boosting students' attentiveness and enhancing their learning engagement even in the face of challenges. Since unlike negative emotions, positive emotions including FLE are mostly provoked by teachers' characteristics and their teaching methods (Alrabai, 2022; Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020; Jiang & Dewaele, 2019). We encourage teachers to focus their efforts on lessening students' apprehension and leveling their engagement. This can be achieved by creating learning opportunities and activities that elevate their enjoyment, interest, engagement, optimism and pride; and at the same time diminish their sense of anxiety, fear and shame. Relatedly, students' affective and cognitive engagement increase when teachers create a pleasant, friendly, and creative learning environment (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2020; Hosseini et al., 2022). A further implication this study recognizes is that teachers need to manipulate their students' perceptions of task difficulty in order to sustain their engagement, interest and enjoyment to complete the tasks. Li et al. (2007) suggested that making a task relevant to their previous learning experience, providing them with enough time to practice, monitoring their progress and giving individual feedback can be very helpful in making difficult tasks seem more attainable.

It is important to consider the limitations of this study when interpreting its findings. First, the research delimits its findings to undergraduate EFL students in a university in Saudi Arabia, so generalizing the results to other learning contexts may not be possible. Secondly, research in this area is still in its infancy stage. There is a scarcity of literature on the relationship between perceived task difficulty, cognitive engagement, mindset as well as Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE). This work, therefore, recommends considering a structural equation model (SEM) study to better understand the complex relationship among these variables.

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Comparison of American and Indonesian Women's Notion in Cather's *O'pioneer!* and Hamka's *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk*

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Abstract—This scientific paper is a literary study that addresses gender issues in the form of a comparison of American women's notions narrated by Alexandra in Cather's novel *O'Pioneer!* with Indonesian women narrated by Hayati in Hamka's novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk*. Literary comparative studies are carried out in the form of an analysis of the similarities and differences of American and Indonesian women's notions in the early 20th century as narrated in the two literary works. This research is a structural analysis of literature that emphasizes the study of the intrinsic elements of literature, especially the characterizations originating from Cather's novel *O'Pioneer!* in 1913 and Hamka's novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* in 1938. The data from the two novels were analyzed based on the scientific method of comparative literature which is reconstructed from the concept of de Zepetnek and Endraswara. The results of this study indicate that the similarities between American and Indonesian women in the early 20th century were based on a traditional society that adhered to religion, accepted marriage and homemaking as natural in the process of women's lives, loyalty to true love as a symbol of belief in life, accepting differences, and forgiving. Their differences are moderate traditional *versus* traditional conservative, new women *versus* traditional women, heterogeneous *versus* homogeneous, repositioning tradition *versus* strengthening tradition, partial domestication of women *versus* full domestication of women, living with renewal ideas *versus* dying with conservative ideas, and so on.

Index Terms—comparative study, women notion, America, Indonesia, novels

I. INTRODUCTION

The presence of women in the midst of society has an important meaning in the course of history and human civilization which is spread across all nations, countries, and continents. Women are an important part of human regeneration which determines the sustainability of certain communities in the world. For example, the presence of the American nation which is currently known as a developed country is the result of the resilience of American women in giving birth to generations in a sustainable manner from time to time. They are able to reposition their roles and reform along with the changing times from the colonial era to post-modern. Likewise, the presence of the Indonesian nation which is currently categorized as a developing country is the result of the ability of Indonesian women to maintain their existence against changing times in giving birth to generations in a sustainable manner from time to time from the era of kingdoms to post-modern. They still try to maintain tradition and adherence to customs. Traditional women in these two nations play an important role in bringing people to various typical generations to day. The differences and similarities in conditions between American women and Indonesian women in the twenty-first century need to be traced through the notions of women of the two nations in the past, especially in the early 1900s as documented in the novel *O'Pioneer!* and the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* as constructive information for the current generation.

The heterogeneity of American women in the early 1900s was reflected in a number of characters in the novel *O'Pioneer!*, including Alexandra Bergson, Marie Tovesky, Anne Lee, and others. The various characteristics of American women in the novel refer to the views of Elsworth (2019) who identifies the characteristics of traditional

American women. Although the novel describes the typical diversity of women, but the dominance of the story emphasizes the characteristics of women who are independent, competitive, courageous, innovative, rational, analytical, and objective as played by the main character named Alexandra Bergson. She is a woman who is able to independently lead her family when her parents died. She was successful in meeting the needs of his three younger brothers until they got married and had a family. She is able to overcome conflicts with her younger siblings through rational and objective decisions. She also overcame an agricultural crisis when a famine hit her farming village in Divide, Nebraska through innovative, analytical, and rational thinking. Her courageous actions in facing financial risks in managing her fields became a role model for other farmers. Alexandra Bergson portrays herself as a *New American Woman* who brings renewal and change in American society. Abbas et al. (2022) said that *New American Women* are young American women who want to make social change through cultural reconstruction to gain wider access in family and community life in order to reposition the domination of men over women.



Figure 1. Portrayal *New American Women* in 1890 to Make Social Change Through Cultural Reconstruction
(Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=image+new+american+women&tbm>. Accessed on June 4, 2022 at 00⁰⁶ p.m.)

The homogeneity of Indonesian women in the early 1900s tended to portray themselves as adhering to tradition as reflected by a number of characters in the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk*, including Hayati, Khadijah, Jamila, Mak Basse, and others. According to Abbas (2019), stereotypes of Indonesian women in this novel are appreciative, considerate, dependent, excitable, fearful, feminine, fickle, forgiving, friendly, helpful, modest, sensitive, sincere, submissive, sympathetic, timid, worrying, assertive, deliberate, subjective, and others. The identification of these stereotypes refers to the results of study of social and cultural constructions that are labeled for women (Pearson, 1985). These stereotypes are typical of traditional women who are obedient to tradition as played by the main character named Hayati. She sacrificed her love and loyalty to her lover, her adherence to Minangkabau cultural traditions, and her fear of going against traditional leaders. Hayati's adherence to tradition is not based on analytic, rational, objective thinking, so that she is unable to reposition traditional women in social interaction. She was unable to reposition the position of women and failed to change the order of society. Hayati portrays herself as a conservative woman who is termed a *Traditional Indonesian Woman* who always surrenders her fate to traditions and customs. According to Asmarani (2017), a full traditional woman is a woman who gives her soul, body, mind, capacity and dedication to domestic life in fulfilling her duties and responsibilities as a wife and a mother as a form of her adherence to tradition, customs, and conservative culture as presented by Raden Ajeng Kartini who lived from 1879 to 1904.



Figure 2. Portrayal *Indonesia Traditional Women of Minangkabau Ethnic Group in 1880 Devotes All Her Physical and Psychological Potential to Domestic Life*

(Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=foto+perempuan+Minangkabau+tradicional&oq> Accessed on July 1, 2023 at 10³⁹ p.m.)

This research was conducted to explore the ideas of Indonesian and American women in the past around the early 1900s as reference material for the historical situation and conditions of women's notions in the two nations. The historical documentation of women's ideas is studied in the world of literature as an effort to enrich the sociological values of literature that can be utilized by academics, researchers, observers of social institutions, and so on. The similarities and differences in the ideas of women characters in a number of literary works are a reflection of the situation and condition of women in their time which have an impact on the reality of the social life of women in certain nations today. The researchers compare the notions women between America in the novel *O'Pioneer!* by Willa Cather and Indonesia in the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* by Hamka in the early 1900s using comparative literature theory.

II. LITERARY REVIEW ON COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

Comparing texts has been done by humans since ancient times for various purposes such as assessing the authenticity of manuscripts, measuring the accuracy of information, learning the truth of events, uncovering espionage secrecy, and so on. Comparative literature is the development of inter-text research which was identified at the beginning of its appearance in the 18th century in the European region, especially in France, England, and Germany. Wellek and Warren (1977) argued that the study of relations between literary works was pioneered by French scientists coordinated by Fernand Baldensperger in his journal entitled *Revue de Littérature Comparée?* around the 18th century. It discusses the reputation of a number of literary works in France and England such as Goethe, Ossian, Carlyle, Shiller, and others. The discussion then developed into a review of similarities and differences in literary phenomena in the two nations. Literary figures such as Fernand Baldensperger, Jean-Marie Carre', Paul van Tieghem, and Marius-Francois Guyard according to Rejo (2011) became the pioneers of French comparative literature which is considered as the foundation stone of the methodological study of inter-text as a condition of scientific product.

Comparative literary studies then enter the area of hypogram analysis which according to Riffarterre (1978) is the tracing of literary works against the literary works they produce. For example, novel *My Antonia* in 1918 is considered a hypogram of novel *O'Pioneer!* in 1913. The hypogram analysis is to compare the social life conditions of the frontier generations in the farming villages which are constantly changing from time to time as reflected in the two novels. The practice of comparing literature then developed in linguistic aspects in the 19th century in the three major language families in Europe, namely Germanic, Romance, and Slavic. Mahameed et al. (2021) said that linguistic-literary comparisons can be understood as cross-culture between two nations directly or indirectly. The two nations being compared, each has its own distinctive pattern of life, but both have universally similar ideas. According to Wellek and Warren (2014), the variety of literature in the three language families generally originates from Greek and Roman which spread from English, French, German, Polish, Bohemian, Ukrainian to Russian. Furthermore, in the 20th century, the study of comparative literature developed rapidly in America and even gave birth to American comparative literature. According to Hutomo (1993), this study has spread to Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Australia since the 1970s as examples of comparative literature between Indonesia and Malaysia, India and Pakistan, and others.

A simple illustration of comparative literature is to compare two or more literary works by bringing up certain issues that criticize various problems in human life such as slavery, racism, exploitation, feminism, gender relations, and so on. It means that literary works and society influence each other in aspiration or narration on social issues that are

considered to have a significant impact on life such as politics, emancipation, the economy, and others as stated by Pattu et al. (2022). Comparing literary works according to Ridoean (1986) has an emphasis on certain things, namely the influence of the author and his literary works in his country on other literary works, the spread of the ideas of the author and his literary works into other literary works, increasing the capacity of the author and the quality of the work through other well-known literary works, the author has become famous and the popularity of her/his literary works over other literary works in other countries. Comparing the novels *O'Pioneer!* and *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* serve as examples to increase the influence and fame of the ideas of the two authors, namely Willa Cather from America and Hamka from Indonesia. This comparison also has an impact on strengthening the position of the two literary works as international literature or world literature. Hutomo (1993) expressed his view that world literature is the national literary work of a nation which deserves to be positioned parallel to the literary works of other nations which the famous German writer, Goethe termed as *weltliterature* or world masterpiece or great literature.

Rahman (2000) stated that the scope of literary comparison is influences between literary works, themes between literary works, cultural background between literary works, and genres between literary works. The first aspect explores the possible influence of one literary work on other literary works from an interdisciplinary perspective such as sociology, religion, belief, gender, and so on. Second, the specificity of the theme narrated by one literary work is considered to have a universal correlation with other literary works. Third, the background of certain social conditions that gave birth to a literary work indicates a period or genre of literature and has a civilizational relationship with other literary works. Fourth, the genre of a literary work is considered unique to other literary works. These aspects can be used as a reference in the scope of literary comparison which according to Baribirin (1993) includes comparisons of oral literature, comparisons of written literature, and comparisons of supranational literature. Comparison of oral literature is to compare the migration of folk stories or folklore into writing literary works. Then the comparison of written literature is to compare two or more written literary works on certain aspects based on geography such as between regions or between countries, periods such as between classical literature and modern literature, literary schools such as between naturalism and realism.

The various aims and objectives of literary researchers comparing literary works are mimetic, pragmatic, expressive, and objective orientations. The mimetic orientation emphasizes the reflection of literary works on phenomena from human life that are closer to the sociological aspects of literature. The pragmatic orientation measures the level of understanding of literary readers towards literary works. The expressive orientation explores the position of a number of authors in their literary works, such as the background of their social life in expressing their feelings, expressing their hearts and minds, expressing their imagination, and so on. Objective orientation assesses literary works autonomously on their structures. Endraswara (2013) discusses six purposes of comparing literary works. First, a comparison to find the influence of one literary work on another. Second, comparison to determine the originality of one literary work with other literary works. Third, comparison to build the equality of a nation's literary works with other nation's literary works. Fourth, comparison to find the cultural diversity of one literary work with other literary works. Fifth, comparison to strengthen the universality of one literary work with other literary works. Sixth, comparison to assess the capacity and quality of one literary work on another.

Based on various opinions and explanations related to comparative literature, it can be seen that comparative literature was originally built from inter-text research in a number of European nations around the 18th century which later gave birth to the French school as the foundation for its scientific methodology. Comparing literature was then developed by literary and linguistic researchers in the area of literary hipogram analysis and literary linguistic comparison, especially in the Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages around the 19th century. Comparative analysis of literature was further developed by researchers of American literature around the 20th century as part of literary criticism which emphasized universal issues in the problems of human life known as Americanism. After the 1970s, the study of comparative literature spread widely to Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and Australia. Comparison of literature in general can be understood as a study of two or more literary works that are connected by certain aspects with certain aims and objectives. This research article emphasizes universal issues about the ideas of American and Indonesian women in the novel *O'Pioneer!* and the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* which is considered to document the notion of women from the two nations in their time. It is expected to be able to increase the influence and fame of the ideas of the two authors, namely Willa Cather from America and Hamka from Indonesia as well as strengthen the position of these two literary works as international literature or world literature. In this article focuses on the differences and similarities of American women's notions in the novels with reference to de Zepetnek's (1998) thought that comparative literature is conducted to explore certain aspects or issues in two or more literary works in order to find similarities and differences in the ideas of the two literatures.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research is categorized as a structural analysis of literature which emphasizes the study of the intrinsic elements of literature, especially characterizations. The structural concept frames literary research on an understanding that a comprehensive meaning has been built within itself so that it is able to create an image of itself through the themes it narrates, such as feminist literature, socialist literature, religious literature, secular literature, and so on. The main idea of the classical structuralists as put forward by Hawkes (1978) is literary works have autonomy in their structures so

that they reject literary works as mimetic or expressions of the human sociological world. This research is more dynamic because the idea of a fictional character in the novels *O’Pioneer!* and *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* is considered the product of the author's imagination and the expression of certain groups of people, so that both novels have mimetic elements. The dynamics of this research is in line with the views of Sayuti (1994) that researchers as well as literary readers have the opportunity to explore sociological meanings of literary structures. It inspired this research that the presence of certain characters in both novels has sociological meanings in the form of notions of American and Indonesian women. Endraswara (2013) suggests that the literary comparison method can be categorized into two parts, namely diachronic comparison and synchronic comparison. Diachronic comparisons are one literary work compared to other literary works of different periods, while synchronic comparisons are comparing one literary work with other literary works of the same period. Comparison study in this research is more accurately described as a synchronous comparison because the novel *O’Pioneer!* and *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* has the same period as in the early period of the 20th century. Then the issues that are compared in these two synchronic literary works are the differences and similarities of women's notion as part of the history of women in the two nations, namely Alexandra in the novel initiated the notion of *New American Woman* and Hayati in the novel reflected the notion of *Indonesian Traditional Woman*. Comparative literary studies like this are in accordance with the views of Stallknecht and Frenz (1961) who argued that literary studies are possible to bring together historical ideas of a nation with other nations through the author's philosophical views of the surrounding community which are able to exist from time to time in the form of time transformations.

The main data of this study is an American novel entitled *O’Pioneer!* by Willa Cather in 1913 and the Indonesian novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* by Hamka in 1938. Both data were processed in the form of a literary comparative scientific method absorbed from de Zepetnek's (1998) concept in his book *Comparative Literature: Theory, Method, and Application* and Endraswara (2012) in his book *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra Bandingan* as reconstructed in the following chart.

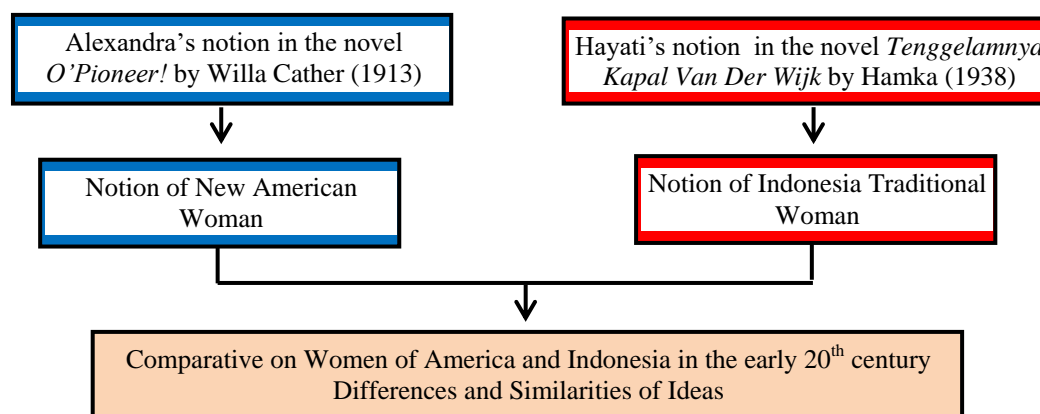


Chart 1. Procedure for Comparing Literary Works

Referring to the research procedure chart above, the initial stage of the research was to analyze the notion of the main character in the novel *O’Pioneer!* whose name is Alexandra, then notion Hayati as the main character in the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk*. The second stage is narrating Alexandra's notion as a reflection of *New American Woman* and Hayati's notion as an *Indonesian Traditional Woman*. The third stage is to compare the notion between Alexandra as a *New American Woman* and Hayati as an *Indonesian Traditional Woman* in the perspective of differences and similarities.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The finding of this research is Alexandra's notion in the novel *O’Pioneer!* which reflects the *New American Woman* and Hayati's notion in the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* which narrates *Indonesia Traditional Woman*. Then the research discussion is comparative on women's notions of America and Indonesia in the early 20th century on novels.

A. Alexandra’s Notion in Novel *O’Pioneer!*

Alexandra is the eldest child of Mr. Bergson, who since the age of twelve has been accustomed to working hard to help her father in the fields and farms and selling agricultural products in the surrounding towns. She lives in a traditional community in a farming village called Divide which stretches along the banks of the Norway Creek River into the hills. This area was pioneered by frontiers who opened settlements and cultivation in western America such as Nebraska since the mid-19th century by Bohemians like Mr. Bergson along with a number of families from backgrounds of Swedish, Austrian, Norwegian, Russian, and others. Mr. Bergson died after decades of struggling to clear wild lands for farming and ranching. Mr. Bergson along with other pioneers died when his family life was still poor with a number

of family debts, mortgaged agricultural fields, and many dead livestock. The frontier generation like Alexandra inherited all these difficulties, especially since the farming areas experienced a prolonged dry season for three years, causing the farmers in Divide to experience a famine. Many young people take a practical path by selling family assets or their parents' inheritance in the midst of this difficult situation and leaving farming to try their luck in the cities. There are those who become successful like Carl Linstrum, but most of them experience failure, stress, panic, and almost madness as experienced by Carrie Jansen. This phenomenon resulted in massive urbanization which resulted in a social crisis and became a national problem in America. Cather (2012) narrates it, "Lou and Oscar hired two men and put in bigger crops than ever before. They lost everything they spent... A few foreclosures demoralized the county" (p. 37).

In a difficult situation that caused people in the frontier farming area to lose enthusiasm or be demoralized, Alexandra remained in the Divide farming village and appeared as an innovative female figure who brought a spirit of renewal as a typical *New American Woman*. One of the bold steps taken by Alexandra was to portray herself as the person in charge of the family replacing her father deceased. Family responsibilities are played by men as is the order of traditional American society in the frontier area, but Alexandra as a young woman around twenty-two years old dares to take this responsibility. She struggles to provide for her mother and her three younger brothers, namely Oscar who is nineteen years old, Lou who is seventeen years old and Emil who is around three years old. During the six years since his father died, she managed to pay off all of his family's debts and then took the initiative to cultivate fields and livestock in an innovative and competitive way to be more productive in order to make a lot of money. She conducted exploration of agricultural lands on the river coast, consulted with students who are concerned with agricultural science, read a number of inspirational books, and diligently prayed while reading the Bible. Alexandra finally found a brilliant idea in the middle of the dry season that has hit Divide for the last three years. For five days, she brought his youngest brother, Emil, to visit agricultural areas on the banks of the Norway Creek River which is at the foot of the valley to the area to the left of the river in the Birgham area. They visited the area observing young men and women managing agricultural land in a professional and profitable manner. The area is now managed by educated young people. On the way back up the hill, Alexandra continues to think innovatively about managing the land. She must be better than the previous generations. History shows that many nations were brought up by the innovative spirit of its men and women. The idea is the dream of a pioneer woman who thinks forward in the welfare of the lives of cultivators who still hold strong traditional values (Cather, 2012).

The high-risk step taken by Alexandra was to borrow money in installments for five years and guarantee the land inherited from her father in a hilly area that has low production capacity because it can only be managed and produces once a year. The loan money was used to purchase half of the Linstrum family's land, half owned by Crow, and half owned by Struble with a total area of one thousand four hundred acres or one hundred and forty thousand square meters or fourteen hectares. The location is on the edge of a river with abundant water flow so that the land can be cultivated and produce up to three times a year. The sale of abundant agricultural production on agricultural fields such as potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, and vegetables can be used to repay debt installments. Likewise, the selling price of the land on the banks of the river in the fifth year will double up so that Alexandra can get big profits. Her inspiration was brilliant because she was able to increase land productivity, increase productivity, and reap huge profits without losing the land inherited from his father. Alexandra's notion was met with opposition from her younger brother, namely Lou, who was afraid that the plan to borrow money with collateral for inherited land was considered very risky because it would be the same as killing them if the land was confiscated due to debt default. Alexandra remained firm on her notion and convinced them that her hope was that her younger siblings' lives would get better and that her youngest brother, Emil could go to high school. Within five years, Alexandra's brilliant notion was realized which was supported by her ability to manage finances. Her two younger siblings, Oscar and Lou, were married off to women from neighboring villages and she divided up all of her parents' estate equally into three parts for herself, Oscar, and Lou. Emil was not given an inheritance because he would be sent to school to become a great person as an asset for the progress of the nation. Oscar and Lou are already living independently as farmers with the productivity of the land they own to meet their family's needs and build a large house.

Another innovative step taken by Alexandra was selling straw and manure to be processed into organic fertilizer, even though cultivators had been burning the straw and throwing away the manure. A number of Alexandra's innovations served as inspiration and motivation for other farmers so that their level of welfare increased. In fact, some young people who previously left the village and tried their luck in the city now returned to farming to become successful farmers in Divide and have households like Marie Tovseky, Frank Shabata, Carrie Janssen, and others. Alexandra employs underprivileged people such as Ivar, Signa, Barney Flinn, Nelse Jensen, and others and rewards their efforts with high wages and promotes an equal relationship between employer and employee. Lou and Oscar often oppose the principles of openness, equality, and fairness that Alexandra applies to her workers, but she always gives her brothers an understanding that workers are human too and they are also part of our extended family. Behind Alexandra's success, she also faced various family polemics and social problems. Lou and Oscar had sued Alexandra's property, but she firmly defended her rights and said that she had never violated any rules set by the government. She challenged her two younger siblings to go to the government office to check the legality of all her proverbs. Lou and Oscar had also opposed their older sister, Alexandra, who wanted to send her youngest brother, Emil, to college, but Alexandra

remained firm in her wishes until Emil finally graduated from the University of Lincoln. Another polemic is that some of the neighbors discussed the close relationship between Alexandra and Carl Linstrum, but Alexandra remained focused on her dream of building a farming area instead she maintained good communication with her neighbors. All problems and polemics were faced by Alexandra with patience, determination, and courage.

Alexandra is a woman who lives in a traditional American frontier society, but she has a number of notions that lead to change and renewal of society. She is a hard worker who inherited her parents' fighting spirit as a pioneer in the area of frontiers farming, anticipatory, and open herself to progress. She still maintains her entity as a cultivating society and always motivates the younger generation to go to other countries in search of life experiences as well as knowing a wide and varied life as capital to rebuild farming areas. Even though she is forty-three years old and still single, she still dreams of being married, having a family and having children. She idealizes love as rationality and common sense that must be able to support her ideals and hopes. Alexandra found the idealization of her love in her best friend since childhood, namely Carl Linstrum, to build a peaceful and happy family on the farm as a form of reconciliation between village and city life.

*B. Hayati's Notion in Novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk**

Hayati is a girl whose mother has died. She grew up in the Minangkabau customary environment in Batipuh Village, the western part of Sumatra Island which is part of the Indonesian archipelago. The livelihoods of the people in Batipuh Village are generally farming and animal husbandry which have natural nuances in the form of mountains, valleys and rivers. Clerics and traditional leaders are groups that are very influential in making decisions in society such as marriage matters, inheritance matters, determining kinship lines, granting customary titles, and so on. They tend to exclude themselves as the Minangkabau indigenous people who adhere to a matrilineal kinship system by limiting access to the presence of other ethnic groups such as the Makassarese who adhere to a patrilineal kinship order. The sociological situation and cultural life of the people of Batipuh Village is the backdrop for Hayati's life who lives in the midst of a traditional community that strongly adheres to Islamic spiritual values and Minangkabau customary provisions which are based on matrilinealism. They place Islamic law and Minangkabau customs in one inseparable unit. One of the representations in their lives is unmarried young people are told to stay at the mosque at night to get closer to the place of worship, while the girls have to stay at home helping their mothers take care of the kitchen, cleaning the house and yard. One day a young man from Makassar came to Batipuh Village named Zainuddin to visit the hometown of his late father, Pendekar Sutan. The arrival of Zainuddin in Batipuh, who becomes acquainted with a flower girl from Batipuh Village named Hayati, is the beginning of a series of events that narrates Hayati's notion in the novel (Hamka, 2014).

Hayati really appreciates the kindness of others as did Zainuddin when he lent her an umbrella because it was raining on her way back home from the fields. Hayati and Zainuddin's meeting fosters a feeling of love between them which is expressed through correspondence through the intermediary of a small child named Ahmad, Hayati's younger brother. The correspondence continued with Hayati's direct meeting with Zainuddin which was slowly observed by other young people and became a topic of conversation in society. Hayati knows that her love affair with Zainuddin will be opposed by custom, but she hopes that the sincerity of their love can change the attitude of those around her. This hope turned out to be unable to reposition the attitude of the people in Batipuh Village who are very strong in upholding customary provisions. Hayati is forced to throw away her love for Zainuddin and she will be married to Azis, who is considered a fellow Minangkabau. Hayati and Zainuddin's love affair was opposed by Minangkabau people in general because Zainuddin was seen as a migrant from Makassar even though his father was Minangkabau because custom only recognized matrilineal kinship from the mother's line. Zainuddin's genealogical background causes him to be considered not a native Minangkabau so he does not get Minangkabau customary and cultural rights, including that he is not allowed to marry Minangkabau girls. Hayati is unable to go against custom and she only keeps her loyal love in her heart because she is afraid that her love will harm her and Zainuddin because of the strict customs adopted by the Minangkabau people in Batipuh Sapulo Kuto Village.

Hayati is helpless in the face of customary law that expels her lover, Zainuddin, from Batiputih to Padang Panjang, the two are forced to separate their love. Hayati realizes the misfortune of her being dismissed from school and restricted access outside the home so that she is not allowed to meet men freely, but she is powerless against the cultural order that shackles her. Hayati's arrival in the city of Padang Panjang witnessed modern life with more open clothing and the freer association of young people had influenced her adherence to traditional orders. Hayati finally rejects the views of city youths like Azis and Khadijah about the phenomenon of modern notion, namely money reigns over everything, honesty is just a joke, marriage is not a priority, working in an office is the main dream, love is not a symbol of loyalty, friendship is for achieving interests, and others. Hayati finally decided to stick with and surrender to traditional values, Minangkabau customs, and her religious teachings. She expressed her submission in a letter sent to her lover, Zainuddin that it was better for them to separate and take their own paths in life following the destiny of Allah SWT rather than going against people's will, he invited Zainuddin to find a better woman (Hamka, 2014).

In the early days of marriage, Hayati confirmed the message of her parents that true love comes after marriage, while teenage love before marriage is just acquaintances. Hayati finally corrected the truth of this noble message because her husband, Azis, turned out to be a man with bad behavior and was not responsible for his household. She doubted the sincerity of Azis's love as her husband because he rarely came home and committed adultery with other women in entertainment venues. Azis sold all of Hayati's jewelry and household furniture to gamble, instead he owed money

everywhere so that all of his property was confiscated by the debtors and dishonorably dismissed as a civil servant. At the end of this household story, Azis divorces Hayati and suggests that she return to dedicate herself to her true love, namely Zainuddin. Hayati's determination to reunite with Zainuddin did not materialize because she suffered a serious head injury as part of the passengers on the Van Der Wijk Ship which sank in Tanjung Pakis, Tuban, eastern part of Java Island. Hayati in a dying state is very happy because she still has time to hear Zainuddin's statement that he still loves her and he wants to take her back to Surabaya to build a happy household. Zainuddin's wish did not come true because Hayati breathed her last at exactly 10 pm after being able to say the two sentences of shahada three times.

C. Comparative on Women Notion of America and Indonesia in the Early 20th Century in the Novels

Alexandra who reflects on American women and Hayati reflects that Indonesian women have the same notion and social background in the early 20th century in fictional narrative novels. These two characters live in a traditional religious community. Alexandra lives in a farm village called Divine, Nebraska, which still holds traditional values inherited from her ancestors, pioneers from various European nations who came to America. The people in the village of the frontier generation adhere to Protestant religious teachings like the Norwegian Church, they are diligent in worshiping in church and reading the Bible. Likewise, Hayati lives in the Minangkabau customary environment in Batipuh village, which still holds strong traditional values and adheres to Islamic teachings. The livelihoods of the people in the village where Alexandra and Hayati live are cultivators and ranchers. The geographic background and natural feel of Divide and Batipuh share similarities in the form of mountains, valleys, and rivers. Alexandra and Hayati both do not reject marriage and having a household as natural in the process of women's lives. They have a notion of loyalty to their true love as a symbol of faith in life, although society highlights their loyalty. People on Divide focus on Alexandra's love affair with Carl Linstrum and people on Batipuh highlight Hayati's love affair with Zainuddin.

On the other hand, Alexandra's notion which portrays American women in the novel *O'Pioneer!* is different from Hayati's notion which portrays Indonesian women in the narrative of the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk*. The people in Divide who are the background of the Alexandra community are heterogeneous from various different nations such as England, France, Norway, Austria, Sweden, and Russia, while the people in Batipuh who are the background of the Hayati community are homogeneous from the Malay ethnic group, namely Minangkabau. Alexandra's notion is the renewal of society following the demands of developments and changing times while still maintaining a moderate traditional social order, while Hayati's notion is adherence to religious customs and teachings based on the demands and desires of society while maintaining a conservative traditional order. Alexandra was able to create a new order in society as part of the *New American Woman*, while Hayati was unable to reposition herself from the confines of the conservative traditional order so that she was unable to reposition society's notion in changing times, instead it strengthened the conservative traditional order. The motive for marriage that Alexandra wanted was to build a marriage institution to realize the ideals of the women's reform movement as her future husband, Carl Linstrum, supported Alexandra to become an innovative and inspiring farmer. On the other hand, Hayati's motive for becoming a household is to comply with customary and religious provisions which require women to fully comply with family decisions, traditional leaders, and leaders in domesticating women. Alexandra finally married a man of her choice based on her will, while Hayati was married off by her family's choice based on Minangkabau customary wishes. Alexandra was slow to get married and continued to live to find a new life as a *New American Woman*, while Hayati married quickly and finally died while upholding the values of *Traditional Indonesian Women*.

Comparison of the notions of American and Indonesian women in the early 20th century as narrated by Alexandra in the novel *O'Pioneer!* and Hayati in the novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijk* can be seen in the table.

TABLE 1
NOTIONS COMPARISON OF ALEXANDRA AND HAYATI

Comparison	Notion	
	Alexandra	Hayati
Similarities	Natural nuances of mountains, valleys, and rivers	Natural nuances of mountains, valleys, and rivers
	Based on traditional society	Based on traditional society
	Society of farmers and ranchers	Society of farmers and ranchers
	Religious	Religious
	Marriage and household as a natural nature in the life process of women	Marriage and household as a natural nature in the life process of women
	Love life is part of the public concern	Love life is part of the public concern
	Loyalty to true love as a symbol of faith in life	Loyalty to true love as a symbol of faith in life
	Accept differences	Accept differences
Differences	Forgiveness	Forgiveness
	Traditional moderate	Traditional conservative
	Imaging new women	Imaging traditional women
	Heterogeneous society	Homogeneous society
	Repositioning tradition	Strengthening traditions
	The motive for getting married is to realize the ideals of the women's reform movement	The motive for marrying is to fulfill customary and religious provisions
	Ideological thinking	Nationalist thinking
	Modern is an opportunity for progress	Modern is a moral perversion
	Independent, competitive, courageous, innovative, rational, analytical, and objective	Dependent, resigned, anxious, submissive, sympathetic, feeling, natural, and subjective
	Realizing hope	Dreaming of hope
Partial domestication of women	Full domestication of women	
Living with renewal ideas	Dying with conservative ideas	

Based on the comparative data above, it can be seen that the notions of American and Indonesian women as portrayed by Alexandra and Hayati in fictional narratives had similarities and differences at the beginning of the 20th century. Their similarities are more natural as women, while the difference is their capacity to realize their expectations. Alexandra lives in the nuances of an already independent nation, so she prioritizes change and thinks more ideologically, while Hayati lives in the nuances of a nation that is still colonized, so she is more concerned with unity and thinks nationalism. In the end, Alexandra continues to live in her ideas of change, while Hayati dies in holding on to her traditions.

V. CONCLUSION

Literature has the capacity to portray similarities and differences in gender issues in the comparison of two literary works from two different nations. Comparative literature is implemented in the notion of women in the early 20th century between American women as narrated by Alexandra in the novel *O’Pioneer!* by Willa Cather with Indonesian women narrated by Hayati in Hamka's novel *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*. The equality of women from these two different nations is based on a traditional society that is devoutly religious, living in an agrarian society with beautiful natural nuances, accepting marriage and having a household as natural in the process of women's life, loyalty to true love as a symbol of belief in life, accepting difference and forgiveness. Their differences are moderate traditional versus traditional conservative, new women versus traditional women, heterogeneous versus homogeneous, repositioning traditions versus strengthening traditions, thinking ideologically versus nationalism, realizing hopes versus dreaming hopes, partial domestication of women versus full domestication of women, living with the idea of renewal versus dying along with conservative ideas, and others. In further research it is recommended to examine the comparison between Willa Cather as a female writer and Hamka as a male writer in expressing women's narratives in their literary works.

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Effects of Blended Learning on EFL College Students' Oral Communicative Competence: A Critical Review of Studies

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Abstract—For EFL learners' development of oral communication competence in English, computer-assisted instruction has become an indispensable model. In the face of the arrival of the information and intelligence era and the need for regular pandemic prevention and control, blended learning has become a normalized teaching approach. Although there have been some investigations of the effectiveness of blended learning in enhancing college EFL students' English communication skills, a review article that synthesizes the findings of these studies deserves an urgent attention. Thus, the overall purpose of this research is to review previous studies that have examined the use of blended learning to improve college EFL students' English communication skills. The anticipated outcomes of this research can uncover the potential benefits of utilizing blended learning for enhancing English oral communicative competence among college EFL students. This article can offer some critical perspectives, suggestions, and consequences concerning the integration of blended learning in the acquisition of English language communication competence among college EFL students.

Index Terms—blended learning, online teaching, college EFL students, oral communicative competence, review article

I. INTRODUCTION

In modern English language learning (ELL), the main goal of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners is to effectively use language in real-life communication environments, rather than simply focusing on grammatical rules and memorization of content. As noted by Poolsawad et al. (2015) and Brown (2016), achieving communicative competence has remained a primary objective in language classrooms as a means of facilitating globalization and internationalization. In recent decades, the advancement of technology—particularly with the emergence of digital devices and Web 2.0 technology—has opened up a wide array of opportunities to enhance English communication skills. Further, the progress of technology has significantly transformed the domain of learning and acquisition of English language communication competence (ELCC).

Consequently, online teaching has become a conventional way of teaching at primary, secondary, and tertiary education for a long time. During the pandemic, online teaching was adopted as an emergency measure (Lee et al., 2022), which has not only provided a new perspective for the reform of teaching methods in higher education but also has created a wide range of opportunities for it. In the post pandemic era, blended learning has become a mainstream teaching method which utilizes a range of online tools and platforms such as video conferencing, online forums, and course management systems (Brown, 2016). Through these platforms, teachers can effectively deliver educational content, while still conducting in-person lessons.

However, despite the increasing attention given by educators to the use of blended learning approach, few studies have focused on developing students' oral communicative competence (OCC) in English through this approach.

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Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to examine the possibilities and challenges of using blended learning to enhance English language communication skills among college EFL students. This article is a review article which critically analyses previous studies that have investigated the effectiveness of blended learning for improving English language communication competence among young learners. This article ends with a presentation of the procedures of the implementation of blended teaching.

II. IMPORTANCE OF OCC FOR COLLEGE EFL STUDENTS

Throughout time, the primary goal of language classrooms has been to achieve communicative competence, which involves teaching the organizational, pragmatic, systematic, and psychomotor aspects of language (Brown, 2016; Poolsawad et al., 2015). This goal remains relevant in modern ELL, where the emphasis is on the practical use of language for the development of effective communication in real-life situations, as opposed to simply memorizing grammar rules (Eaton, 2010).

Several studies have highlighted the positive impact of OCC on college EFL students' academic success. For example, Nassaji and Fotos (2011) found that EFL students who possess effective OCC have higher academic achievement, increased participation in classroom activities, and improved comprehension of academic materials. Additionally, effective oral communication allows students to understand and express academic concepts accurately, ask questions, and engage in discussions, leading to successful academic performance. OCC is also essential for cultural integration for EFL students. In fact, effective oral communication allows students to participate in social interactions, build relationships, and integrate into the target language culture (Kramsch, 2009). EFL students who possess effective OCC are more likely to feel confident, interact with native speakers, and gain a deeper understanding of the culture.

The literature also emphasizes the role of OCC in EFL students' professional success. For example, EFL students who possess effective OCC are more likely to succeed in job interviews, be hired, and advance in their careers (Susanto, 2012). Effective oral communication is also essential in various professional settings, such as negotiations, presentations, and meetings, and can lead to career success and advancement. Furthermore, in personal development aspect, effective oral communication allows students to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions, leading to improved self-esteem and personal growth (Tavil, 2010). Taking this into account, college EFL students who possess effective OCC are more likely to feel confident, assert their needs, and develop their social skills, leading to personal development and overall well-being. Hence, OCC is critical for college EFL students' academic success, cultural integration, professional success, and personal development. Effective oral communication allows students to participate in social interactions, build relationships, and express themselves accurately, leading to personal, social, and professional success.

However, there are still several common challenges and obstacles that college EFL students may encounter in developing effective oral communication skills. For instance, many students may feel nervous or anxious when speaking in public or in front of others, which can affect their ability to communicate effectively. Moreover, some students may lack confidence in their abilities to communicate effectively, which can hold them back from expressing their ideas clearly and persuasively. In addition, effective oral communication skills require practice and repetition, but many college EFL students may not have enough opportunities to practice and improve their skills. With the advent of digital technology, teaching techniques have evolved to incorporate new tools and platforms. Blended learning allows for greater flexibility in terms of scheduling and pacing and provides students with increased opportunities to practice their oral communication skills with more immediate and detailed feedback.

III. EFFECT OF ONLINE TECHNIQUE ON ENGLISH ORAL COMMUNICATION: RELATED STUDIES

In recent times, technology has brought about a revolution in the realm of human interaction. One specific domain where technology has made a profound impact is in the arena of spoken English communication. Virtual classrooms and video conferencing are online educational platforms that offer a collaborative learning environment for students and instructors altogether. These platforms have become increasingly prevalent in English as a Second Language (ESL) settings, as they permit learners to practice their English language skills in real-time with native speakers. Lamy and Hampel (2007) assert that video conferencing platforms, such as Zoom and Skype, are valuable tools that can help students enhance their pronunciation, intonation, and speaking fluency. Moreover, these platforms can be utilized to simulate real-life scenarios, rendering them a valuable tool for learners to practice their communication proficiencies.

An additional use of web-based technology in the field of spoken English is through the utilization of mobile applications. Programs like Duolingo, Babel, and Rosetta Stone can offer language learners interactive tutorials, assessments, and activities to enhance their speaking abilities. These applications also provide speech recognition features, which can supply instantaneous feedback on one's intonation and pronunciation. Mobile apps can provide learners with the opportunity to exercise their speaking skills at their own convenience, which offers a higher level of flexibility and convenience, in addition to offering a range of multimedia resources, such as audio and video files, which can enrich learners' proficiency in listening and speaking skills. Additionally, mobile apps frequently employ gamification and other interactive features to make learning more captivating and stimulating (Alwafi et al., 2022).

Furthermore, online discussion forums and social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, can be used for English oral communication practice. These platforms allow for asynchronous communication and provide a platform for students to engage in discussions and debates with their peers, practicing their speaking and listening skills altogether. Aykut (2008) discussed the implementation of tasks with technology in ELT, including the use of online tools, including discussion forums and video conferencing. The authors argued that technology can enhance the effectiveness of language tasks by providing opportunities for collaboration, communication, and feedback.

Nevertheless, the technological barriers may exist in the immersive online learning approach. Yet, some learners may struggle to navigate online platforms or may not have access to the necessary technology, which can result in unequal learning opportunities (Rerung, 2018; Rianto, 2020; Sari & Wahyudin, 2019). Besides, learners may be susceptible to distractions when using online tools, which can decrease their engagement and hinder their language learning progress, as well as overreliance on online tools may result in a diminished emphasis on other essential language skills, such as critical thinking and creativity. The existing problems mentioned above reflect the need of mixed instructional approach that integrates both online and offline instruction. In this way, the strengths of both two types of approaches can give learners opportunities for active learning and engagement. Students can achieve deeper learning and retain information better through blended teaching. This is because blended learning can not only provide learners with authentic language learning experiences but also the flexibility to learn at their own pace and on their own schedule (Müller & Mildemberger, 2021).

IV. BLENDED LEARNING IN ELT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION EDUCATION

A. *Popularity of E-Learning in ELT*

In recent years, electronic learning (e-learning) has experienced a surge in popularity within the realm of English language instruction. This trend can be attributed to various factors, such as the advantageous features of online learning, which include its flexibility and convenience, as well as the plethora of digital tools and resources accessible to both instructors and learners. Additionally, the increasing significance of digital literacy in contemporary society has contributed to the rising acceptance of e-learning methodologies (Pratiwi et al., 2022).

Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of e-learning in ELT. For instance, Paliath and Evangeline (2022) found that e-learning was more effective than traditional classroom instruction in improving learners' reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, Istifci et al. (2011) reported that e-learning was as effective as face-to-face instruction in developing learners' writing skills. Furthermore, Banditvilai (2016) found that e-learning enhanced learners' attitudes towards ELL, as well as their proficiency in listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills. The supremacy of e-learning in ELT has been reported in a good number of studies. Studies have shown that e-learning can lead to an improvement in learners' motivation, engagement, and autonomy (Lazorak et al., 2021). It enables learners to work independently and at their own pace, thereby enhancing their self-regulation and self-directed learning abilities. In addition, e-learning facilitates personalized learning by providing learners with a variety of resources, such as online dictionaries, grammar and vocabulary exercises, and multimedia materials (Purwantoro et al., 2021). Besides, e-learning platforms offer opportunities for learners to engage in collaborative learning and social presence by interacting with their peers and teachers (Lazorak et al., 2021).

Despite the inherent benefits of electronic learning in English Language Teaching (ELT), it also poses certain impediments. Foremost among these is the absence of direct personal contact, which can impede the acquisition of verbal communication and auditory perception skills (Mwakyusa, 2016). In addition, e-learning necessitates that students have strong self-discipline and motivation, traits which may not exist in all learners. Another issue that learners encounter is the potential for technical difficulties such as connectivity issues and software malfunctions, which can diminish learners' engagement and motivation (Olutola et al., 2021).

B. *Blended Learning for the Improvement of English OCC*

The use of blended learning in improving English OCC has emerged as a response to the growing demand for English language proficiency in an increasingly globalized world. As English has become the dominant language of international communication, the ability to speak and understand English has become essential for success in academic, professional, and personal contexts.

After investigating the effectiveness of blended learning in improving English OCC among university students, Hasanah and Malik (2020) reported that students who received blended learning instruction showed a significant improvement in their OCC because they had more opportunities to practice speaking and receive feedback through the online components of the course, which included interactive multimedia resources, online discussion forums, and chat rooms. Blended learning provides learners with opportunities to practice English oral communication skills in a supportive and low-risk environment. It also allows learners to engage with authentic English language resources, such as videos, podcasts, and social media, which can improve their language proficiency and fluency (Kukulaska-Hulme & Traxler, 2013). Besides, blended learning offers learners flexibility in terms of time and location, allowing them to learn at their own pace and convenience (Moradimokhles & Hwang, 2022).

Blended learning benefits from face-to-face interaction because it incorporates additional elements of teaching and learning, such as social networking, group collaboration, and daily conversation (Yang & Ogata, 2023), which may not

be present in digital-only learning (Simbolon, 2021). It is important to mention that online learning may not cover all the necessary language skills required for everyday life, such as public speaking. In other words, online platforms may not bring the same experience gained when learners are in immersive language learning environments (Alhamami, 2018, 2019). However, the experiences gained from face-to-face interaction can be exploited to enhance online learning. This can be done through creating an engaging atmosphere and improving language speaking skills. With this in mind, the primary overall objective of ELT is to equip students with the necessary language skills to handle real-life situations, which can be best achieved through speaking, a skill that is best developed through face-to-face interaction in the classroom.

In another study, Ibrahim and Yusoff (Yu et al., 2005) found that by using blended learning for the speaking course, students were provided with more opportunities to practice speaking outside of the classroom and were encouraged to develop and do presentations to real audiences. They also discovered that utilizing a wiki in a blended learning environment was advantageous for the Public Speaking course. Likewise, Qindah (2018) suggested that blended learning was suitable for teaching language skills, especially in speaking and grammar courses, as it requires students to take responsibility for their learning and practice their language skills efficiently. Besides, Yang et al. (2013) investigated the effectiveness of integrating Communication Technology into personalized English listening and speaking instruction through using Moodle, a computer-based learning environment. They reported that students who participated in the intervention program showed significant improvements in both English speaking and listening skills. To conclude, the literature reviewed in this section supports the idea that blended learning can effectively enhance speaking skills.

V. BLENDED LEARNING IN IMPROVING ENGLISH OCC: THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

A good number of theories have been used to support the wide range of benefits in using blended learning. For example, sociocultural theory is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the importance of social and cultural contexts in shaping human learning and development. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning occurs when a learner can engage in activities that are just beyond their current level of ability, but still within their zone of proximal development (ZPD). This means that learning is a socially mediated process that requires interaction with others who are able to provide guidance, feedback, and support.

Another key concept in sociocultural theory is the idea of scaffolding, which refers to the support that more knowledgeable others provide to learners as they move towards greater independence and mastery of a task (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Scaffolding can take many forms, such as modelling, questioning, prompting, and providing feedback. The goal of scaffolding is to gradually transfer responsibility for learning from the teacher to the learner, while still providing the necessary support to ensure success.

Sociocultural theory also emphasizes the role of language and communication in shaping learning and development. Language is not just a tool for communication, but also a means for thinking and problem-solving (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). In sociocultural theory, language is seen as a social practice that is shaped by cultural and historical contexts, and that plays a central role in shaping social relationships and identities (Lantolf, 2000). Sociocultural theory has been applied to the field of second language acquisition (SLA) to help understand the complex processes of learning a new language within social and cultural contexts. In this relationship, the sociocultural theory provides a valuable perspective on how social and cultural factors can influence language learning and teaching (Scott & Palincsar, 2013). By emphasizing the importance of social interactions, collaboration, and exposure to authentic materials, sociocultural theory can help educators and learners create more effective blended learning environments that support the development of English oral communicative competence.

Another underpinning theory is the communicative competence model by Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). This model is comprised of four components: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. It emphasizes the importance of using language for communication purposes, rather than simply focusing on linguistic accuracy (Bagarić & Mihaljević Djigunović, 2007). In this view, communicative competence goes beyond linguistic knowledge to include social and pragmatic factors that enable effective communication in different contexts. The model has been widely used in language teaching and testing and has influenced the development of communicative language teaching approaches, which emphasize the importance of using language in authentic communicative situations to develop communicative competence.

Canale and Swain's (1980) model has been used as a basis for developing communicative language teaching (CLT) approaches, which aim at promoting language learning through communicative interaction. In CLT, the focus is on providing learners with opportunities to engage in authentic communicative activities, in which they are required to use language to achieve meaningful communication goals. The use of communicative activities helps learners to develop the ability to use language in a variety of contexts, and to adapt their language use to suit different situations and interlocutors.

The concept of communicative competence has also been influential in the development of language assessment. Canale and Swain's (1980) model has been used as a basis for designing communicative language tests that assess not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to use language in social and pragmatic contexts. Communicative language tests aim to assess learners' abilities to use language in real-life situations, rather than simply testing their

knowledge of language rules. By providing opportunities for authentic language use and collaboration in both face-to-face and online settings, blended learning can help students develop their linguistic knowledge and social, cultural, and situational awareness in communication. Moreover, the use of technology can help students develop their strategic competence by encouraging them to use different communication strategies to achieve their goals in a digital environment.

VI. BLENDED TEACHING IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

The virtual world, specifically online teaching platforms and educational resource libraries, offers valuable assistance for blended teaching and learning. This approach allows educators to extend their teaching beyond the physical classroom and provides students with greater opportunities to learn efficiently and effectively. By utilizing online teaching platforms and high-quality educational resources, blended teaching and learning not only allows teachers to lead the learning process but also enables students to play an active role in learning. Teachers can incorporate online teaching resources into their classroom teaching, while students can access these resources and interactive tools for further learning, discussion, and communication outside the classroom. The hybrid teaching mode in the network environment mainly includes the following procedures (see Figure 1):

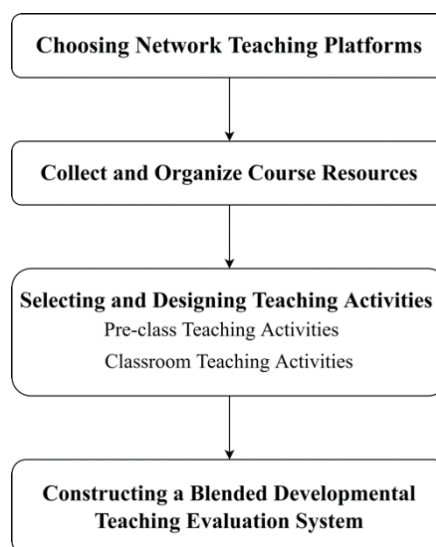


Figure 1. Blended Teaching Implementation Procedures

A. Choosing Network Teaching Platforms

Currently, most universities in the world have built advanced and fully functional campus networks and accessed the Internet, providing a good network environment for traditional school education and online education. However, the function of the network for teaching should not be just the release of teaching content, but more should be to support teaching interaction, teaching evaluation, and teaching management since these are important links to ensure teaching quality.

Although the network can provide rich and colourful communication functions for teaching, these functions are scattered, which is not conducive to the deployment and management of teaching. Therefore, there is a need for a web-based teaching platform that integrates the functions of teaching content publishing and management, classroom teaching, online teaching interaction, online teaching evaluation, project-based collaborative learning, developmental teaching evaluation, and teaching management to support hybrid teaching (Rao, 2019). Currently, the popular general online teaching platforms include 4A, Tsinghua Education Online, RTVU Online, Netladder Teaching Platform, and Ambo Online, WebCT, Blackboard, UKEU, Frontier, and Learning Space, etc.

B. Collect and Organize Course Resources

Course resources refer to a wide range of multimedia teaching materials that students can use to achieve the objectives of the course content. According to Yu et al. (2005), these resources are typically part of a network course with a logical organizational structure that includes presentation and interactive teaching content. These resources can be multimodal with various formats, such as videos, audio, animations, graphics/images, and text, which can serve as both content presentation and interactive educational resources, as well as English teaching resources. Course resources can also include tools for teaching evaluation, such as questions and papers, and a literature catalogue index for expanding the scope of learning content. The design of course resources is similar to that of online courses and can be developed using online teaching platforms.

In the blended teaching mode, the second language oral teaching material is not restricted to the usual textbook content. Teachers have the freedom to expand the teaching material beyond textbook knowledge, incorporating current social content that aligns with students' interests and the effectiveness of past content. This includes a range of knowledge areas from professional knowledge to ideological, political, and cultural knowledge. To adapt and introduce relevant content into teaching, teachers draw from a wealth of online resources, catering to the diverse learning needs of students and promoting their independent learning and oral communication practice. The advent of intelligent information technology such as artificial intelligence and cloud computing has revolutionized the way we obtain information. We now have access to comprehensive network information, making it easier for students to incorporate into their daily lives.

C. Selecting and Designing Teaching Activities

The activities for English oral teaching are created with the intention of promoting a thorough development of the teaching process. These activities may include problem-solving through exploration, collaborative group problem-solving, group communication and discussion, answering common questions, online intelligent Q&A, self-assessment plans, homework plans, and evaluations. To ensure that these activities are effective, they must align with the course objectives, content, and presentation format, and should be selected and designed in accordance with the teaching progress, specifically relating to knowledge points. The aim of teaching activities is to establish language speaking environments for students and to enhance communication and interaction between teachers and other students. As a result, suitable teaching strategies are of utmost importance for the successful execution of teaching activities.

(a). Pre-Class Teaching Activities

Before class, teachers should adequately prepare by uploading course materials, audio, and video to the Learning Pass platform and assigning preview tasks. Students can download learning resources in a timely manner, carefully complete preview tasks, take note of any questions they don't understand, and seek advice from teachers during offline teaching. Previewing can be done through online teaching, which allows for flexible learning opportunities. The online resources provided by teachers are comprehensive, diverse, and feature rich audio and video materials, which can motivate students to engage in pre-class preview and achieve positive learning outcomes. For the online teaching of practicing English oral competence, the pre-class activities are available as below:

Learning how to pronounce and use intonation: Prior to class, students are required to learn English pronunciation and intonation using online platforms or other methods, such as listening exercises, phonetic training, and imitative exercises.

Completing pre-class assignments: Before class, the teacher assigns preview tasks such as completing listening exercises, reading specific articles, or preparing dialogues or speeches, enabling students to better utilize their oral expression skills during class.

Self-study: Students must independently study relevant information prior to class, such as new vocabulary, phrases, and sentences, to apply the knowledge more effectively during class.

Communication and interaction: Students can communicate and interact with their peers and teacher through online discussion forums, email, WhatsApp, and other platforms, allowing them to discuss problems, share experiences, and address difficulties.

Pre-class preparation: Students need to prepare necessary teaching tools and learning materials, such as recording equipment, dictionaries, notebooks, and course outlines in advance, to participate in class interaction and practical exercises more effectively.

(b). Classroom Teaching Activities

The integration of online and offline teaching in hybrid teaching has transformed the previous single teaching method into a new teaching process that incorporates multiple links, including multi-structure driven approaches, situation creation, preview with teacher guidance, multi-aspect detection and feedback, and cooperative learning. This approach not only increases students' enthusiasm for learning and hands-on practice, but also allows for more flexibility in scheduling and communication between teachers and students. The new teaching process requires teachers to consider the connections between links in teaching and test their ability to match multiple links with online and offline teaching content to encourage more participation from students. Blended teaching is not simply a sequential process of "offline first, then online" or "online first, then offline," but rather a synchronous integration of online and offline teaching (Yu et al., 2005). The diversification of teaching processes does not necessarily mean a decrease in teaching standards or content difficulty. Instead, as teaching processes change, teaching standards and difficulty should be improved to reflect the diversification of standards and evaluation.

Firstly, the teacher should give a brief overview of the pre-class learning situation, which can include offering feedback on students' online learning progress. Examples of this are checking students' homework, using online platforms to review assignments and provide prompt feedback and grading. These activities can have various benefits. First, they can enable students to gauge their progress and identify areas for improvement. Second, they can help in sharing outstanding student work in class as this can, in turn, motivate students to complete their online assignments and enhance their enthusiasm and confidence for learning. Organizing online group discussions can encourage students

to share their experiences and knowledge gained from frontline activities, as well as help teachers understand students' learning difficulties and needs. By giving personalized feedback and suggestions on students' homework and performance, teachers can help students comprehend their learning situation and enhance their self-reflection and abilities. Finally, teachers can create a pre-class questionnaire survey to learn about students' perspectives and experiences with frontline activities, as well as their expectations and suggestions for future learning, which can be useful for improving classroom instruction.

Next, adjust the teaching goals accordingly by considering the students' prior learning and concentrate on crucial and challenging topics. Teaching the essential concepts in the course is a crucial step to ensure that students promptly comprehend the course's knowledge framework. In the classroom, educators utilize pre-planned online courses that combine meticulously created and handpicked multimedia materials to engage students' various senses and assist them in comprehending and retaining the information.

Then, put emphasis on English oral practice through classroom discussion, communication, Q&A, and classroom group collaboration research topics. Classroom discussions can be the beginning of online discussions, or they can be the continuation and deepening of online discussions. To foster students' practical abilities and innovative spirit, project-based research-based learning is an effective approach. The development of project research can be carried out in both online and classroom settings: online, discussions, information retrieval and processing, data sharing, results display, process information recording, and evaluation are mainly conducted; in the classroom, group presentations are organized, and in the process of presentation, there is in-depth communication and discussion with the teacher, thereby obtaining appropriate oral communicating guidance.

D. Constructing a Blended Developmental Teaching Evaluation System

Build a multi-level and open hybrid teaching evaluation system. In the context of improving blended learning processes, the content, methods, and processes learned by each individual are not the same. Teaching evaluation should focus more on examining students' multi-level performance at various stages of a course. In online speaking activities, weaker students should focus on consolidating their basic knowledge, while stronger students can explore more advanced topics. Meanwhile, offline courses should be tailored to different student groups with varying discussion and assignment styles. By adopting a hybrid teaching approach, teachers can provide targeted teaching and formulate different evaluation systems depending on the needs of each student. It is essential to reconstruct the balance between online and offline assessment, as hybrid teaching emphasizes self-learning and group collaboration, making self-evaluation and peer evaluation essential components of a comprehensive, open, and diverse evaluation system.

To effectively carry out developmental evaluation, it is crucial to choose suitable evaluation methods and apply them flexibly, taking into account the specific evaluation content and corresponding course objectives. It is also important to incorporate the concept of performance-based evaluation appropriately. The evaluation should be focused on students' speaking performance and their ability to apply oral English knowledge or information technology to solve communication problems in practical situations. This approach should involve a comprehensive evaluation of students' language foundation, learning process, methods, and the formation of relevant emotional attitudes and values. With the aid of the internet, evaluation activities can be conducted through various means such as online speech, self-evaluation, portfolio recording, and questionnaires, allowing for a more comprehensive assessment.

VII. BLENDED LEARNING IN TEACHING OCC FOR COLLEGE EFL STUDENTS

The implementation of blended teaching to improve students' OCC necessitates the integration of virtual and in-person instructional approaches, and the successful fusion of these two methods is heavily dependent on leveraging cutting-edge computer technology, thereby imposing fresh demands on educators and learners alike. According to Vaughan (2010), teachers face various challenges when they start implementing blended learning, and factors such as teachers' personal creativity, the performance of blended learning systems, management support, incentive policies, and training all have an impact on teachers' blended learning. Similarly, Brown et al. (2016) also believes that there are both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that hinder teachers from implementing blended learning, such as a lack of time or increased workload.

While blended learning has the potential to enhance students' ability to communicate orally by providing more learning resources, greater opportunities for oral practice, and customized teaching services, the integration of technology into the teaching process, which results in the online component, might cause some level of unease among students, teachers, and educational institutions. Rasheed et al. (2020) conducted a systematic review of the literature and summarized that the challenges students face in blended learning include: self-regulation challenges, technological literacy and competency challenges, students' isolation challenges, technological sufficiency challenges, and technological complexity challenges. According to research conducted by Özmen and Atıcı (2014) and Thoms and Eryilmaz (2014), combining social networking sites with learning management systems has been found to have a positive impact on the quality of communication among students as well as between students and their instructors. This integration leads to increased social interaction, which ultimately results in a more engaging learning experience. Consequently, students who attend institutions where social networking sites are used for online activities are likely to face fewer of the challenges highlighted above (Rasheed et al., 2020).

To teach effectively in a blended learning environment, it is important for English teachers to possess adequate technological skills. Additionally, it is necessary for educators to seek out the appropriate technical and instructional assistance from their institution to inspire students to engage and participate in oral communication actively in their learning. According to Medina (2018), the competence of teachers in utilizing contemporary technological advancements is being challenged, and their unwillingness to acquire knowledge and apply online technology might be linked to studies highlighting the educators' grievances concerning the inadequacy of proper training and motivating assistance provided by their institutions in terms of integrating technology into their teaching practices.

In order to effectively utilize blended learning to improve students' oral communication abilities, educational institutions must possess a thorough comprehension of the technological proficiency and aptitude levels of their teachers and students, which is essential for the provision of dependable and resilient technological infrastructure support, as well as varied learning management systems. The main challenge that educational institutions face in implementing blended learning is providing technical support for teachers and students, including the expenses related to online technologies, maintenance, training, and acquiring appropriate modern technologies to promote a productive blended learning environment (Dehghanzadeh & Jafaraghaee, 2018; Genaidy et al., 2018).

To sum up, there is a growing need for increased involvement of stakeholders in utilizing blended learning for English language education and improving communication skills. This can be achieved by gaining institutional recognition and by teachers' dedicated efforts towards establishing a more extensive and well-structured hybrid learning system.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Online teaching has a broader meaning beyond distance education and can also have a significant impact on traditional classroom teaching. The purpose of integrating online teaching into campus teaching is not to replace traditional teaching methods, but rather to gradually merge and complement them to improve the overall teaching approach. This leads to the development of an effective teaching methodology that can be implemented in an information technology environment. Blended learning has become increasingly popular with the advancement of educational technology, and it emphasizes the combination of the strengths of traditional and digital teaching methods to achieve better learning outcomes.

In conclusion, the emergence of new digital resources has brought about rapid changes in various aspects of the world. Blended learning, as a newly emerging technological tool, has great potential to enhance modern language education in various fields due to its popularity among students. Therefore, English language educators, scholars, and institutions need to recognize the potential benefits of using blended teaching in the English education sector, especially for young learners. They should also take advantage of the opportunity to develop an innovative digital learning system for EFL students in the post-pandemic era.

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Reflection of Explicitation in Scientific Translation: Neural Machine Translation vs. Human Post-Editing

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Abstract—The present paper reports on the findings of an empirical comparative study on the extent to which explicitation is employed in the translation of a scientific text as conducted by Google Neural Machine Translation (GNMT) vs its post-edited (PE) version. A recent report released in English by the World Meteorological Organization in September 2023 was selected as the source text for the present study. The purpose of the study is to reveal how domain-specific acronyms and technical terms are lexically expanded (explicitated) in a GNMT output compared to its post-edited (PE) version as performed by a team of professional translators at a translation service provider in Amman-Jordan. Explicitation in translation can be obligatory or optional. The type of explicitation investigated in the present study is optional, pragmatic explicitation. The results show that GNMT has its limitations in dealing with scientific terms and acronyms in translating scientific texts from English into Arabic. In contrast, human post-editing explicitated domain-specific terms and acronyms producing a text with a higher level of readability and naturalness for domain expert readers and non-expert readers.

Index Terms—acronym, explicitation, GNMT, post-editing, technical translation

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Explicitation in Translation Studies*

Explicitation has been defined as a translation strategy that makes the message in the target text clearer and more explicit than it is in the source text (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997; Hatim & Mason, 2004). The first theorists to introduce explicitation as a translation shift were Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) defining it as ‘a stylistic translation technique which makes what is implicit in the source language explicit in the target language’ (p. 342). It was argued that explicitating the source text (ST) contributes to the cohesion and coherence of the TT especially with regard to system-bound elements (e.g. Al-Dabbagh, 2008).

Features of explicitation include but are not limited to lexical expansion; i.e. inserting new meaningful elements in the TT that are absent in the ST or lexical specification in which a SL unit is replaced with a TT unit with a more specific meaning (Klaudy & Karoly, 2005, p. 15). Features of explicitation were also identified as a reflection of any textual segment that is encoded explicitly in the translation (Carston, 2002). The common ground among all definitions is that it tends to contribute to disambiguation, cohesion and coherence of the TT.

Explicitation is considered obligatory when it is driven by structural mismatches between the two languages and optional when it is employed as a strategy to enhance the readability and naturalness of the TT (Klaudy, 1998, p. 83). In other words, optional explicitation is associated with stylistic differences and preferences. A sub-category of optional explicitation is pragmatic explicitation which seeks to explicitate system-bound elements or culture-bound elements to overcome the differences in the world or cultural knowledge between recipients of source and target texts (Englund-Dimitrova, 2005). The present study investigates optional, pragmatic explicitation of system-bound elements in a scientific report.

B. *Explicitation in Technical / Scientific Translation*

Translation of technical texts was defined as translation of texts written for special purposes including domains such as medicine, engineering, law, science among others (Wright & Wright, 1993). The fact that technical texts have their own jargons and specialized terminology makes their translation challenging (Muhiesan & Al-Ajrami, 2019). Thus, explicitation by lexical expansion becomes a necessity in specialized translation which seeks to expand domain-specific units with condensed information including highly technical terms, abbreviations and acronyms (Baker, 1992; Herget & Alegre, 2022). Acronyms were defined as abbreviations formed from the initial letter or group of letters of two or more words that are pronounced as words rather than separate initials (Pyles & Algeo, 1964). According to Al-Hamly and Farghal (2012), English opts for lexical reduction through abbreviations and acronyms for producing shorter discourse. In technical texts, acronyms are used to promote a sense of professionalism in domain-specific texts based on the assumption that it is written by domain experts to be read by experts (Barnett & Doubleday, 2020). However, when readership includes non-experts, translators may resort to lexical expansion of highly technical terms and acronyms to

simplify the text and enhance its naturalness. Some scholars even stressed the need for acronym expansion even for domain-expert readers (Hales et al., 2017; Thomas, 2021). Such a practice is more essential in case of translation from English into Arabic. While English tends to resort to acronyms especially in specialized domains (Al-Hamly & Farghal, 2012; Ulitkin et al., 2020), Arabic-coined acronyms are rarely found. Most acronyms used in Arabic discourse are either borrowed or transliterated from English (Kamil, 2020; Ameer & Altaie, 2009). Expanding a given acronym in the ST into its full form in the TT is a form of explicitation (Pakhomov et al., 2005; Anbaqi, 2009; Kasprowicz, 2010; Gumul, 2017; Abdelaal, 2019).

C. Neural Machine Translation

Machine translation (MT) is the application of computer software or program to the task of translating a given text from one language into another. Examples of MT tools include *Google Translate (GT)*, *DeepL*, *Microsoft Translator*, *Bing Translator*, *Reverso* among others. Such software programs are built by encoding morphological, syntactic and lexical-semantic structures of SL and TL allowing a statistic-based mapping to match segments of the two languages (Hartley, 2009, p. 121). Based on the initial MT design, two approaches of machine translation emerged; a rule-based machine translation (RBMT) and statistical machine translation (SMT). While the former is based on linguistic knowledge retrieved from grammars and dictionaries, the latter which superseded the former used unit alignments from parallel corpora to overcome language irregularities (Koehn et al., 2017).

In 2015, Neural Machine Translation (NMT) was launched benefiting from artificial neural network for higher rate of accuracy (He et al., 2015). As a technological breakthrough in machine translation, it superseded the previous approaches of RBMT and SMT (Polakova & Klimova, 2023). In principle, NMT conducts end-to-end translation with SL encoder and TL decoder in which words are integrated or incorporated within their corresponding words. This means that languages are represented by an embedding vector and clustered in the embedding space (Tan et al., 2019). By way of exemplification, iron, copper and gold are related semantically and usually co-occur within certain contexts and therefore are grouped together in metal-related clusters. This means that whenever the word *iron* occurs within this cluster, it vectors NMT to translate it as a type of metal rather than a home appliance used for smoothing clothes. Word-embedding was originally drawn from semantic theories that can process the semantics of a given text in an effective way very close to human processors and creates a better text-context interaction (Koehn et al., 2017). Thus, NMT architecture was meant to enhance text-context interaction; an advancement which was reflected in GNMT. The present study uses (GNMT) output along its human PE version for investigating and analyzing reflections of pragmatic explicitation.

D. Explicitation and Neural Machine Translation

Neural Machine Translation (NMT) is widely used in the translation industry to save effort and time (Koneru et al., 2023). In reflection to the market demands, machine translation and computer-assisted translation (CAT) as well as post-editing modules have been integrated into the study plans of translator training programs all over the world to prepare students for a competitive market (O'Brien et al., 2021). Subsequently, research on the efficiency of NMT vs human translation and the gaps that human translation can fill through post-editing have gained momentum.

There has been research on the development of NMT, its methods and efficiency (e.g. Tan et al., 2020). Several recent studies tended to compare between the quality of NMT vs human translation or post-editing (e.g. Houry, 2024) in Arabic-English translation. To the best knowledge of the author, no studies have been conducted to compare explicitation in NMT vs. human translation between English and Arabic; a gap which the present study fills.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Explicitation, as a translation shift received due attention in theoretical and empirical translation studies (Murtisari, 2016). Blum-Kulka (1986) studied the concept intensively through corpus-based comparative study of translations between French and English. Her study revealed that a remarkable addition of cohesive markers was noted as a recurrent translation shift in the TL from French into English and vice versa. As a result, Blum-Kulka (1986) hypothesized that explicitation is a translation universal.

Based on previous research, scholars conducted empirical corpus-based analysis to test the validity of the hypothesis (e.g. Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997; Englund Dimitrova, 2005; Abdel Hafiz & Sokarno, 2004; Al-Khafaji, 2005). Most studies supported the notion of the universality of explicitation, especially in translation of professionals. Subsequent studies tended to compare reflection of explicitation in the translations of professionals vs. non-professionals revealing that non-professionals also resort to explicitation (e.g. Vesterager, 2017; Blum-Kulka, 2000; Al-Dabbagh, 2008).

Studies were conducted on different language pairs and text domains for reflection of explicitation. Studies included languages such as French, Danish, Hungarian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Arabic and English among others. Text domains selected for studies on explicitation included literary, legal, scientific and cultural discourse that are labelled as technical texts requiring specialized translation (Gotti & Sarsevic, 2006; Olohan, 2015). Translation of technical texts were found to reflect higher percentage of explicitation due to inclusion of system-bound terms that need to be explicitated for non-expert readers (De Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981; Dirchalidis & Patsala, 2018).

In the context of translation between English and Arabic, Baker (1992) investigated explicitation in translation of literary and culture-bound texts. Hjort-Pedersen and Faber (2009) investigated how explicitation is employed by trainee translators versus experienced translators in translation of technical/legal discourse between Danish and English. Vesterager (2017) conducted an empirical study on how explicitation is employed by professional vs. non-professional translators in legal translation and revealed that professional translators resort to explicitation more than trainees.

Most studies concluded that explicitation is a translation universal in translations of professionals and non-professionals with higher percentage in translations of professionals indicating that it is a practice that reflects expertise in translation. In his descriptive translation studies, Toury (1995) found a direct correlation between explicitation and readability of the ST and therefore producing a better quality TT. For Hatim and Munday (2004), explicitation clarifies the intended message of the source text which contributes to a more natural TT. Alzu'bi (2021) concluded that explicitation is a technique that adapts the TT and improves it. Most studies conducted on explicitation came to the conclusion that explicitation plays an essential role in inter-lingual and intercultural communication (Murtisari, 2016).

Explicitation techniques -whether the explicitation was obligatory or optional- were found to be reflected at four levels; syntactic, lexical, pragmatic and textual (Al-Anqabi, 2009). For instance, adding cohesive devices is deemed as a syntactic explicitation while adding footnotes and expanding condensed information (e.g. highly technical terms, acronyms and abbreviations) are considered lexical expansion (Baker, 1992; Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997; Blum-Kulka, 2000).

Including neural machine translation in translation studies for quality assessment was reflected in several studies. The study carried out by Ahrenberg (2017) compared NMT with human translation in the use of connective devices revealing that human translation produces more cohesive texts. Some other studies compared performance of trainees vs. professional translators in post-editing GNMT outputs (e.g. Khoury et al., 2024) which revealed that experience in the job market can remarkably affect the quality of post-editing. Temizöz (2013) showed that experts of the subject matter post-edited technical terms in a better way than experienced translators. Béz (2018) revealed that while students of modern languages focus on syntactic post-editing, translation students post-edit all aspects of the source text.

The only study that compared features of explicitation in neural machine translation vs. human translation was conducted by Krüger (2020). It investigated explicitation in the translation of scientific text from English into German and concluded that human translation conducts more explicitation than NMT and thus produces a more natural text. Since explicitation indicates sensitivity to text-context interaction, the results of Krüger's study (ibid) served as a significant indicator of NMT underdeveloped performance in relation to explicitation as a translation universal. The present study contributes to the literature by providing the first study to investigate explicitation in NMT vs. human post-editing between English and Arabic.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study lies in more than one aspect. Firstly, it contributes to comparative studies between raw NMT outputs and the PE version; a research scope that is still at its infancy. Secondly, it investigates explicitation which was not tackled in such comparative studies -to the best knowledge of the author- except for the study by Krüger (2020). Thirdly, such comparative studies have not been conducted in English-Arabic translations yet. The present study fills the gap by investigating reflection of explicitation in scientific translation as performed by GNMT vs human post-editing between English and Arabic.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As the industry today relies on NMT (O'Brien, 2021), machine translation needs to be part of translation empirical studies in terms of proficiency. As discussed in section 1, explicitation was found to be one indicator of professional translation. By comparing NMT performance with the post-editing of experienced translators, important implications can be driven at two levels: 1) the proficiency of raw NMT without explicitation and 2) what needs to be post-edited in the output to increase its proficiency. Therefore, the research questions for the present study are stated as follows:

- 1- What is the difference between GNMT and its PE version in expanding/ explicating condensed information units (domain-specific units and acronyms)?
- 2- What needs to be post-edited in a GNMT output in terms of expansion/ explicitation?

V. METHODS AND MATERIALS

A. Source and Target Texts

A 48-page report titled '*United in Science 2023: Sustainable Development*' released by the World Meteorological Organization in September, 2023 was selected as the source text for the present study (found at <https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/united-in-science-2023>). The ST belongs to technical/ scientific domains or what is called specialized translation (e.g. Olohan, 2015).

The ST is an authentic text that was requested for translation into Arabic by a research development institute in Jordan. The translation was performed by a group of five professional translators in a translation service provider in

October, 2023. According to the translation service provider, the translation project was carried out by using raw GNMT output after which the output was post-edited by the five translators.

B. Data Collection and Tools

For the purpose of the study, the only aspects that were investigated in the PE version were related to reflections of pragmatic explicitation in the form of lexical expansion of domain-specific expressions and acronyms before and after post-editing. Incidents of explicitation in the two outputs were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The post-edited version was conducted by five experienced translators at a translation service provider as part of a translation project presented to a research development institute. Thus, the comparative study was built on the raw GNMT vs the PE version as provided by the translation service provider.

VI. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In the following section, results and analysis are presented quantitatively and qualitatively. All domain-specific acronyms and terms were traced in the 48-page report. The report was found to use 55 domain-specific acronyms and 9 highly technical terms. Selection of domain-specific terms was based on their reflection at the UN digital library (<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/452305?ln=en>). Sections 7.1 and 7.2 below present and discuss the translation of GNMT before and after post-editing in relation to reflections of lexical expansion as a form of pragmatic explicitation.

A. Acronyms Processing in GNMT vs. PE Version

As mentioned previously, there are several techniques that lie within explicitation as a translation shift. One of which is lexical expansion (Klaudy, 2000). The source text used acronyms intensively which is typical of English scientific texts (Ammar et al., 2011; Al Hamly & Farghal, 2012).

The repetition rate of acronyms used in the report ranged between twice such as CORDEX (Coordinated Regional Climate Downscaling Experiment) and 185 times such as SDG (Sustainable Development Goals). In compliance with the norms of technical writing, acronyms are normally written in full form on first use (Mark, 2012). With reference to the ST, expansion of acronyms was provided at first mentioning; after which acronyms were used solely without their expansions which is typical of English technical writing as mentioned above.

(a). GNMT of Acronyms

The translation processing of acronyms in GNMT was found to lie within four main categories; 1) translating the full form of the acronym in Arabic; i.e. expansion in the target language, 2) borrowing the acronym as is in the SL alphabets without expansion, 3) transliterating the acronym into a TL-alphabet acronym without expansion. In addition, it was noticed that some acronyms that stand for more than one multi-word unit were inappropriately expanded; i.e. mis-explicated for the domain. Examples on each of the four categories are discussed below.

The analysis of GNMT reveals that 15 out of the 55 acronyms were properly expanded or explicitated into their TL full forms. This is equal to 27% of the total acronyms used in the ST. The rest were kept as acronyms either in the SL (borrowing) or TL alphabets (transliteration). Acronyms which were fully expanded into their Arabic full form in each mentioning throughout the report include IPCC, ILO, SDG which stand for *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, *International Labour Organization* and *Sustainable Development Goals* respectively.

On the other hand, acronyms such as EWSA (*Early warning for South Africa*), SE (*Safe Energy*), OSISAF (*Ocean and Sea Ice Satellite Application Facility*), SAA (*Vulnerability Adaptation Assessment*) were transferred into English acronyms in the Arabic TT without any lexical expansion. Apart from the fact that non-expert readers may not be familiar with a given acronym, such code-switching from Arabic into English in the TT is expected to break the flow of the Arabic discourse and thus block its comprehension.

The same resulted in transliterating the English acronym into Arabic alphabets which yielded a more puzzling TT since Arabic does not normally use acronyms in texts originally written in Arabic (Ameer & Altaie, 2009; Kamil, 2020). Transliterating acronyms into Arabic included units such *جي سي اف و جي جي دي دبليو وجواون* as translation of GT (Gas Turbine), GCF (Green House Fund), GGGW (Global Green House Watch, GOAON (Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network) respectively.

The fourth category included acronyms that were mis-explicated since they stand for more than one multi-unit form. These were also found as disguised mistranslation since the explicitation was irrelevant to the domain. By way of exemplification, GNMT rendered the English acronyms IFRC (International Conference on Regional Climate), IOC (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission) AI (Artificial Intelligence), UC (Urban Climate) EEI (Earth Energy Imbalance) and FSS (Farmer Field Schools) into *الاتحاد الدولي، اللجنة الدولية الاولمبية، منظمة العفو الدولية، جامعة كاليفورنيا، مبادرة التعليم المصرية، خدمة الساتلايت الثابتة*. The back translations of the these full-form units are: International federal for IFRC, International Olympic Committee for IOC, Amnesty International for AI, University of California for UC, Egyptian Education Initiative for EEI and Fixed Satellite Service for FSS which were expanded out of their contextual meaning. Thus, the Arabic multi-word units given as explicitated segments to the English acronyms were semantically irrelevant to the subject matter of the scientific report. The fact that the ST provided the full form of acronyms on first use provides evidence of the intended meaning of the acronym. Such processing of acronyms by GNMT resulted into

further confusion to the Arabic reader since the acronym was translated properly on first mentioning and mis-explicated in subsequent uses. In addition, some acronyms were completely mistranslated as they were confused in GNMT with English words. This includes REAP and WISER which stand for *Resource and Energy Analysis Programme* and *Weather Information Services* respectively were translated as words into *يجني و اكثر حكمة* in the meaning of *to reap a harvest* and *to have more wisdom*.

The analysis presented above on how GNMT architecture dealt with acronyms reveals more than one issue to be considered. Firstly, GNMT is trained on expanding acronyms from English into Arabic as it translated a percentage of 27% of the ST acronyms. However, it failed in expanding 73% of them with exception of the first mentioning. In addition, the analysis shows that GNMT is still under-developed to meet the contextual meaning in relation to acronyms. This is reflected in more than one example such as expanding IOC as International Olympic Committee instead of Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission in a meteorology-specific domain.

Transferring acronyms from the ST into acronyms in the TT by borrowing or transliterating poses a cohesion-coherence problem for the Arabic TT. According to norms of translating acronyms from Arabic into English, only common English acronyms are borrowed into Arabic in their SL alphabets or transliterated into Arabic such as *اليونيسكو*, corresponding to UNESCO, FAO and NASA. Non-common acronyms are normally expanded in Arabic followed by the acronym in English between brackets (Al-Jarf, 2021). Evidence to this practice is supported by referring to parallel Arabic texts found at www.un.org and <https://arabic.euronews.com>.

(b). Post-Edited Version of Acronyms

The PE version of GNMT as conducted by the translators' team reflects different handling of expansion of acronyms. The 55 acronyms were expanded into their full forms in Arabic in every use of the acronym. The method of post-editing employed by the translators is expansion to the full form in Arabic followed by the English borrowed acronym between brackets without any transliteration of the acronym; i.e. English acronyms were not written in Arabic-alphabet acronyms, which was found to be consistent throughout the report. In addition, several acronyms were further explicitated within the expanded form above the lexical items for which they stand. For instance, acronyms such as GCF for Green Climate Fund was expanded and explicitated into *صندوق دعم التغيرات المناخية التابع للأمم المتحدة* (Back Translation: Green Climate Fund **of the United Nations**) in which UN reflects further lexical explicitation above the acronym initials.

With reference to Arabic parallel texts on climate found at www.un.org, it was found that while all acronyms are expanded into their full form in Arabic, there is no clear unified methodology or norm in dealing with the expansion process. While some organization names are translated literally such as Green Climate Fund into *الصندوق الأخضر للمناخ*, other acronyms are expanded into a form that reflects the function such as Greenhouse Gases as *الغازات الدفيئة*. This implies that the PE version in the present study is reader-oriented that seeks naturalness of the translated text for expert and non-expert readers. Such feature is still far-fetched in GNMT and inconsistent in human translation available in parallel texts.

B. GNMT vs PE Version of Domain-Specific Terms

Domain-specific terms were defined as having significant meaning in a particular domain or belonging to a specific domain as part of its jargon (Kim & Cavedon, 2011) constituting a part of domain specific languages (DSL) in which the terminology is custom-tailored for a specialized domain (Pech, 2021). Selection and categorization of terms that are domain-specific was based on *the glossary of scientific and technical meteorological terminology, English-Arabic*, available at the UN digital library (<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/452305?ln=en>). The scientific report reflected nine climate-specific terms which were cross-checked in the glossary. These included proper names of projects or software applications, e.g. Climpact and Femlink and other terms related to climate phenomena such as El Niño and eutrophication. Table 1 shows the translation provided by GNMT of these terms while Table 2 reflects the PE version of the same terms. Discussion follows the display of the Arabic translation of GNMT and human translation along with their back translations in Table 1 and 2.

TABLE 1
GNMT TRANSLATION OF DOMAIN-SPECIFIC TERMS

	ST term	GNMT	Back Translation
1-	Anthropogenic Activities	نشاط بشري	Human Activities
2-	Climate Extremes	الظروف المناخية المتطرفة	Extreme climate conditions
3-	Climpact	Climpact	Climpact
4-	Cyclone Freddy	اعصار فريدي	Freddy Hurricane/ cyclone
5-	El Niño	النينيو	El Niño
6-	El Niña	النينيا	El Niña
7-	Eutrophication	التخثث	Eutrophication
8-	FemLINK	فيملينك	FemLINK
9-	Nowcasting	التنبؤ الانمي	Immediate forecasting

TABLE 2
HUMAN TRANSLATION OF DOMAIN-SPECIFIC TERMS

	ST term	Human Translation	Back Translation
1-	Anthropogenic Activities	النشاط البشري المضر بالبيئة	Human Activities that harm the environment
2-	Climate Extremes	الظروف المناخية الحادة	Acute climate conditions
3-	Climpact	برنامج Climpact وهو برنامج لحساب المؤشرات المناخية ذات الصلة بقطاعات الصحة والزراعة والمياه	Climpact: a software which calculates climate indices related to sectors of health, agriculture and water
4-	Cyclone Freddy	اعصار فريدي وهو اعصار شديد ضرب جنوب المحيط الهندي في شباط عام 2023	Freddy cyclone: a severe cyclone whit hit southern Indian ocean during February 2023
5-	El Ni ño	النينيو: ظاهرة مناخية تحدث تحدث عندما يكون هناك انخفاض في كمية المياه الباردة التي ترتفع إلى سطح البحر بالقرب من أمريكا الجنوبية	El Ni ño: a climate phenomenon which occurs when there is a decrease in the amount of cold water that elevates to the surface in areas close to South America
6-	El Ni ña	النينيا: ظاهرة مناخية تحدث نتيجة برودة غير عادية لسطح المياه في المنطقة الاستوائية في المحيط الهادي	El Ni ña: a climate phenomenon characterized by unusual coldness of surface water of the Pacific Ocean
7-	Eutrophication	اثراء غذائي في المسطحات المائية	Richness of nutrients in water bodies
8-	FemLINK	فيملينك Femlink وهو مشروع يسعى لحماية المرأة (المهمشة) في الظروف المناخية الحادة	FemLINK: a project which aims at protecting overlooked women in extreme/ acute climate conditions
9-	Nowcasting	التنبؤ الاالي: تنبؤ للمستقبل القريب يتراوح بين بضع دقائق الى ستة ساعات	Nowcasting: near future forecasting covering a period of time between few minutes up to six hours.

Table 1 reflects the Arabic translations as provided by GNMT. It reflects two types of domain-specific terms; common climate-related terms and names of climatic phenomena, software applications and institutions. Common nouns were translated by GNMT without further explicitation. These include ‘anthropogenic activity’ and ‘nowcasting’ which were translated literally without any explicitation. Names of entities or phenomena such as El Ni ño, Cyclone Freddy, Climpact or Femlink were unrecognized by GNMT where some were transliterated and others were borrowed as acronyms in English alphabets without explicitation. This reveals that in addition to acronyms, NMT reflects drawbacks in recognizing some proper nouns (Hassan et al., 2018; L äubli et al., 2020). It may be argued that NMT are not trained to deal with proper nouns, however, some studies suggested injecting feature vectors into factored-transformer model to improve NMT of proper nouns (Takai et al., 2021).

With reference to human post-editing in Table 2, it can be noticed that proper common nouns were not only translated but further explicitated. For example, ‘anthropogenic activities’ was translated into النشاط البشري المضر بالبيئة which is back-translated into ‘human activities that harm the environment’ explicitating the negative impact of the activities. The same can be seen in the translation of ‘nowcasting’ that was explicitated in the PE version as future casting covering any period between few minutes up to six hours.

Interestingly, Arabic parallel texts found at <https://www.un.org/ar/chronicle/article/20126>, <https://www.un.org/ar/climatechange/reports>, <https://archive.unescwa.org/ar> and <https://news.un.org/ar/story/2023/03/1118817> revealed that domain-specific technical terms are translated into domain-specific technical terms without further explicitation (e.g. eutrophication: التخصث). Post-editing in the present study exerted further effort in explicitating domain-specific terms (Table 2) apparently to guarantee comprehension to domain-expert and non-expert readers.

Similar to the post-editing of acronyms, scientific terms were all further explicitated by the post-editors which does not comply with what is reflected in Arabic parallel texts. Therefore, data analysis provided in sections 7.1 and 7.2 reveal that human post-editing seemed to expand and explicitate both acronyms and highly technical terms to provide readability and naturalness to both expert and non-expert readers remarkably above the GNMT output and slightly above translations in parallel texts.

Based on the notion that explicitation contributes to a more readable and natural TT (e.g. Klaudy, 1998), it can be argued that the PE version in the present study rendered the text into a readable and more natural text for expert and non-expert readers. Therefore, the first research question stated in section 5 is answered as follows: PE version of GNMT output reflected explicitation of acronyms and domain-specific terms. Acronyms were fully expanded and further explicitated above the full form in some examples and domain-specific terms were explicitated by adding some explanatory lexical items to provide readability and naturalness to non-expert readers. Thus, the second research question is answered by building on the findings to suggest a thorough post-editing process for scientific texts from English into Arabic.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Recent research emphasizes that encoder-decoder architecture in NMT has been designed to utilize recurrent neural networks that capture the meaning in relation to the context to perform better contextual meaning (Gao et al., 2022).

Despite the argument that NMT systems are booming in the translation industry, their development is still hampered by the lack of quality input, as well as the insufficient means of testing the quality of the translations (Shoshan, 2018). Based on this, the present study investigated the MT output vs its PE version to provide the feedback needed on the quality of the MT raw output.

The results of the present study show that vectors are not yet designed to deal with acronyms between English and Arabic in a systematic pattern and still need to be embedded in a similar pattern to recognize the semantic relationship between units. As for domain-specific terms, MT output was able to capture the meaning translating it into a domain-specific term, however, without any further explicitation which raises a question of whether there is a loss of meaning for non-expert readers.

The fact that GNMT expanded some acronyms and struggled with others reveals that the neural network through its encoder-decoder models are being fed with some Arabic-English acronyms but still lags behind when compared to human translation or post-editing. Apart from acronyms, GNMT is trained to deal with scientific terms from English into Arabic, however, the output remains confined to domain expert readers. In conclusion the Arabic-English encoder-decoder architecture in GNMT needs post-editing in relation to acronyms and domain-specific terms for scientific texts if the target readership includes expert and non-expert readers.

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A Cognitive Model of Language Teacher Fossilization

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Abstract—Expertise in foreign language teaching has been widely discussed in the literature as inherently related to accumulated classroom experience and, hence, extensive practical knowledge. Even though current conceptualizations are increasingly focusing on teachers' ability to reflect on their performance and continuously develop a repertoire of didactic resources regardless of their career stage, effective human information processing in the profession remains under-researched. This paper sees the concept of expertise from the perspective of cognitive processes, and specifically operations involved in problem-solving. The author presents a theoretical model of teacher fossilization, discussing attention, knowledge, reasoning, and judgment as potential inhibitors of intellectual vitality and growth in individuals. When neglected, these factors might lead experienced teachers to make just as incompetent decisions as novice educators. The model highlights the external and internal forces that cause practitioners to minimize, rather than maximize, their learning opportunities in a workplace. The new concept has implications for teachers' day-to-day practice as well as for in-service professional development initiatives. It serves as a guiding principle for the successful utilization of one's cognitive capital and outlines both the purpose and direction of one's mental effort.

Index Terms—teacher cognition, expertise, language teaching, late career, fossilization

I. INTRODUCTION

The teaching profession, especially Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), demands that practitioners continuously improve their specialist knowledge and skills to effectively cater to a variety of **specific** needs of their **specific** learners in **specific** educational, cultural, economic, and social contexts. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, the concept of domain expertise has long been recognized as a non-linear learning process rather than the ultimate state of occupational development. It holds that an individual's mental and emotional growth occurs through confronting changes in the physical and symbolic reality (Lindsay & Norman, 2013). Information processing when addressing the unexpected (solving problems) is seen as an intentional human activity aimed at mobilizing the available cognitive resources (e.g., attention, existing knowledge structures, reasoning) to construct new meanings and formulate relevant feedback for future reference. This perspective on expertise challenges the traditional assumption that accumulated experience always reflects a person's professional competence. On the contrary, in order to make expert judgments about emerging events in the foreign language (FL) classroom, teachers need to maximize their interpretative efforts, critically evaluate what appears to be familiar patterns of incidents, and expand the limits of their current understandings.

In reality senior teachers are often perceived as accomplished performers, although studies show that didactic decisions resulting from excessive confidence or "autopilot" responses to environmental stimuli can be far from informed, flexible, and context-sensitive. There are several factors, both external and internal, that contribute to teachers gradually developing a "fossil shell" instead of deepening their domain expertise throughout their careers. This paper explores the primary cognitive causes behind language teachers becoming so-called experienced non-experts. It proposes to refer to this process as a Cognitive Model of Language Teacher Fossilization and discusses its validity in academic research as well as in teacher training programs.

The literature review below presents and challenges the predominant views on professional development in teaching. It emphasizes the necessity for empirical research on experienced teachers' cognitions, particularly focusing on specialist knowledge and its origins.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The figurative meaning of the adjective *fossilized*, as illustrated below, is essentially negative.

- "Made firm, fixed, or rigid by the passage of time" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)
- "old-fashioned and never changing" (Cambridge Dictionary)
- "antiquated or inflexible" (Collins Dictionary)
- "unable to change or develop" (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries)
- "unlikely to change" (Britannica Dictionary)

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Both physical and abstract entities referred to as *fossilized*, such as structures, systems, mechanisms, views, approaches, or notions, imply inefficacy and failure.

In foreign language didactics, the term *fossilization* has been associated with two main concepts 1) repeated errors that become ingrained in the learner's productive performance as permanent and difficult to eliminate features, and 2) the plateau in the development of the learner's foreign language competence (Selinker, 1972). The phenomenon is primarily characterized by **resistance to cognitive progress**, which is caused by a variety of internal and external factors. Among others, studies have shown correlations between language fossilization and learners' age, their tendency to overgeneralize, and their motivation level (Benzouaoui & Fettah, 2023; Xu, 2022; Han et al., 2021; Ellis, 2000). While some theorists doubt whether FL learners can overcome linguistic obstacles and achieve native-like proficiency in the target language, others advocate for teachers to address fossilization by employing various compensatory strategies. These strategies aim to draw students' attention to the problem in order to assist them in improvement (Al-Ibadi & Breesam, 2021; Zang, 2021; Widyaningsih, 2021). Indeed, the subject has stimulated strong academic and pedagogical interest ever since Larry Selinker's publication in *The International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*.

By contrast, the scholarly discussion about **teachers reaching a cognitive plateau** and developing resistance to growth in different aspects of their professional performance (e.g., conceptual and procedural specialist knowledge, language skills, problem-solving capacity, interpersonal intelligence, etc.) has been rather limited. Researchers have conducted comparative studies of experienced vs. inexperienced English instructors (Torabzadeh & Tavassoli, 2021; Nazari et al., 2019; Mehrpour & Moghaddam, 2018) and extensively explored the concepts of expertise in TEFL (Yazdanmehr et al., 2016; Akbari & Yazdanmehr, 2014; Richards, 2002), teacher identity (Nazari & Karimpour, 2023; Golombek & Klager, 2015; Ahmadi, 2014; Tsui, 2007), continuous professional development (Ray, 2021; Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017; Riddell, 2015), reflective practice (Godinez Martinez, 2022; Farrell, 2017), motivation, and occupational burnout (Fathi, 2021; Pourtousi et al., 2018; Day, 2004). However, there is no theoretical model demonstrating processes contributing to the metaphorical 'fossilization' of teachers' minds, particularly their immature ability to maximize opportunities to enhance competence by diagnosing incidents in the FL classroom and engaging in progressive problem-solving (Tsui, 2005). Such a model is necessary to foster awareness among teachers that resources commonly believed to validate their instructional competence, such as extensive practice or a solid educational background, can actually deteriorate it.

Accumulated practical knowledge remains the fundamental point of reference for teachers in critical situations. Indeed, mental representations of prior experiences provide educators with patterns or schemata of immediate thought and action, enabling them to conserve cognitive energy for critically evaluating and judging the new circumstances they find themselves in (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). As Strasser (2010) points out, teacher learning takes place through the intentional processing of new information that leads to adjustments in existing representations. This involves 1) attention to detail, 2) activation of various sources of knowledge, 3) higher-order reasoning, and 4) principle-based feedback for effective use in analogous situations in the future (Kahneman, 2011; Rodgers, 2002; Reber, 1993). Nevertheless, available evidence indicates that experienced teachers can also exhibit characteristics of non-experts; they may struggle to reconsider their personal beliefs and theories, rely on quick-fix solutions, and demonstrate excessive confidence in their didactic choices (Tripp, 2012; Richards & Farrell, 2011; Johnson, 2005; Wysocka, 2003; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993). A study by Yan et al. (2023) reveals that five mid-career English teacher educators evaluated their language competence as substandard and their contribution to professional development opportunities as unsatisfactory.

The theory of professional capital in education (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) emphasizes that teachers' decisional effectiveness is shaped by their experience and classroom practice. This enables them to navigate complex or challenging situations and make sound judgments even in the absence of agreed-upon rules or procedures. This fundamental component of expertise should be complemented, according to the authors, with close collaboration and the transfer of knowledge within a workplace community to ensure the continuous development of individual instructors and schooling institutions. Importantly, the vision promoted as a strategy for environments requiring improvement interventions rests on the premise that teachers and their superiors are willing to engage and take full responsibility for their professional growth. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) do not elaborate, however, on the higher-order dimension of knowledge construction and exchange.

The model proposed in this paper addresses the risk of mental stagnation that teachers face due to insufficient engagement of their cognitive resources in response to episodes that "have enormous consequences for personal change and development" (Sikes et al., 1985, p. 230).

III. A COGNITIVE MODEL OF LANGUAGE TEACHER FOSSILIZATION

Figure 1 below presents a model that encapsulates both the cognitive resources involved in **problem-solving situations in teaching** (i.e., attention, knowledge, reasoning, and professional judgment) as well as internal/external factors that affect the administration of these resources. For descriptive purposes, the elements located on the periphery of the diagram will henceforth be referred to as "calcifiers" because, ultimately, they are believed to inhibit rather than stimulate human information processing at critical junctures.

Problem-solving is the focal point of the model because, as argued by Feltovich et al. (2006), unexpected and puzzling occurrences are likely to motivate individuals to develop new causal relationships between situational components. Teachers' reactions to difficulties reveal their domain competence, level of open-mindedness, and cognitive flexibility, all of which indicate a stage in their professional development. In the foreign language classroom, a variety of potential challenges extend beyond the complexity of the subject matter or class management. Both the intercultural dimension of teaching English as a foreign or second language and a wide range of specific learning needs constitute challenging terrain to navigate.

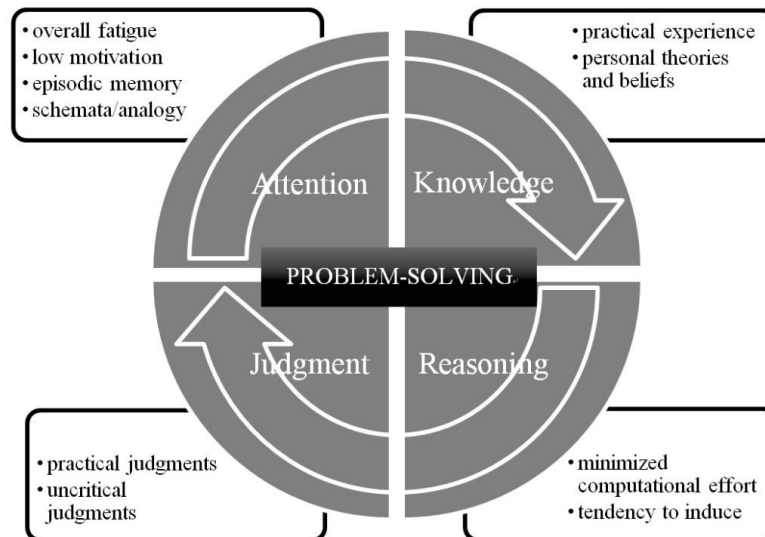


Figure 1. A Cognitive Model of Language Teacher Fossilization

A. Attention

As Hayes (1989) put it, problems can only be solved when a gap between the current state and the desired state is recognized and accurately depicted/represented. Indeed, the fundamental step in selecting an adequate course of didactic action is **observing** that there is an issue to attend to. Teachers construct mental representations of complex issues in unique ways, utilizing their sensory, imagery, intellectual, and emotional capacities. This fact questions, to some extent, the concept of experienced practitioners with their distinct pattern-recognition skills being superior to novices. Specifically, individuals who are new to the profession are highly responsive to stimuli. Their focus and computational effort increase and sharpen even when they feel anxious, overwhelmed, and uncertain about what they observe. Styles (2006) maintains that motivation to build meaningful connections between one's existing knowledge and the external world is a good enough objective to successfully manage attentional processes and bring into focus what might broaden personal and professional understandings.

By the same token, extensive practice, or, in cognitive terms, a reservoir of mental models of classroom situations, allows mid and late-career teachers to promptly respond to the environment in tried and tested ways. However, familiar schemata are activated at the expense of attention to nuances and subtleties (Berliner, 1994). In other words, experienced teachers, equipped with their abundant episodic memories, seek analogical coherence and thus can possibly overlook tiny yet significant incompatibilities between *now* and *then* (Holyoak, 2005). When incoming information is neglected or roughly represented, teachers fail to adopt optimal solutions to problems. Consequently, they struggle to support language learning, expand their professional horizons, and demonstrate competence.

Last but not least, overall fatigue resulting from work and age-related burdens can significantly contribute to teachers' inattention or incorrect recognition of patterns in the classroom environment. Senior educators who strain to thoroughly observe lesson contents, interactions, planned procedures, and behaviors may be unable to recognize the need for revision and innovative approaches. Low levels of motivation, which are not uncommon among experienced practitioners, do not support attentional processes. The complexity of foreign language instruction can discourage many individuals from engaging in the cognitive work, especially when they perceive their efforts as unacknowledged and face intolerable systemic or institutional pressures. This might also result in automatic responses to emerging difficulties.

On the whole, the powers of observation do not improve along the professional path unless teachers choose to make effort to enhance them. The continuous mobilization of attentional resources is certainly the primary preventive measure for professional fossilization.

B. Knowledge

Alexander et al. (2011) point out that events in teaching offer the best orientation toward knowing as they prompt questions about what occurs. These questions, in turn, necessitate the activation of specialist knowledge and an

evaluation of its application. The longer teachers work, the easier it becomes for them to answer questions about perplexing situations. This is because they have acquired a proper understanding of the scope of the curriculum, the institutional settings, and the general educational context with its cultural, economic, and political undertones. They are also familiar with their learners' profiles and needs, didactic materials, lesson procedures, instructional and management techniques, not to mention the subject matter, their well-established professional identity, and psychological make-up. However, there are areas of expertise in TEFL that are increasingly threatened among experienced practitioners.

The model of teacher fossilization indicates two major calcifiers: teachers' personal theories and their practical knowledge, both of which are highly resistant to cognitive renewal. First, it is worth stressing that what teachers know and think about FL instruction has been shaped by various factors, such as their individual life paths, including their own language learning experiences, preferred teaching styles, pre-service education, critical incidents in their work, significant others, and institutional demands (Borg, 2006). Over the years, their impact amplifies teachers' conceptualizations of what works and what does not work in the classroom. For example, the selection of grammar teaching strategies, lesson interaction patterns, testing methods, or feedback tools, to name just a few, reflects teachers' subjective, and sometimes biased, interpretations of the language learning process. In the era of increased human mobility and intercultural communication, instant and digitalized access to information, AI assistance, developments in neuroscience, and new trends in teaching English resulting from these phenomena, open-mindedness and adaptability become principal teacher qualities. In short, the validity of long-established assumptions and beliefs may become doubtful in the fast-changing reality and educational challenges it generates.

Secondly, the practical dimension of work, namely procedures applied by instructors to create optimal conditions for learning, constitutes a legitimate source of teacher knowledge provided that the didactic decisions have rational and specialist justification (Maclellan, 2015). Unexamined routines build up teachers' tacit knowledge and instinctive responses to problems, rather than informed ones. Tripp (2012) interestingly observes that teachers who cannot explain what they do and why are akin to doctors who administer treatments based on what they 'feel' or 'hope' will be effective. Experienced educators bear a special responsibility towards society, similar to doctors or lawyers, but they also face the highest risk of becoming disconnected from advancements in educational research. TEFL literature offers much more than just pools of classroom activity resources to choose from; it abundantly helps practitioners align theory with action. Teachers who neglect it expose themselves to professional fossilization.

Overall, personal theories and repertoires of workable solutions/behavior patterns do not encourage teachers to explore their field, test hypotheses, boost reflective thought, and expand knowledge boundaries. By contrast, they may substantially impede teachers' problem-solving performance.

C. Reasoning

Reasoning involves establishing relationships between pieces of internal and external knowledge activated as a body of evidence to examine in a problem-solving situation (Strasser, 2010). The principal aim is to successfully integrate distributed mental representations. As a result of operations performed on available representations, new configurations of information are formed, laying the foundation for conclusions. A degree of computational effort and adopted lines of reasoning can either lead to a desirable outcome or have a calcifying effect.

When teachers confine their thinking to familiar paths, they overlook potentially relevant sources of professional guidance that they could have explored but did not see as valuable connections to make. For example, the fact that students failed to do homework may initiate a common yet highly simplified train of thought, starting from the premise that a task given to students is their statutory obligation to the claim that failing in duties indicates an irreverent attitude deserving a reprimand. Challenging questions about the validity, format, clarity, or familiarity of the homework, as well as about the teacher's own beliefs in this regard, can lead to advancing a new explanation of both the phenomenon and its causes. Similarly, collective feedback provided to English learners on their writing should go far beyond what are referred to as common mistakes. It is rather naive to think of this technique as a beneficial corrective to language production inaccuracies, but it remains a widespread practice among teachers, including seasoned ones. Addressing the problem so selectively indicates that instructors do not incorporate the theoretical principles of second language acquisition, differentiation, or learner psychology in this instance. Tsui (2005) discusses the concept of 'problematizing the unproblematic,' which can be a helpful strategy for teachers as it enables a more thorough benchmark for the future. However, research indicates that experienced teachers often prioritize mental short-cuts over analytical thinking processes, even when the former are based on limited or selective evidence.

Furthermore, inductive inferences prevail in workplace contexts as they are immediate and natural responses to rising issues. They can be perfectly logical, but their accuracy, especially when based on limited observations, calls them into doubt as a basis for effective problem-solving, not to mention professional expertise. Those who primarily rely on inductive reasoning expand their practical knowledge. However, without challenging assumptions and testing them against domain paradigms or theories, they may generate instinctive short-term answers rather than optimal ones. Indeed, inept inductive reasoning sets a cognitive trap for teacher thinking, and it can lead to cognitive fossilization.

In summary, higher-order reasoning operations play a crucial role in problem-solving. This is why their potency regulates the extent to which learners benefit from the proposed solutions and also demonstrates the cognitive capacity of the teachers. In the field of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, this aspect of intellectual performance is as important as in other educational subject areas.

D. Judgment

Professional judgments on instruction-related matters, including problematic situations, are teachers' best estimates of the occurrences based on their observations, specialist knowledge, and logical reasoning. Tripp (2012) proposes a typology of judgments that comprises practical, diagnostic, reflective, and critical conclusions, with critical judgments requiring the most of cognitive effort. This is because teachers not only act upon their analysis of potential causes of disturbances and awareness of competent ways to repair damage but also engage in a prolonged process of verifying both personal and professional standards that guide their didactic moves. To confront values and principles, it is necessary to demonstrate intellectual and emotional maturity and rigor, qualities that are expected to be found in experienced educators. However, as Wysocka (2003) points out, senior teachers tend to be confident in their convictions and lack self-awareness. In her study, ELT instructors claimed that they promoted the communicative approach in their classrooms, even though lesson observations failed to prove this. Their self-critique may have been hindered by uncritical thinking and judgment.

The other complicating factor in making effective judgments is an excessively exaggerated focus on the practical aspect of the English teaching profession. In-service Continuous Professional Development (CPD) sessions are common in educational settings, along with numerous online initiatives, most of which aim to provide practitioners with exciting and applicable ideas. Regardless of how inspirational they can be, resources in use need solid conceptual foundations, which can only be established through careful consideration. Foreign language didactics is an academic discipline and as such should not be limited to fun-oriented creative activities as a response to learners' needs. For example, if the teacher avoids pair work and justifies it by students' reluctance to interact within such patterns, it might as well be his or her reluctance to admit that he or she struggles to arrange these patterns effectively or finds eliciting the outcomes time-consuming. When contemplated in a truthful and responsible manner, the teacher may discover possible underlying biases and opportunities for adjustment.

Overall, the concept of professional fossilization offers a fresh perspective on the stages of teacher development. It complements our current understanding of expertise by introducing an inherent risk of cognitive stagnation. It also indicates the enemy forces that teachers can successfully combat if they aim to demonstrate high competence throughout their careers.

IV. DISCUSSION

The model presented above may understandably prompt questions about its universality, central focus, or other factors influencing fossilization processes in teachers. First and foremost, cognitive stagnation is not limited to foreign language instructors, so the model is expected to be considered relevant across the educational board. After all, many years of classroom practice may lead teachers to operate on "autopilot," regardless of their subject specialization. However, teaching foreign languages, especially English, cannot be entirely effective if educators do not adapt didactically and linguistically to the changes in the modern world. Li (2014) observes that one reason why Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is now of particular interest to Applied Linguistics is that teachers must now be "Jacks of all trades" and draw on knowledge from various sources, including systematic developments in English vocabulary in science and emerging professions. Bandura (2007) emphasizes the new role of English teachers as intercultural mediators in increasingly ethnically diverse classes, where communication competence is as important as language instruction. When considering the revolutionary concept of World Englishes or proposals by advocates of Lingua Franca Code (LFC) and Native English as a Lingua Franca (NELF) to simplify language properties and modify pedagogical approaches accordingly, teachers must be alert and intellectually active to confront their cognitions formed a decade or two earlier. Reality proves the opposite, though. Educators often lack interest in research; they tend to avoid reading domain-related articles and books, opting instead for professional development workshops that promise quick-fix solutions (Willingham & Daniel, 2021). Therefore, the peculiarities of the TEFL landscape in today's world make the model particularly applicable to English teachers as its specific audience/recipients.

Secondly, the model supports Dakowska's (2015) conceptualization of teaching as a form of strategic behavior that involves diagnosing problems in the classroom and designing appropriate solutions. A lesson plan, for example, is the outcome of choosing one option from many available options that the teacher deems optimal for the specific class conditions. Given the varying class conditions, instructors should consider all aspects of the teaching and learning environment as a combination of intricate cognitive tasks that necessitate adaptable responses. Generated episodically, these responses evolve from temporary to lasting knowledge representations. Effective problem solvers always allow room for potential adjustments or replacements based on collected feedback. In other words, problem-solving is an instance of making mental calculations, an integral part of which is recognizing and processing what is known and what is unknown. In this sense, questions such as *When should I incorporate pronunciation practice? How do I arrange it? What should I stress in the reading activity?* or *What is the objective of my class?* are all problems teachers face on a daily basis. They become either constructive or detrimental moments in teachers' cognitive growth, depending on how educators utilize their mental resources. This paper aligns with the view that automatic transfer of past experiences hinders the consideration of novel information and the search for novel solutions.

Finally, the model does not consider perception as a potential calcifier in cognitive function. This is because intelligent human beings naturally engage in four-dimensional coding of environmental stimuli (Sieb, 2017). As long as

we are conscious, the neural structures of the brain expand by converting and systematizing incoming information as representations of the external world. Regardless of age and educational status, individuals experience the physical and non-physical aspects of reality idiosyncratically. However, we all construct visual and affective representations, along with cognitive ones, as survival-oriented reactions to stimuli. The way we construct meaning from these representations marks the moment of goal-oriented cognitive functioning, and therefore controlled thought processes. This is exactly where the process of potential fossilization begins.

This paper aims to stimulate academic interest in the topic of teacher cognitive fossilization and encourage research into the processes discussed above. Expanding our understanding of how experienced educators react to problems in the classroom is indispensable for renewing the long-established concept of expertise in teaching.

V. CONCLUSION

There are occurrences in teaching that are much more complex than they seem on the surface. They must be dissected in order to identify the core of the problem and its causes. Experts pay attention to discriminatory cues in their search for relevant solutions. They actively retrieve and combine various types of specialist knowledge at their disposal. Additionally, they formulate qualitative evaluations of the problem situations, which will continuously contribute to re-organizing their professional understandings. Such goal-oriented strategic behavior is exactly the opposite of the mental operations that experienced non-experts engage in. Their minds, which tend to simplify multifaceted matters and rely on constant repetition of thought/action patterns, challenge cognitive fitness. The cognitive model of language teacher fossilization highlights the significant risk associated with passively utilizing resources such as attention, knowledge, higher-order thinking, and judgment. The risk essentially involves applying partial, superficial, or false methods to address problems in the classroom.

The model should be perceived as an integral component of professional development programs because it aims to increase in-service teachers' awareness of occupational hazards. After all, if the profession is to survive rapid changes in society, educators cannot afford to lose their accountability and corrode public respect.

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Impacts of LMS Socio-Linguistic and Psychometric Factors on Students' English and Translation Proficiency and Communicative Competence: A Paradigm Shift During COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract—This quantitative study investigated the impacts of Learning Management Systems' (LMS) socio-linguistic and psychometric factors on students' English and translation proficiency and communicative competence. The participants were enrolled at the College of Languages and Translation, Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The results highlighted the positive experiences students had with the LMS platforms, with a notable frequency of (79.6%). Additionally, a significant percentage (86.2%) affirmed the effectiveness of these platforms in aiding them in achieving academic objectives. However, (52%) indicated that students consistently or often faced challenges when using technology. The findings highlighted improvements in various areas, including linguistic abilities (71.7%), translation skills (73.7%), social skills (62.5%), and psychometric abilities (70.3%), emphasizing the role of online environments in fostering effective communicative skills. The study also revealed the benefits of language and translation technology for students, with (84.1%) using computer-assisted translation, (82.9%) engaging in dubbing and voice translation, and (75.6%) utilizing language audio/video resources. Positive impacts on proficiency and communicative competence were evident, with frequencies of (74.4%) and (69.1%), respectively. These findings underscore the positive influence of technology on language and translation learning, emphasizing communicative approaches that enable students to develop competencies based on language socialization and real-time translation practices. The study recommends ongoing technology training for students and advocates for the use of psychometric tools embedded in LMS to encourage self-assessment and independent learning. The study's significance lies in understanding the intricate relationship between cognition, educational technology, and language and translation learning, particularly in the context of higher education.

Index Terms—English proficiency, psychometric abilities, socio-linguistic abilities, translation competence

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has unpredictably brought new conditions at higher education all over the world. According to UNESCO (2020), the pandemic resulted in the closure of more than (90%) of traditional educational institutions, affecting 1.6 billion students. Education has shifted dramatically to remote approaches, and students were compelled to use online learning as an alternative to traditional face-to-face education. Technology has continued to play a major role in the transformative process of education (Akcil et al., 2021). Online teaching has become the new normal (Basilaia et al., 2020). Digitalization of education has become the preeminent mode for teaching and learning (Wong, 2023). With the aid of digital technologies, education systems have become highly platformised (Williamson et al., 2020). Platformization of learning is the core of the Learning Management System (LMS), which was the most prominent technologies during the pandemic. The LMS is defined as the technology that facilitates online learning when students interact with instructors synchronously or asynchronously (Singh & Thurman, 2019). The LMS platforms encompass effective features, including diverse content and resources, smart boards, and communication tools. The multi-functions platforms that incorporate information communications technology are used effectively for online teaching (Gao & Li, 2021). LMS platforms such as Blackboard, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom have been used widely for learning English and translation due to their appropriate class management features (Aladwani & Alfadley, 2022; Alhaj & Albahiri, 2022). While previous research examined students' perceptions of using LMS, there remains an

unexplored area in the literature concerning the impacts of socio-linguistic and psychometric aspects of LMS on students' proficiency and communicative competence. This is particularly relevant for students who were forced to experience online learning for the first time during the lockdown. Although the LMS platforms play a crucial role, serving as the backbone of remote education, a more comprehensive investigation of the initial experiences of students and teachers in online environments is required (Choudhury & Pattnaik, 2020). Furthermore, there is still a gap in the literature regarding the application of online platforms for teaching translation (Almahasees & Qassem, 2022). The present research serves as a case study, delving into the initial experiences of students with online learning, and the impacts of LMS on their cognitive development. Thus, this study contributes to global reports on higher education conditions during COVID-19 crisis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Problems and Benefits of LMS*

During COVID -19, many students were compelled to participate in inclusive online classes for the first time, which presented some challenges. Ferri et al. (2020) revealed thematic patterns pointing to technological, pedagogical, and social challenges. Technological challenges were mainly related to unreliability of internet connections, lack of training, and difficulties in navigating the platforms. For example, students expressed the need for substantial enhancements in the functionality of Blackboard applications (Alturise, 2020). Due to technological issues, most students of English and translation desired to return to on-site classroom (Schrijver & Cortez, 2021). Pedagogical challenges were associated with deficiency of professional development, lack of structured content, and insufficient cognitive teaching approaches (Pikhart & Alobaydi, 2023). Teachers were confronted with the new reality that online learning required them to employ new methods for interacting with students beyond simply sending teaching materials through emails (Alsayed & Althaqafi, 2022). Teachers also encountered challenges using remote assessment (Guangul et al., 2020). Social challenges appeared in learners' lack of interactivity and motivation, and insufficient social presence. Students reported that absence of face-to-face communication increased their feelings of isolation (Leal Filho et al., 2021). Adaptation to online settings was a daunting problem, as the transition was sudden, which necessitated designing learning and communication activities with interactive characteristics (Alawamleh et al., 2020). Assaf and Nehmeh (2022) found that social isolation barrier affected negatively (49%) of students. Students had to enhance their productivity in response to the transformative impact of technology on their lives. However, previous studies found that experiencing inclusive online learning has some benefits. For example, during COVID crisis, higher education institutions intensified technology training to use synchronous and asynchronous modes for learning, including Blackboard, Moodle, Teams, Zoom, and Webex, among others. The asynchronous modes include emails, and social media to facilitate communication among teachers and students. In a comparative analysis of synchronous and asynchronous learning, Zhang and Mercado (2022) found that students actively participate in live discussions using Zoom or Microsoft Teams. The study showed that in synchronous online courses, a strong sense of social presence remarkably correlated with students' self-evaluation and grades. Conversely, in asynchronous online courses, students' learning outcomes were less reliably predicted by their levels of learning, cognitive, and social presence. Examining the influence of technology on sociability, Yılmaz and Yılmaz (2023) found that integrating social media into LMS promotes collaborative-groupings, which help learners enhance their verbal communication, utilizing nonverbal cues and audio-visual features. Furqon et al. (2023) indicated that LMS platforms enable students to collaborate and become more flexible in exploring and assessing information related to their daily learning. In their study, Kim et al. (2021) found another benefit for asynchronous learning, highlighting students' development of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies, resulted in enhancing self-regulated learning.

B. *LMS Impacts on Socio-Linguistic Abilities*

Previous studies showed that LMS support students' linguistic, social, and psychometric factors in several ways that enhance their proficiency. The MLS platforms offer language and translation resources such as online dictionaries, grammar guides, pronunciation audio resources, and translation tools to help students improve English and translation skills. In this respect, Assiri and Metwally (2020) found that strengthening linguistic ability contributes to shaping competent translators. Similarly, Aladwani and Alfadley (2022) indicate that students develop linguistic abilities within online environments that enhance social interactions. In this view, Muñoz-Martín and Olalla-Soler (2022) emphasized the importance for translators to develop linguistic abilities to possess translation proficiency. To elaborate, there is pressing requirements for translators with linguistic and socio-cultural proficiency, a goal attainable through the enhancement of their linguistic abilities (Jinfang, 2023). In other words, the necessity for qualified translators and interpreters requires overcoming linguistic barriers to ensure multilingual market project success. Being engaged in LMS classrooms, students learn how to bridge the gaps between their theoretical studies and real-time practices. In such environments, they are motivated to develop their socio-linguistic skills. Developing socio-linguistic skills necessitates improving language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, all of which are essential for performing effectively translation tasks. In their quasi-experimental study, Terzioğlu and Kurt (2022), examined the impact of LMS on speaking and listening fluency, revealing a significant difference in performance achieved by the experimental group that used technology in posttest. In a similar study, Aldukhayel (2021) indicated that students improved their listening

and vocabulary because they had simultaneous access to *vlogging* (video log) resources. Affirming these results, Salahuddin (2020) revealed that developing LMS English programs facilitated learning syntactic and semantic aspects, which influence language correctness. In this light, Mykytiuk et al. (2020) assessed participants' proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, listening, and writing, indicating that the improved performance of the experimental group was attributed to repeated exposure to the visual and interactive aspects of technology platforms, including social media. Findings by Wang (2023) highlighted the beneficial outcomes of online translation instruction that emphasized the connection between language proficiency and translation performance. The study supported previous research that synchronous and asynchronous teaching can lead to substantial academic performance for students when compared to traditional face-to-face approaches. Controversy, Suriaman et al. (2023) found that some students did not benefit from online learning due to problems of materials downloading, and difficulties in understanding the advanced English language of the materials.

Previous studies showed that fluency in a foreign language can be achieved through enhancing sociocultural interactions (Schleef, 2017). Asiri and Metwally (2020) explored the correlation between linguistic competence and translation proficiency, indicating that linguistic low performance is mirrored in translation incapacities. Su et al. (2021) used Kirkpatrick evaluation model, encompassing *reaction*, *learning*, *behavior*, and *results*, for examining teaching translation fully in online settings, indicating that in spite of technical difficulties, students had positive experiences and were able to achieve most of the program goals because of their interactions with teachers and peers. In this light, Berezenko et al. (2022) revealed that using communicative approaches enhanced communication skills and interactions among students from different socio-cultural contexts. In this regard, Puzanov et al. (2022) found that social media increases students' opportunities of social interactions, and thus, enhances their fluency in communication. Furthermore, since Holmes' (1972) research, considerable studies (Fu & Chen, 2019; Gao, 2021; Lee, 2022; Munday, 2022; Schöffner, 2012; Valdeón, 2021; as cited in Wang & Gu, 2023) have been conducted exploring the communicative approach to translating, enforcing the role of translators in communicating not only information but also culture.

C. LMS Impacts on Psychometric Abilities

Some LMS platforms incorporate adaptive learning technologies that personalize learning experiences based on students' performance and psychometric data, thus, assessment becomes an integrative component of learning. In this respect, Aladwani and Alfadley (2022) indicated that using Microsoft Teams platform motivated students to improve attitudes, interactions, and self-assessment, which resulted in increasing performance. The study also showed that LMS enhanced students' self-study skills. Similarly, Honarзад and Rassaei (2019) found that self-regulated learning management systems enhance students' self-efficacy. Considerable attention in the literature has been focused on self-efficacy. For example, Lin and Wang (2021) investigated the impact of virtual reality on learners' self-efficacy, indicating that using virtual reality for creative projects enhanced intrinsic motivation. Li et al. (2023) examined the relationships between academic self-efficacy, cultural intelligence, and translation competence, indicating significant relationships among predictors of students' competence in translation technology. Yang et al. (2021) examined the impacts of psychometric properties of self-efficacy on translation performance, revealing that quality translation requires an integration of language proficiency and psychometric competences. In this respect, Guanghua (2023) asserted that the linguistic, sociolinguistic and psychometric factors determine translation quality. In other words, the psychology of translators is crucial to translation processes because it involves cognition, emotion, behavior, and social intelligence. Moreover, psychometric factors also refer to psychological measurements and assessments used to evaluate individuals' cognitive abilities, personality traits, and behaviors (Kim et al., 2021). These factors are assessed using standardized psychological tests that can be incorporated into LMS. Furthermore, previous studies revealed that psychometric tests play a major role in evaluating personality characteristics such as extraversion, and introversion. In this respect, Zhang et al. (2021) explored English online assessment practices, indicating that summative assessment was reduced in favor of formative assessment, pointing to the influence of LMS for connecting assessment to daily learning. In a different study, Khodabandeh (2022) explored the applicability of virtual reality to extrovert and introvert learners, indicating that virtual reality enhanced both extrovert and introvert learners' performance. Lin and Wang (2021) found relationships between virtual reality, creativity, and self-efficacy. Hamilton et al. (2021) also found that immersive virtual reality enhanced learning outcomes in approximately (50%) of cognitive studies, enabling students solving conceptual problems. Su et al. (2021) indicated that studying translation online motivated students, linking four elements of cognitive development, namely, reaction, learning, behavior, and results, to real-time practices. Conversely, Arniatika (2020) explored the connection between motivation and extroverted and introverted personality traits, in relation to speaking performance, revealing that while there is an association between extroverted and introverted traits, motivational orientations, and speaking performance, among English learners, instances where extroverted and introverted personalities directly influence motivational orientations and speaking achievement are quite infrequent. In general, socio-linguistic and psychometric factors highlight the importance of appropriate LMS designs, effective pedagogical strategies for languages and translation, and ongoing technology support, to maximize the benefits for students and minimize potential challenges.

D. Technology Effects on Proficiency and Communicative Competence

Since the integration of technology into education, research has been developed using the theory of constructivism. Constructivism is concerned with the logical categories of knowledge, motivating students to construct new knowledge using their learning experiences. Constructivism is based on several principles, encompassing the idea that knowledge is actively constructed rather than merely memorized, that knowledge is shaped within social and cultural contexts, that learning is a dynamic interplay of individual and collaborative efforts, and that assessment should focus on authenticity (Fosnot, 2013). Within this theory, technology provides many opportunities for English and translation students to develop their skills while studying online, accessing various resources that help them develop language and translation proficiency and communicative competence. In this regard, Akcil et al. (2021) indicated that technology, including social media, boosts student-centered resourceful settings when students construct new knowledge, making their learning more socially contextualized and active. Previous research (Almahasees & Qassem, 2022; Li et al., 2023; Terzioğlu & Kurt, 2022) evolved around cognition, language, and translation proficiency in technology-based settings, engaging students in using differentiated applications to develop proficiency and communicative abilities. In this respect, Krüger (2021) found that technology has introduced a plethora of educational resources, including computer assisted tools for translation, machine translation, and localization and assessment, which can be used to enhance linguistic, socio-culture, and psychological competences that are necessary to produce quality translation. Using technology in learning English and translation is a paradigm shift, enforcing the importance of cultural communication. As asserted by Köksal and Yürük (2020), translation/interpretation has always been central to intercultural communication. In the same light, Madkour (2018) affirmed that a shift in the purpose of translation from transferring information into a task of transmitting culture necessitates training students to acquire socio-cultural skills by engaging them in opportunities to discuss diverse cultures of original texts. Furthermore, integrating technology into translation profession, prompting the importance for students to develop various competences to meet the requirements of translator's workflow (Oraki & Tajvidi, 2020; Puzanov et al., 2022; Yang & Wang, 2019). In other words, technology provides numerous opportunities for critical thinking, communication, and collaboration, all of which are essential for achieving proficiency and communicative competence.

III. METHODOLOGY

The current study employed a quantitative design to examine the impacts of using LMS platforms on English and translation students' socio-linguistic and psychometric abilities. The quantitative design helped in investigating the extent to which technology would affect student's proficiency and communicative competence, while examining the frequencies of using technology in online classes.

A. Research Questions

1. What are the most frequent Learning Management Systems (LMS) used in English and translation online classes during COVID-19?
2. What are the impacts of Learning Management Systems (LMS) on students' socio-linguistic abilities?
3. What are the impacts Learning Management System (LMS) on students' psychometric abilities?
4. To what extent can technology affect students' proficiency and communicative competence?

B. Participants

152 students participated in the study, selected from the Saudi female undergraduates who study in the English Department, College of Languages and Translation, at Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The number of participants who study English is 70 (46%), while that who study translation is 82 (54%). The participants' age ranges between 18-22 years old. Their mother tongue is Arabic, and they have studied English for 6 years at school before they joined IMSIU. Before COVID-19 pandemic, the instructional approach was centered around traditional methods, supported by (20%) blended learning. The assessment of performance is based on formative and summative evaluation. The participants were not involved in inclusive online learning prior to the pandemic crisis.

C. Instruments and Procedures

The instruments include a 5-point Likert questionnaire, and college technology reports. Data collections also included the university strategic plan for inclusive online learning in order to examine the alignment of LMS usage with academic goals. The questionnaire was distributed after being validated by a pilot study. IBM-SPSS® (version 28) was employed for statistical analysis. Statistical measures were computed, including: (1) frequencies and percentages to understand participants' responses to questionnaire ;(2) Pearson correlation coefficient to assess the internal consistency and validity of the study tool; (3) Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of the study tool's different dimensions; and (4) mean and standard deviation to examine the participants' responses across study sections.

D. Research Limitations

The present study was limited to 152 female students studying English and translation for four years at a single university. The time span covered by the study was only the first semester of the pandemic lockdown. Further investigations may include students from various courses, both male and female, across different universities.

IV. RESULTS

Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated, indicating a total score of correlation as significant at the (0.01) level. Results also pointed to Cronbach's alpha value of (0.892), which refers to high reliability. Pearson correlation coefficient also showed that variables exhibit statistically significant correlations at the (0.001) level, advocating for notable validity in the study's measures, significantly at the level of (0.01).

A. Answering the Study Questions

Q1: What are the most frequent Learning Management Systems (LMS) used in English and translation online classes, during COVID-19?

Frequencies, and percentage of the participants' responses were calculated to show the most frequent LMS that was used ($n=152$). The results showed that a significant number of responses with the percentage of (86.8%), comprising (47.4%) *always*, (19.7%) *often*, and (19.7%) *sometimes* used Microsoft Teams as indicated by the highest frequency of LMS used during COVID-19. The results also revealed the frequencies of (7.9%) *rarely* and (5.3%) *never* that Teams was used. The mean score (M) of these frequencies is (3.96), and the standard deviation (SD) is (1.212). Zoom ranked the second, with the frequency of (67.1%), including (19.1%) *always*, (17.1%) *often*, and (30.9%) *sometimes*. The lowest frequencies for using Zoom referred to (13.8%) *rarely*, and (19.1%) *never*. The mean score (M) for Zoom frequencies is (3.03), and the standard deviation (SD) is (1.359). Only (50.6%) pointed to Blackboard as frequently used by the participants, including (15.1%) *always*, (10.5%) *often*, (25.0%) *sometimes*, (24.3%) *rarely*, and (25.0%) *never*. The mean score (M) for Blackboard is (2.66), and the standard deviation (SD) is (1.361). Further, a significant number of participants (79.6%) reported in the frequency of (24.3%) *always*, (23.7%), *often*, and (31.6%) *sometimes* that they had positive experience using LMS, while (9.9%) and (10.5%) were in the frequency of *rarely* and *never* respectively. The mean score (M) of these frequencies is (3.41), and the standard deviation (SD) is (1.253). Figure 1 display the results.

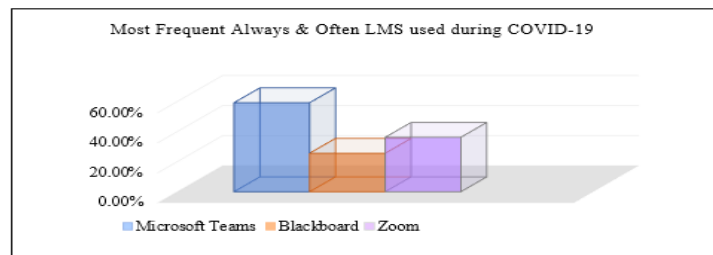


Figure 1. Participants' Most Frequent Always and Often LMS Used

Q2: What are the impacts of Learning Management Systems (LMS) on students' socio-linguistic abilities?

As displayed in Table 1, the results showed positive impacts of LMS on participants' linguistic levels (lexical, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic), pointing to (71.7%) in the frequencies of *always* (21.1%), *often* (16.4%), and *sometimes* (34.2%), as an indicator for improving linguistic abilities, while only (16.4%), and (11.8%) are in the frequency of *rarely* and *never*, respectively. The mean scores of the results are ($M= 3.18$), and ($SD= 1.253$). The results also showed that responses point to high frequencies of (73.7%), comprising *always* (22.4%), *often* (19.1%), and *sometimes* (32.2%), for improving reading comprehension, while lowest frequencies are reported for *rarely* (15.8%) and *never* (10.7%). A percentage of (62.5%) in the frequencies of *always* (20.4%), (13.8%) *often*, and (28.3%) *sometimes*, showed positive impacts on social skills. Table 1 displays the results with (M) and (SD).

TABLE 1
 IMPACTS OF LMS ON PARTICIPANTS' SOCIO-LINGUISTIC ABILITIES (N=152)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	M	SD
9. The technology I used in LMS during COVID 19 helped me to improve my linguistic abilities (lexical, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic levels).	21.1%	16.4%	34.2%	16.4%	11.8%	3.18	1.273
10. The technology my teachers used in LMS helped me to improve my reading comprehension.	22.4%	19.1%	32.2%	15.8%	10.5%	3.27	1.266
11. The technology my teachers used during COVID 19 motivated me to read and translate English literature	20.4%	13.8%	32.9%	17.8%	15.1%	3.07	1.321
12. The technology my teachers used during COVID 19 helped me to increase my English vocabulary and terminology.	25.0%	20.4%	34.9%	11.8%	7.9%	3.43	1.21
13. The technology my teachers used during COVID 19 helped me to improve my reading speed.	29.6%	16.4%	28.3%	13.2%	12.5%	3.37	1.361
14. The technology my teachers used in LMS helped me to improve pronunciation.	28.3%	17.8%	27.6%	17.8%	8.6%	3.39	1.298
15. The technology my teachers in LMS used did not help me to improve speaking skills.	22.4%	13.8%	23.0%	24.3%	16.4%	3.01	1.395
16. The technology my teachers used in LMS did not help me to improve my listening skills.	16.4%	13.8%	27.0%	27.6%	15.1%	2.89	1.295
17. The technology my teachers used during COVID 19 helped me to improve my translation skills.	19.7%	20.4%	29.6%	19.7%	10.5%	3.19	1.259
18. The technology my teachers used in LMS helped to improve English / translation using online dictionaries.	40.1%	17.1%	28.3%	9.2%	5.3%	3.78	1.219
19. The technology I used in LMS helped me to improve my social skills (interaction/collaboration).	20.4%	13.8%	28.3%	15.8%	21.7%	2.95	1.411

As displayed in Table 1, a high frequency of (67.1%) including (20.4%) *always*, (13.8%) *often*, and (32.9%) *sometimes*, referred to LMS impacts on reading and translating. A significant rate of (80.3%), comprising (25.0%) *always*, (20.4%) *often*, and (34.9%) *sometimes* pointed to positive impacts on enriching vocabulary and terminology. A rate of (73.7%), including (28.3%) *always*, (17.8%) *often*, and (27.6%) *sometimes*, indicated impacts on pronunciation. Moderate impacts are shown regarding speaking skills, referring to (59.2%), comprising *always* (22.4%), *often* (13.8%), and *sometimes* (23.0%), and (57.2%) pointing to listening skills, including *always* (16.4%), *often* (13.8%), and *sometimes* (27.0%). Additionally, the rate of (69.7%) pointed to impacts on improving translation skills, including *always* (19.7%), *often* (20.4%), and *sometimes* (29.6%). The results also showed the rate of (85.5%) referring to technology impacts on improving English and translation using online dictionaries. Findings also indicated that LMS helped the participants achieve their learning outcomes, as a significant high frequency of (86.2%), representing (36.7%) *always*, (22.4%) *often*, and (27.0%) *sometimes*) reported that the LMS platforms were effective in helping them achieve their academic objectives, in contrast to the rate of (8.6%) referring to *rarely*, and (5.3%) *never*, respectively ($M = 3.77$, $SD=188$). Figure 2 displays the results.

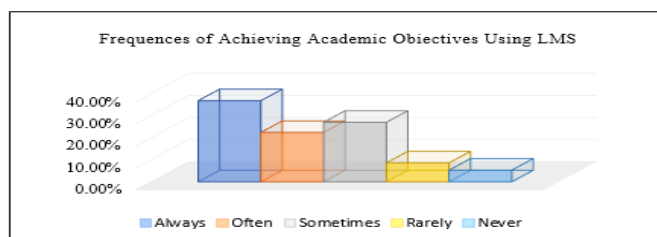


Figure 2. Participants' Achieved Academic Objectives Using LMS

Additionally, the results also showed the technology tools that the participants used while engaged in online learning. The applications that they used while using the LMS, pointed to the percentage of (84.1%) for Computer Assisted Translation (CAT), followed by (82.9%) for dubbing and voice translation, and (78.0%) for voice transcription. The lowest rates refer to (71.9%) for terminology management, and (70.7%) for both OmegaT, and Vocaroo recorder. Regarding language tools, the rate of (92.8%) pointed to using online dictionaries, and (88.5%) for VOA audio/ video language skills. The lowest rate refers to (71.4%), for Grammarly. Table 2 shows the results.

TABLE 2
LANGUAGE /TRANSLATION TOOLS USED BY PARTICIPANTS (N=152)

Translation/ Interpreting Tools (n=82)	Frequency	Percent	Language Tools (n=70)	Frequency	Percent
Computer Assisted Translation CAT	69	84.1%	Online dictionaries	65	92.8%
Translation memory tool OmegaT	58	70.7%	Bilingual Glossaries	60	85.7 %
Compute Assisted Interpretation CAI	62	75.6%	WordWeb	58	82.8%
Bing Translator	60	73.1%	VOA audio/ video (language skills)	62	88.5%
Voice Transcription	64	78.0%	Fluent U	55	78.5%
Dubbing and Voice Translation	68	82.9%	English Pronunciation IAP	61	87.1%
Vocaroo Voice Recorder	58	70.7%	Google Translate	60	85.7%
Terminology Management	59	71.9%	Grammarly	50	71.4%

Q3. What are the impacts Learning Management System (LMS) on students' psychometric abilities?

A significant majority of participants (70.3%), including *always* (18.4%), *often* (11.8%), and *sometimes* (40.1 %) believed that technology positively impacted their psychometric abilities, including self-assessment, self-efficacy, motivation, and attitudes. In contrast, low frequencies of (15.1%), and (14.5%), representing *rarely* or *never* point to negative impacts on psychometric abilities. The results also revealed (68.4%), including *always* (21.1%), *often* (19.7%), and *sometimes* (27.6 %) pointing to positive impact of technology on communicative skills, which reflect participants' personality characteristics of extraversion, and flexibility to communicate and convey information in different social contexts. Table 3 displays the results with (*M* and *SD*).

TABLE 3
IMPACT OF LMS ON PARTICIPANTS' PSYCHOMETRIC ABILITIES (N=152)

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	M	SD
20. The technology I used in LMS helped me to learn new communicative skills (convey information).	21.1%	19.7%	27.6%	14.5%	17.1%	3.13	1.365
21. Modern technology I used in LMS had positive impact on my psychometric abilities (self-assessment/ efficacy/motivation/attitude).	18.4%	11.8%	40.1%	15.1%	14.5%	3.05	1.262
22. The social media I used had positive impacts on my communicative competence.	15.8%	17.1%	36.2%	15.1%	15.18%	3.02	1.263
23. The results of my English courses that I achieved in online classes are worse than the results I achieved in traditional classrooms.	22.4%	15.8%	22.4%	21.7%	17.8%	3.03	1.411
24. Based on the results of my final exams, using technology had positive effects on my English language and translation proficiency.	22.4%	19.1%	32.9%	14.5%	11.2%	3.27	1.271
25. I received adequate training for using technology in studying my English courses online.	15.1%	12.5%	35.5%	11.8%	25.0%	2.81	1.351

As displayed in Table 3, the results also revealed the frequencies of the participants' self-assessment using LMS psychometric tools, pointing to the percentage of (70.3%), comprising (18.4%) *always*, (11.8%) *often*, (40.1%) *sometimes* (15.1%), *rarely*, and (14.5%) *never* (*M* = 3.05, *SD*= 1.262). Figure 3 displays the results.

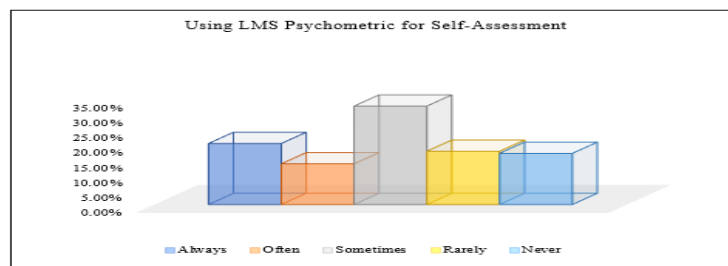


Figure 3. Participants Used LMS Psychometric Tools for Self-Assessment

Q 4. To what extent can technology affect students' proficiency and communicative competence?

The results showed the positive impacts of technology on the participants' English and translation proficiency, with the frequency of (74.4%) including (22.4%) *always*, (19.1%) *often*, (32.9%) *sometime*, in contrast to the low frequency of (25.7%), including (14.5%) *rarely*, and (11.2%) *never*, with (*M* = 3.37, *SD*= 1.272). However, the frequency of (52%) of, combining *always* or *often* showed the difficulties of using technology in spite of technical support and training. Further, a frequency of (69.1%), perceived technology as (15.8%) *always*, (17.1%) *often*, (36.2%) *sometimes*, enhanced their communicative competence, in contrast to the low frequency of (30.9%), comprising (15.1%) *rarely*, and (15.8%) *never*, with (*M* = 3.02, *SD*= 1.263). Figure 4 and Figure 5 display the results.

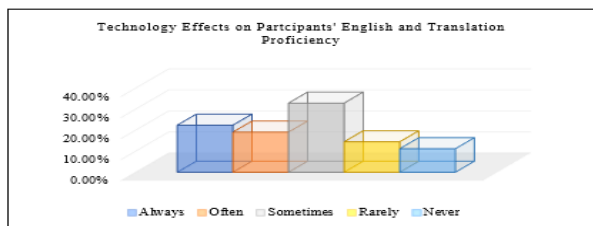


Figure 4. Effects of Technology on Participants' Proficiency

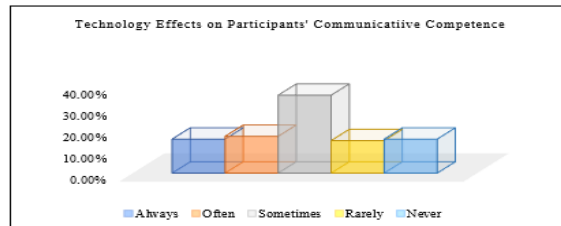


Figure 5. Effects of Technology on Participants' Communicative Competence

B. Technology Report Results

The results revealed the alignment of technology implementation with college goals as the report showed that the college executed the plan of the university during COVID-19, providing weekly training programs, accumulated to 80 sessions in one semester, using LMS platforms including Blackboard, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom. The online workshop format was the most appropriate tool to provide the training because of its manual, audio, and video tutorials, and visual presentations. Difficulties of using LMS include logging in, loading problems, and platform functionality challenges. The results also revealed a paradigm shift model from face-to-face to online settings. The model was based on the university vision for delivering the academic programs through a stimulating environment, and computerized management systems. The model served as a cycle of a sudden transformative change from traditional classrooms to inclusive online settings. Figure 6 displays the model.

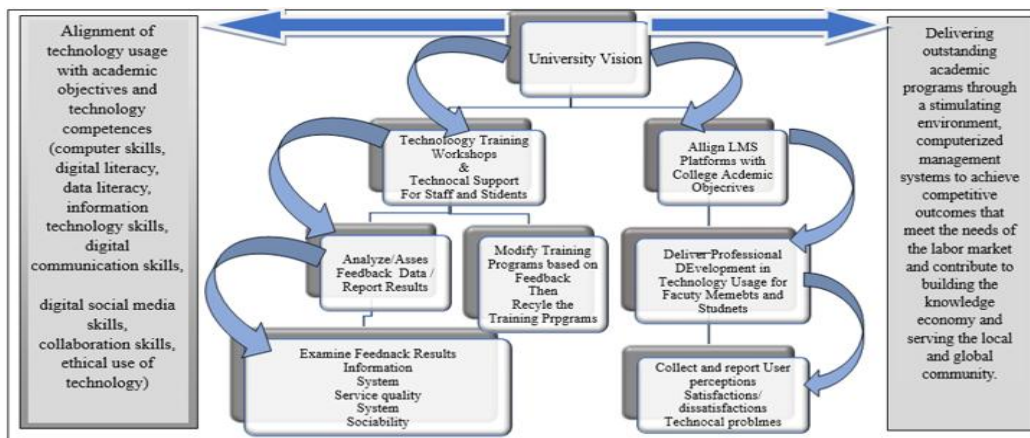


Figure 6. IMSIU Model for Sudden Shift from Face-To-Face to Online Classes During COVID-19

As shown in Figure 6, the cycle started when the university administration sent instructions to departments and colleges simultaneously to attend the training programs. The responsibilities of the technology department focused on preparing the workshops, providing technical support, receiving feedback, then sending feedback to technology experts for analysis and assessment of modification plans. The cycle moves on to college experts to deliver the online workshops among staff and students, then receive feedback and send it to university technology department to start a new cycle of data analysis and modifications to ensure best results. This model was operationalized through using social media communications, including WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter (renamed now as X), and emails. Results showed a preference for using emails (80%), WhatsApp (75%), Telegram (68%), Facebook (64%), and Twitter (39%).

V. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The findings indicated that Microsoft Teams was the preferred LMS with a significant frequency of (86.8%). A high percentage (79.6%) showed that language and translation students had positive experiences using LMS. This was affirmed by (86.2%), highlighting the effectiveness of LMS platforms in helping them achieve academic objectives. The data suggested that the LMS played a crucial role in facilitating online learning (see Figure 1). In harmony with these findings, Aladwani and Alfadley (2022) asserted that Microsoft Teams platform is effective in helping students achieve their learning outcomes due to its enriched content tools and easy navigation. Previous studies (Alha & Albahiri, 2022; Almahasees & Qassem, 2022; Alsayed & Althaqafi, 2022; Alsofi, 2021; Suriaman et al., 2023) revealed that the LMS platforms are effective in language and translation learning, provided the availability of ongoing training. These studies emphasized the appropriateness of LMS in contributing to student substantial learning achievements. Inconsistent with these results, studies (Alawamleh et al., 2020; Basilaia et al., 2020; Furqon et al., 2023; Leal Filho et al., 2021) highlighted students' dissatisfactions with online learning due to lack of interactions, and unreliable evaluation system. The present study findings refer to (52%) of students *always* or *often* face difficulties using

technology in spite of technical support and technology training. These results are in harmony with previous research. For example, Alturise (2020) concluded that some LMS platforms, including Blackboard, need substantial enhancements in the functionality of applications.

Other findings of the current study showed positive impacts of LMS on students' socio-linguistic levels revealed by (71.7%) (see Table 1). In alignment with these results, Aldukhayel (2021) revealed that LMS platforms have positive effects on linguistic performance, specifically, in terms of speaking fluency, listening skill, and vocabulary enrichment. Salahuddin (2020) indicated that developing LMS English programs facilitated learning syntactic and semantic aspects that influence language proficiency. In the same light, Mykytiuk et al. (2020) found improvements in language proficiency, including grammar, vocabulary, listening, and writing abilities. Alhaj and Albahiri (2022) found that using technology in written translation, facilitated collaborative learning to acquire translation skills. In the current study, (73.7%) of students improved translation abilities in online classes due to the diverse contents of LMS platforms. The findings also showed that language and translation tools were found to be useful for students (see Table 2). In this context, Krüger (2021) found that technology tools can be used to enhance linguistic, socio-culture, and psychological competences that are necessary to produce quality translation.

Additionally, the current study findings revealed the impacts of the LMS on students' social skills as (62.5%) referred to improvements in interaction, engagement, and collaboration, indicating that collaborative and interactive online learning environments contribute to developing socio-linguistic abilities, and emphasizing its role in fostering effective communication, which is central to language and translation education (see Table 3). Consistent with these findings, Puzanov et al. (2022) found that technology, including social media, increases students' opportunities of social interactions, and thus, enhances their fluency in communication in English. In the same perspective, Byram (2021) presented a model for intercultural communicative competence, composed of aligning 'intercultural competence' and 'communicative language competence', in terms of linguistic competence, and sociolinguistic competence. In this respect, Madkour (2018) asserted that the relationship between translation, linguistics, education, and social anthropology necessitates the enhancement of the communicative approach to language and translation by providing students with training programs to acquire socio-cultural skills. Students need to develop their communicative language and translation competences because translation is based on language socialization, i.e. real-life practices, which need conveying different cultures while applying syntactic and semantics strategies. New perspectives on translation studies, drawn from Holmes' (1972) research have been developed to understand the integration between socio-linguistic and psychological abilities, and translation quality, strengthening translators' competences. According to Holmes, translation psychology is concerned with research dealing with the process or act of translation itself, including translators/interpreters' skills, competences, performance, and work conditions. In this light, the current study findings on students' psychometric abilities pointed to a significant frequency of (70.3%), indicating that technology positively impacted students' psychometric abilities (see Table 3), emphasizing its potential for enhancing cognitive skills related to cognition and online learning. The findings also indicated that students improved their motivations, self-assessment, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning. In harmony with these findings, Furqon et al. (2023) found that using LMS platforms enabled students to effectively collaborate and become more flexible in scrutinizing and evaluating information related to daily learning. Kim et al. (2021) revealed that psychometric tools help in assessing cognitive abilities, and psychological attributes such as personality traits, behaviors, attitudes, and motivation. The current study findings also revealed that technology has positive effects on the development of students' language and translation proficiency and communicative competence indicated by (74.4%), and (69.1%) respectively, highlighting the role of technology in facilitating effective contextual communication (see Figure 4 & Figure 5). These findings are in harmony with previous studies. For example, (Klimova & Pikhart, 2023; Oraki & Tajvidi, 2020; Schrijver & Cortez, 2021) asserted that there is a relationship between cognition and language and translation proficiency in technology-based settings, when students use differentiated digital applications to develop linguistic and communicative domains. The evidence from the current study findings emphasized that adaptive learning technologies are designed to personalize and optimize the learning experience for language and translation students. These technologies use data-driven insights to adapt instructional content and resources to meet the needs, abilities, skill level, learning style, and progress of each learner.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The present study has a number of implications. The study highlights the impacts of technology on students' socio-linguistic and psychometric domains that influence language acquisition and translation skills by providing exposure to authentic language materials, interactive translation exercises, and communication opportunities in real-time practices. The LMS platforms contribute to improvements in students' language and translation proficiency and communicative competence, offering structured contents, audio-visual tutorials, and social contexts that affect their intrinsic motivation, interaction, and collaboration. The shift towards online learning provides students with personalized contents that can help them achieve self-efficacy, urging them to appreciate autonomous learning. Educational technology provides students with some challenges that motivate them to think critically, solve complex problems, while developing self-regulated learning strategies. In addition, the cycle model (see Figure 6) that was employed at IMSIU for inclusive transformation from traditional classrooms to online education, using various LMS platforms, can be replicated in

different universities worldwide, for developing online language and translation programs that link together cognitive approaches and learning theories. This shift requires fully transformation from direct presence in the classroom to technologically mediated telepresence in online classes, which necessitates rethinking the purpose and relevance of language and translation teaching and learning. In online settings, language learning does not depend on memorizing rules, but rather on constructing new knowledge based on students' personalized experiences when they use English to communicate in diverse socio-cultural real-time contexts. In online settings, students learn that translation is not concerned merely with rendering information but rather transmitting culture. Online learning also necessitates continuous technology training within an environment that provides incessant technical support. Therefore, the study recommends enhancing the infrastructure of online platforms, and incorporating technology resources to maximize students' learning outcomes. To wrap up, this study explored the challenges that language and translation students encountered during the lockdown of COVID-19, at IMSIU, in Saudi Arabia. The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of the LMS platforms in helping students develop their socio-linguistic and psychometric abilities that influence their language and translation proficiency and communicative competence. The findings revealed that the socio-linguistic aspects are intertwined with psychological evaluations that can be used to assess students' cognitive capabilities while using various LMS platforms. The study presents the cycle model that was used during the pandemic lockdown to transform the traditional classes into fully online settings, highlighting the positive impacts of educational technology on students' achievements. As such, the study contributes to global reports on higher education conditions during the crisis of COVID-19.

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Visual Representation of Selected Malaysian Political Trolling on Social Media: Disclose the Ideology and Power

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Abstract—The visual variety involving internet political trolling in Malaysia also adds to and impacts the audience's awareness of this resource. The existence of internet trolling encourages the audience's openness to give diverse responses and perceptions in politics in Malaysia. Thus, these responses and views will have a big impact on anything that is depicted visually, especially on social media. This study examines the ideology and power behind visual internet trolling on social media. For this purpose, the research methodology applies a qualitative approach based on visual content. Social media such as Twitter is used as the medium and unit of analysis of this study in visual sources. Adaptation of the theory uses Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse analysis and Visual Semiotics Theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) in studying selected visual trolling. By using a combination and adaptation of these theories, visual ideology, and power can be best unraveled. The results of the study found that the visual production of Malaysian politicians' trolling aims to have an impact on the audience's attitude through the ideology and power that is visualized in Malaysian politics. The visual ideological and power construction of trolling also successfully creates an alternative for the audience to express their perceptions and rights, namely the right of expression which underlies to support or criticize Malaysian politics. This study provides knowledge and understanding about the ideology and power behind visual trolling in the Malaysian political context.

Index Terms—visual trolling, politics, social media, critical discourse analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Visual trolling in politics refers to the deliberate use of images or visual elements to provoke, ridicule, or critique political figures, ideologies, or movements. This form of political trolling or commentary heavily relies on mediums such as memes, cartoons, or edited photos to convey its messages. The significance of visual trolling lies in its ability to disseminate political commentary or criticism rapidly and effectively through easily shareable and visually appealing content (Fichman & McClelland, 2021). In the current era, dominated by social media, visual trolling has become increasingly prevalent as a means for individuals or groups to voice their opinions or grievances regarding political issues or figures. Visual trolling can be formed of memes, cartoons, edited photographs, and so on. These are widely circulated images accompanied by humorous or satirical text, often used to comment on political events or personalities (Todd & Melancon, 2019). In addition, trolling has transitioned from being a peripheral activity on the internet to becoming a focal point in academic and media discussions surrounding topics such as free speech, harassment, racism, and politics. This information can be manipulated and shared widely on social media platforms to convey specific messages or viewpoints.

With this globalization, the world is in a current of sophistication that can be explored and utilized by all levels of society. One of the sophistications that all the world's communities have is the global communication network system using the internet (Ramcharan, 2013). The development and use of the Internet have expanded according to the Malaysian Multimedia Communications Commission; the number of Internet users in 2023 involving Malaysians is estimated at 33.47 million people (SKMM, 2023). In this regard, the diversity of platforms used by Malaysians is seen

as one of the factors why discussions and disagreements involving political issues exist, so it is not surprising if visuals involving political provocations are presented on social media. According to Zulkifli et al. (2018), the Internet has emerged as a hub for discussions and avenues to reveal political scandals, especially those related to corruption, in Malaysia. As a result, this has led to an increasing number of Malaysians engaged in accessing online platforms to gather information about political communication.

Nowadays, social media offers convenient and swift entry to platforms where trolling frequently takes place. Users can promptly join and engage in online discussions across various platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Blog, and so on. Users could interact within online communities sharing similar interests and perspectives, including those utilizing trolling as a means of self-expression or conveying political viewpoints. This accessibility means that anyone with internet connectivity can contribute to the creation of political content, resulting in a diverse range of political viewpoints expressed through visual trolling. This social media empowers users to actively participate in content creation and distribution, including trolling (Savage, 2019). This empowerment enables users to contribute to shaping political narratives or influencing public sentiment.

However, some social media platforms permit users to maintain anonymity or utilize pseudonymous accounts linked with situational elements such as mood, the context of the discussion, and feelings of anonymity (Cheng et al., 2017). Nitschinsk et al. (2022) action commonly seeks to incite or irritate other users for one's amusement. Besides that, trolling on social media also can swiftly shape public opinion, as provocative or contentious messages often garner attention and spread rapidly, creating the illusion of widespread acceptance or prevalence. Recognizing this behavior known as "trolling" required familiarity with the norms particular to these websites to differentiate between genuine and insincere, or authentic and deceptive, interactions (Herring, 1999). Hence, the utilization of social media plays a pivotal role in fortifying political visual trolling by expediting content proliferation, facilitating wider engagement, and reinforcing political opinion divergence.

Utilizing social media for trolling may yield adverse outcomes, such as disseminating misinformation or causing harm to individuals or specific communities. Therefore, exercising prudence and accountability in social media usage is paramount. Within this context, even though social media mostly has a negative impact however political visual material such as viral posts have the potential to swiftly shape public opinion and attract broad attention that can examine the audience's actions towards the featured visuals. Ortiz (2020) explained that some trolls can give a brief perception of the audience in sarcastic critique, uncovering hypocrisy, ineptitude, or corruption within political establishments.

The focal point of this study is to discover the ideology and power in the visual representation of selected Malaysian political trolling. Overall, visual trolling plays a significant role in contemporary political discourse by providing a platform for individuals or groups to express dissent, question authority, and engage in political trolling through visual means.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Trolling, Ideology, and Power in Political Visual

Alternatively, visual trolling can be misleading (Rill & Cardiel, 2013). In this context, 'trolling' serves as a negative action to evoke emotional responses from readers on a particular issue, as well as to create conflicts and manipulate perceptions. Many trolling forms in Malaysia take on negative visuals, such as impressions of the trolling individuals. Matthes et al. (2011) asserted that negative emotions linger in the audience's minds regarding the visual influence of individuals who are the subject of trolling, in addition to observing the political inclinations of individuals, whether consciously or unconsciously.

Bishop (2014) explored developing a scale or framework to gauge the severity or impact of trolling in these communities, including the behavior of the community toward trolling. This finding explains the nature, impact, and management of trolling. Despite attempts to regulate them, various types of messages such as satire, impolite remarks, and unpopular viewpoints will persist on the Internet. This study underscores the importance of acknowledging the power of societal tolerance for differences, which has remained relatively unchanged over millennia, implying that significant evolutionary or environmental shifts may be necessary to alter human action trolling.

Local research, by Junaidi et al. (2015), focuses on the intersection of visual and political impact. It investigates the by-election campaign and manifesto within the Kajang State Assembly, alongside scrutinizing respondents' influence on political party selection through social media usage. This study also focused on its agenda and ideology for the Malaysian election in Kajang state. The research reveals that social media utilization, coupled with persuasive and cynical visual forms and rhetorical elements, can shape public perception. Meanwhile, Coles and West (2016) study how participants in online forums conceptualize and grasp the concept of trolling. This indicates that the common belief of trolls can be easily recognized, pinpointing them is often more complex than perceived. Furthermore, the research underscores the inherent contradictions in users' descriptions of trolling, as views on its nature and acceptability differ greatly among individuals toward its agenda.

Yildiz and Smets (2019) stated that the phenomenon of internet trolling within authoritarian regimes, with a specific focus on Twitter usage by both regime supporters and 'Ak trolls. The research involves conducting a qualitative content analysis of tweets posted by these two groups, to understand the nature, strategies, and objectives of trolling within the

framework of 'networked' authoritarianism. The study reveals distinct patterns of trolling conduct displayed by both regime supporters as the main ideology and 'Ak trolls' on Twitter, encompassing typical strategies, linguistic patterns, and targets influencing the production of this visual trolling. This research offers insights into the dynamics of internet trolling within authoritarian regimes, shedding light on its role in shaping online discourse, quelling dissent, and upholding regime authority.

Power and ideology through visual trolling is a method for individuals or collectives to establish authority or supremacy by manipulating information, whereas ideology stems from ideological convictions or agendas. In this context, ideology built-in political visuals act as a message spreader in shaping the audience's influence on what is seen and voiced (Brian, 2003). This is seen as social criticism in highlighting an injustice directly or indirectly funnily or critically. Forms of provocation through the manipulation of the audience's mind can produce an effective ideological secretion (Orwicz, 2019). For example, the visual figure of a political leader is seen as a power in influencing actions, behavior, decisions, and so on.

Next, Linvill and Warren (2020) study the ideological phenomenon of targeted disinformation campaigns carried out on the Twitter platform. It delves into the characteristics of disinformation content, the tactics utilized to amplify its dissemination, and the potential ramifications on public discourse and perception. This finding utilized the operational methods of troll factories, patterns, and strategies used to disseminate disinformation on Twitter that impacts public discourse and perception. Xenia and Marton (2020) also observed that political trolling denies their support for a particular party or political figure because knowledgeable audiences tend to view issues more positively, as claimed by Zulkifli et al. (2018). Political trolling is closely linked to audience knowledge and the impact of this trolling. Nitschinsk et al. (2023) currently study trolling within the framework of functionalism, a sociological theory that perceives society as a complex system comprising interconnected elements working together to uphold stability and balance. This study finds the development of norms, sanctions, and strategies for managing trolling within these communities. A functionalist approach to online trolling aims to comprehend the role of trolling within the broader social system, considering its functions, effects, and implications for maintaining social order and stability in online environments. At the same time, Fichman and Akter (2023) explained in their study the trolling behavior aimed at Republicans and Democrats in politics, along with a shift from foreign-based trolling to domestic trolling. The results indicate an uneven distribution of trolling, with one political party experiencing more frequent change in the source of trolling activities, shifting from foreign entities to domestic actors within the same political arena.

As described, studies involving the analysis of visual ideology and power, especially internet trolling in social media, are rarely highlighted by local researchers in visual analysis but they carried out the visual data in the newspaper. Besides Junaidi et al. (2015) among the local studies found involving internet trolling is the study by Zulkifi et al. (2018). This study found that visuals in internet trolling, namely on Facebook, are seen as a medium to identify the audience's response to trolling and the study can see the audience's openness in expressing views as a current trend of change. However, the form of power and ideology in this study are not discussed and its visuals are not as their focus. Hence, this study will be focused on the ideology and power of Malaysian political trolling on social media.

III. METHODOLOGY

A total of 4 visual data from visual trolling were used for analysis. This research aims to investigate the ideology and power of visual representation of Malaysian political trolling on social media. A qualitative method is applied. The below subsections offer detailed descriptions of the population and method.

A. Study Contexts

This data involves selected visual trolling data from Twitter. This data was obtained through the Twitter website or 'X'. The researcher will obtain data based on famous troll accounts on Twitter, namely Fahmi Reza's account @kuasiswa, known as a Malaysian political graphic artist. The data was selected from Reza's Twitter because of his proficiency in crafting political graphics that deliver impactful messages. Fahmi Reza possesses the knowledge and abilities necessary to adeptly communicate intricate political matters using visual methods. This renders an asset for individuals interested in visually engaging with Malaysian political trolling.

B. Sample

Regarding the sample, the selection of this data is based on the high tweets, quotes, and likes on Twitter. The number of likes that many visual trolling receive is seen as an advantage in analyzing the visual due to social influence such as netizens. Four selected visual data involve the data from 2022 and 2023. Therefore, during this period many issues can be related to the individual in the visual given that the visual trolling that is highlighted occurs when matters related to individuals are very hot highlighted in the mass media and platform media. This visual will influence the audience with the current situation. Additionally, this data can be considered as new political visual trolling data.

C. Data Generation and Analysis

Data in this study were analyzed by adapting and combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) by Fairclough (1995) and Visual Semiotics Theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) to describe the visual content and ideology in four visual data. The four data were deemed relevant to the objectives of the study. Therefore, analyzing this data includes

critical discourse analysis involving text, discourse, and sociocultural aspects, and visual involving the ideational and interpersonal. The concept of Fairclough's theory explains the power, ideology, discursive practice, and sociocultural analysis of how discourse mirrors and perpetuates broader social structures and power dynamics, contributing to the maintenance or transformation of social norms and practices. In this context of analysis, the researchers limit to the macro and micro practices aspects that offer an encompassing perspective on discourse patterns, overarching themes, and societal ramifications. Meanwhile, micro focuses on precise linguistic attributes, interactions, and subtleties. The concept of visual semiotics theory by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) will adapt Ideational refers to the interpretation of symbols in the physical world through narrative and conceptual frameworks. Interpersonal entails discerning the connections among symbols and the individuals or groups who create and receive them. Textual involves examining the visual elements within an image to categorize and analyze participants, objects, locations, or individuals within a particular context. The combination of both theories will allow the investigation and exploration of the ideology and power in visual and textual of the Malaysian political visual trolling holistically.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that four selected political trolling internet visuals on the social media Twitter 'X' Malaysia show that there is an ideology and power construction available behind the visuals. Each featured visual forms a certain perspective based on what the visual characteristics want to present to the audience. Four visual analyses show the construction of ideology and power through hidden visuals which are visual trolling (1) Visual of Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional's Political Party, (2) Visual of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) Political Trolling, (3) Visual of Zahid Hamidi Political Trolling and (4) Visual of Ex and Current Malaysian Prime Minister Political Trolling. The analysis of each visual trolling is explained below:

A. Visual Analysis of Political Trolling 1

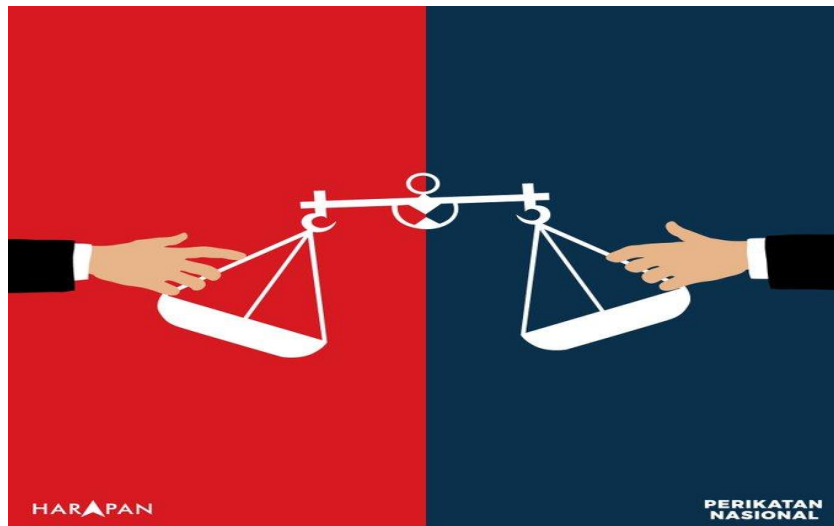


Figure 1. Visual of Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional's Political Party (Fahmi Reza on X, twitter.com)

TABLE 1
THE STRUCTURE OF DISCOURSE IN VISUAL TROLLING 1

Structure in Discourse	Discourse Representation	Visual Element in Discourse
Macro structure	Theme Themes are conveyed through visual discourse.	Topic The visual discourse of the same injustice in both political parties in Malaysia is between Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Perikatan Nasional (PH).
	Schematic Discourse formation of the visuals.	Scheme 1. Visual discourse text: Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional. 2. There is a problem when the government is biased and the same as other governments. 3. Assuming agreed between two parties and not wanting to give in. 4. Conflicts between the two parties.
Micro structure	Semantics Meaning in visual discourse. Syntactic Normalization	Visual Background 1. Shows dissatisfaction with the attitude of members of their respective political parties. 2. PH and PN representation based on words and colors. 3. Balance scale. 4. Two hands hold the balance scale and one of it not strongly hold the balance scale. Visual Meaning in The Text 1. The audience is seen as the best judges in choosing a political party between Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Perikatan Nasional (PH). Presupposition 1. Highlighting the influence of PH and PN on determining the results of political events. Single sentence. Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional.

As highlighted in Figure and Table 1, the representation of the government Political Party and the Opposition Party, namely Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Perikatan Nasional (PN), is depicted. The visual trolling recognition involving these two parties is depicted in two different colors, representing each political party, along with the name of the party in the visual. The red color in the visual represents PH with the rocket symbol logo in the word 'Harapan', while the blue color represents PN. Besides the color difference, there's a balance scale placed in the middle of the image between the two hands representing each political party. Additionally, two hands are depicted clinging to a balance scale, representing equal action.

In this case, the connectedness of this visual trolling can be explained further with the theme and topic revolving around the portrayal of injustice within Malaysian political parties, specifically Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Perikatan Nasional (PN). The visual discourse aims to highlight similarities in injustice between these parties. The background of the visual indicates dissatisfaction with the actions of political party members. Upon closer inspection, the two hands holding the balance scale represent the pact of hope, which does not fully balance the scale, indicating a reluctance to be fully involved in the other's situation.

Furthermore, PH appears to be submitting to or conceding to an enduring and excessively reliant grip or sway, contrary to what would be expected. This implies a situation where the party feels obligated to adhere to demands or appeals due to the potency of the influence exerted by another party, individual, or external factor. Thus, it conveys a notion of surrendering control or autonomy to an external force. Moreover, this visual was shared on Twitter two days after the election, effectively conveying their platform, policies, and vision to the public, ensuring that their goals, plans, and values are communicated clearly and resonate with voters. The visual also highlights a positive narrative surrounding enacting beneficial change compared to the previous administration.

The visual discourse likely represents a critical viewpoint on Malaysia's political scene, particularly addressing issues like injustice, bias, greed, and intra-party conflict. This suggests an underlying ideological stance on transparency, accountability, and fairness in governance. By spotlighting injustices within political entities like Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Perikatan Nasional (PN), it aligns with an ideological position that condemns corrupt or unethical conduct in politics, aiming to promote values associated with good governance and social justice.

Regarding power, the visual discourse likely mirrors power struggles among various political factions or parties. The portrayal of conflicts between PH and PN hints at underlying power dynamics and competition for political clout. Additionally, it may seek to empower the audience by portraying them as influential decision-makers capable of shaping political outcomes.

Moreover, by presenting the audience as influential decision-makers capable of shaping political outcomes, the discourse may seek to empower viewers and challenge the authority of political elites. This suggests a shift in power dynamics where the audience is positioned as catalysts for change, capable of holding political parties accountable.

In summary, the visual discourse critiques established power structures, advocating for societal transformation, and urging viewers to actively participate in political processes. It embodies an ideological standpoint prioritizing

transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in governance while challenging the authority of political elites. As a result, this Figure 1 discourse appears to be driven by a critical stance towards political injustices and power imbalances, aiming to inform, persuade, or mobilize the audience towards a particular ideological perspective or political action.

B. Visual Analysis of Political Trolling 2



Figure 2. Visual of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) Political Trolling (Fahmi Reza on X, twitter.com)

TABLE 2
THE STRUCTURE OF DISCOURSE IN VISUAL TROLLING 2

Structure in Discourse	Discourse Representation	Visual Element in Discourse
Macro structure	Theme Themes are conveyed through visual discourse.	Topic The perception of Abdul Hadi Awang as the President of Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) political party towards the Democratic Action Party (DAP) in the political arena.
	Schematic Discourse formation of the visuals.	Scheme 1. Awang's leadership will succeed in governing the country.
Micro structure	Semantics Meaning in visual discourse.	Visual Background 1. Shows dissatisfaction with DAP. 2. The visual of the PAS flag. 3. Visual discourse text: 'Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)', 'Pejabat Agong (All-Malaysia Islamic Party (PAS)', 'Office politics'. 4. 'No. Pendaftaran – 355 Padang Merbok' (Registration number – Padang Merbok) 5. 'MINDA PRESIDEN PAS' (The mind of PAS President). 6. 'DAP' words occupy the visual. 7. Abdul Hadi Awang's image and position in PAS.
	Syntactic Normalization	Visual Meaning in The Text 1. Reveal the perception of the President (PAS) towards a different political party especially a different race. Presupposition 1. PAS stands out as the sole political party that upholds fairness, excellence, and adherence to religious principles. Single sentence. President of PAS Abdul Hadi Awang.

Furthermore, Figure 2 illustrates the overall visual representation of the PAS political party led by Abdul Hadi Awang as president. This visual discourse revolves around Abdul Hadi Awang's perception of the DAP within the political landscape, particularly from the perspective of his role as the President of PAS. The PAS flag depicted in the visual signifies the identity and importance of PAS in the political arena. Additionally, this visual trolling showcases the message or critique of the political entity. Political ideologies, values, and affiliations can be encapsulated based on the

potent symbols of the political party flag, making it a strategic way to optimize the impact, lucidity, and emotional resonance of the trolling message associated with the targeted political entity.

The visual discourse text includes Jawi writing translated as 'Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)', 'Pejabat Agong' (Office politics), 'Nombor Pendaftaran' (Registration number – 355 Padang Merbok), 'MINDA PRESIDEN PAS (The mind of PAS President)', 'DAP' words occupying the visual, and lastly, the image of PAS president and position. These elements indicate its ideology and power to the audience who view this visual. The Jawi writing symbolizes cultural and religious identity within Malaysia that aligns with Abdul Hadi Awang's image, conveying an affiliation with Islam and Malay heritage while evoking sentiments of tradition, genuineness, and piety. This juxtaposition reflects the intricate linguistic landscape of Malaysia and the calculated communication strategies employed by political figures. The office politics and registration number on Padang Merbok explain the stronghold of political party officials in Padang Merbok, Kuala Lumpur. The depiction of the PAS president's mind and the 'DAP' words reveals Abdul Hadi Awang's perception of DAP from a political viewpoint, representing contrasting ideological and sociopolitical forces within Malaysian politics.

Based on this visual trolling context, the theme aims to communicate a message concerning the relationship between PAS and DAP, focusing on the viewpoints and interactions of Abdul Hadi Awang towards the DAP party. It delves into how the president of PAS perceives and engages with DAP, shedding light on potential conflicts or disagreements between the two political entities. The presence of PAS flags in the visual background signifies dissatisfaction with DAP, indicating negative sentiments towards the party within the visual discourse. The discourse aims to elucidate Abdul Hadi Awang's perspective on DAP, particularly concerning their statements or actions, highlighting ideological and power contrasts between the two parties.

The visual discourse likely embodies an ideological standpoint aligned with PAS's political agenda and objectives. It may illustrate power dynamics within the Malaysian political realm, particularly concerning the relationship between PAS and DAP. By spotlighting Abdul Hadi Awang's stance on DAP and accentuating dissatisfaction with the party, the visual discourse aims to craft a narrative that positions PAS as a principled and morally upright political force. In essence, visuals reveal the interplay between ideology and power dynamics within Malaysia's political sphere, underscoring disparities between PAS and DAP while shedding light on power struggles and aiming to bolster support for PAS and influence public perceptions. The discussion on this visual trolling regarding Abdul Hadi Awang's perspective on DAP signifies ideological positions and power struggles within Malaysia's political landscape, aiming to communicate ideas about PAS's relationship with DAP while revealing deeper insights into semiotics, socio-political interactions, and cultural subtleties.

C. Visual Analysis of Political Trolling 3

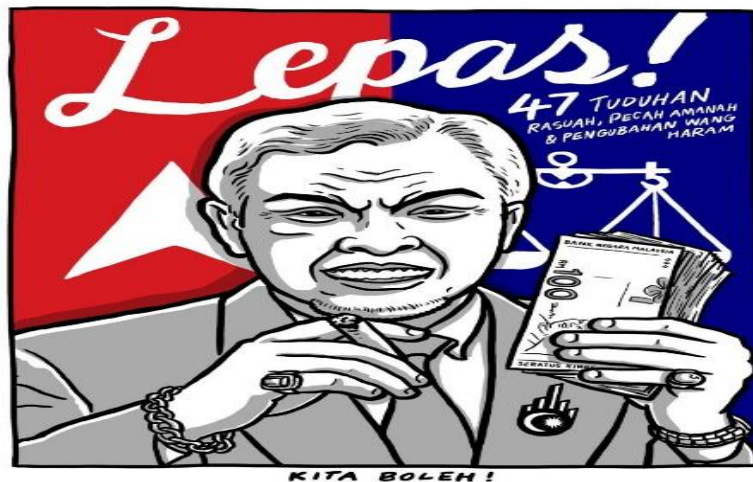


Figure 3. Visual of Zahid Hamidi Political Trolling (Fahmi Reza on X, twitter.com)

D. Visual Analysis of Political Trolling 4








	“Bangsa Malaysia” Wawasan 2020	FAILED
	“Islam Hadhari”	FAILED
	“1Malaysia”	FAILED
	“Malaysia Baharu”	FAILED
	“Malaysia Prihatin”	FAILED
	“Keluarga Malaysia”	FAILED
	“Malaysia Madani”	<p>A akan berjaya B akan gagal C tak tahu D just another empty government slogan</p>

Figure 4. Visual of Ex-Prime Minister and Current Prime Minister of Malaysia Political Trolling (Fahmi Reza on X, twitter.com)

TABLE 4
THE STRUCTURE OF DISCOURSE IN VISUAL TROLLING 4

Structure in Discourse	Discourse Representation	Visual Element in Discourse
Macro structure	Theme Themes are conveyed through visual discourse.	Topic Perception of the failed leadership among the former Prime Minister and prediction of the new Prime Minister of Malaysia.
	Schematic Discourse formation of the visuals.	Scheme 1. A sarcastic and trolling image of the former Prime Minister and the new Prime Minister of Malaysia based on the failed promised slogan and current slogan with the option ‘A akan berjaya (will succeed), ‘B akan gagal (will fail)’, ‘C tak tahu (don’t know) and ‘Just another empty government slogan’.
Micro structure	Semantics Meaning in visual discourse.	<p>Visual Background</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The image of fourth ex-Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad with the slogan of “Bangsa Malaysia” (Malaysia Nation), Wawasan 2020 (Vision of 2020), Failed. The image of fifth ex-Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi with the slogan of “Islam Hadhari”, Failed. The image of sixth ex-Prime Minister Najib Razak with the slogan of “1 Malaysia”, Failed. The image of seventh ex-Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamad with the slogan of “Malaysia Baharu” (A new Malaysia), Failed. The image of eighth ex-Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin with the slogan of “Malaysia Prihatin” (Malaysia concern), Failed. The image of ninth ex-Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob with the slogan of “Keluarga Malaysia” (Malaysia Family), Failed. The image of the tenth current Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim with the slogan of “Malaysia Madani”, with the option of A, B, C and D which are the option ‘A akan berjaya (will succeed), ‘B akan gagal (will fail)’, ‘C tak tahu (don’t know) and ‘Just another empty government slogan’. <p>Visual Meaning in The Text</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Slogans by leaders do not prove excellence but instead show failure. <p>Presupposition</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All former ex-prime ministers could not prove good leadership meanwhile current Prime Minister’s leadership is still under scrutiny. <p>Complex sentences.</p>
	Syntactic	

Figure 4 depicts a visual trolling featuring the ex-Prime Ministers and the current Prime Minister, highlighting each former prime minister's slogan. The visuals showcase images of former Prime Ministers alongside their slogans, all labeled as "failed." The inclusion of the current Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, with his slogan 'Malaysia Madani,' signifies an ongoing evaluation of his leadership, allowing individuals to freely express their opinions and sentiments about political leadership.

The first cartoon image of the fourth ex-Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, shows a provocative gesture with the middle finger, conveying feelings of anger or rebellion towards a person or entity. The slogan 'Bangsa Malaysia' (Malaysia Nation) and 'Wawasan 2020' (Vision of 2020) are labeled as "Failed." The slogan "Bangsa Malaysia" embodies a vision of inclusivity and unity among Malaysia's diverse ethnic and cultural groups. However, the 'failed' label signifies a critical appraisal of Mahathir's leadership and policy effectiveness, suggesting that the envisioned national unity and development objectives were not achieved during his tenure. Similarly, the initiative "Hadari Islam" led by Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is labeled as a failure, symbolized by a cartoon of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi sleeping soundly. This symbolizes inefficiency or inadequacy, reflecting negatively on their ability to advocate for the interests of their constituents effectively.

The cartoon image of Najib Razak depicts him as a clown, indicating foolishness or incompetence, with the slogan '1 Malaysia' labeled as a failure. The humor element in the image affects the audience's perception with the failure reflection of Najib Razak's leadership. Another cartoon visual of Mahathir Mohamad portrays a serious facial expression, reflecting disappointment and frustration, with the slogan 'Malaysia Baharu' labeled as a failure. This suggests dissatisfaction with the political commitments made under the initiative.

The cartoon image of Muhyiddin Yassin shows uneasiness and discomfort, indicating personal dissatisfaction, with the slogan 'Malaysia Prihatin' labeled as a failure. This reflects disillusionment with its outcomes as a failure to prioritize Malaysian concerns effectively. The cartoon visual trolling of Ismail Sabri Yaakob features a yellow face and hands associated with the 'I don't care' and 'I don't know' attitude, with the slogan 'Keluarga Malaysia' labeled as a failure. This signifies a lack of seriousness and commitment to delivering on the promises associated with the initiative.

Overall, the visual trolling critiques the previous failed government and suggests a conspiracy between the current Prime Minister, Anwar Ibrahim, and Zahid Hamidi to form a new government under the Madani government. However, the evaluation of the Madani government's ability is still ongoing, with options provided for the audience to make a definitive judgment about its prospects. This serves as a commentary on the credibility, actions, and rhetoric of political leaders.

V. CONCLUSION

Previous research has demonstrated that social media platforms play a crucial role in uncovering the underlying ideology and power dynamics inherent in visual trolling. Visual trolling serves as a potent tool for critiquing past leadership, scrutinizing current initiatives, and shaping public discourse and perception, aligning with findings from earlier studies. The context in which visual trolling occurs is pivotal in influencing audience opinions on political figures and their leadership qualities. Platforms like Twitter have emerged as prominent arenas for political expression and engagement, facilitated by features such as hashtags that enable the widespread dissemination of visual trolling and associated issues on a global scale. This dissemination of information through visual trolling serves as a mechanism for holding politicians accountable for their actions and decisions. By humorously or satirically highlighting their shortcomings or failures, visual trolling pressures politicians to address concerns and enhance their performance.

Moreover, visual trolling indirectly fosters trust among audiences regarding the political issues it raises, whether by affirming or questioning them. It also contributes to public awareness of political matters and personalities, while simultaneously critiquing power structures within society by challenging authority and exposing inconsistencies or injustices in governance. This enhances its impact and resonance in shaping public opinion. However, it's important to note that the reception of visual trolling can vary widely among individuals, with factors such as facial expressions, symbols, colors, language usage, and slogans all contributing to its overall ideology and power.

Therefore, this research holds significance in uncovering the fundamental ideologies and power dynamics of Malaysian politics, as well as shedding light on the identities of politicians portrayed in visual trolling. Future studies could explore additional aspects of visual trolling, such as its relationship with hashtags, comparisons between local and global visual trolling, and other avenues that yield new insights into this phenomenon.

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Digital Literacy Competence for Scientific Writing: Students' Perceptions and Skills

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Abstract—In this digital era, digital literacy skills must be owned by students to write a good scientific writing. Therefore, this study aims to obtain students' perceptions and skills toward digital literacy in scientific writing. This study was a descriptive study. The data were collected by administering closed-ended questionnaires and conducting semi-structured interviews with the thirty-three students in the seventh semester of the English Language Education Study Program of Teaching Training and Education Faculty of Mahasaraswati University, Denpasar. Data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively, and the data from the interviews were analyzed qualitatively. The result of the study indicated that students had a positive perception of digital literacy and had good digital literacy skills in scientific writing. Students believed having digital literacy skills was essential to help them write good scientific writing. In addition, students have good skills in the digital literacy dimension of critical thinking, finding online information, online writing attitude, and digital function. These skills helped them construct and develop ideas and also avoid plagiarism. However, students' digital literacy skills can be classified as sufficient in the dimensions of online communication, creativity and collaboration, and digital academic culture. Lack of knowledge, competence, and confidence leads students to be less creative and not actively join the online collaboration and digital academic culture.

Index Terms—digital literacy, dimension of digital literacy, scientific writing

I. INTRODUCTION

In this digital era, students and technology cannot be separated since the integration of technology into the learning process provides a flexible, effective, active, and fun learning experience for students (Akram et al., 2022; Odede & Jiyane, 2019; Pangrazio et al., 2020). However, the integration of technology in education does not only have good impacts on education; the rapid development of technology also has terrible impacts on students (Kopecky & Sztokowski, 2017; Purnama et al., 2021; Rocha Estrada et al., 2022). Therefore, learners must have sufficient competencies, including digital literacy skills to use technology critically, effectively, and safely. Digital literacy skills help students operate digital tools and use information from various digital sources (Chan et al., 2017; Gilster, 1997; Leaning, 2019; List, 2019; Park et al., 2021). Hague and Payton (2010) proposed eight dimensions of digital literacy skills, which are the ability to operate digital tools, use digital technology safely, find information on the internet, evaluate digital information critically, share information through digital tools, create digital content, do collaboration through digital technology, and utilize technology in understanding other cultures. More concisely, Iskandar et al. (2022) divided digital literacy into instrumental (ability to use and involve in technology effectively), mental (ability to evaluate, communicate, and create information critically and creatively), and sociocultural (ability to locate and communicate information based proper social, cultural, and moral contexts). In addition, focusing on the main understanding of digital information as the ability to find information, Dudeney and Hockly (2016) constructed four dimensions of digital literacy that is language (how information is communicated through digital technology), information (how information is found and evaluated), connection (how information is achieved by collaborating and joining the social network), and (re)design (how information is adapting). Regarding the stage of an individual's digital literacy, Pérez-Escoda (2019) divided digital literacy into four dimensions: learning, being able, creating, and practicing. In general, digital literacy covers skills to operate digital tools, find and evaluate information on the internet critically, and safely utilize digital technology.

Some researchers conducted studies that focused on digital literacy in language learning. Akayoğlu et al. (2020) explored how pre-service EFL teachers defined the digital literacy concepts, what kind of tools they used, and for which

purposes they preferred digital tools. The result indicated that pre-service EFL teachers' concept of digital literacy consists of many levels, from knowledge to use, to critical, creative, and collaborative use. Moreover, it was found that pre-service EFL teachers use social media platforms for various purposes. In addition, Rinekso et al. (2021) investigated the digital literacy practice of EFL postgraduate students by administering an online opened-ended questionnaire and conducting semi-structured interviews. The result of this study indicated that postgraduate students understood digital literacy as a skill to search, comprehend, evaluate, create, and share information. Students also use digital tools to accomplish their academic and daily purposes. Zan et al. (2020) administered a survey to 226 first-grade students of the Psychology, History, Turkish Language and Literature (TLL), and Contemporary Turkish Dialects and Literature (CTDL) Department at Bartın University to investigate students' awareness and skills in digital literacy. The result of this study indicates that students of the Contemporary Turkish Dialects and Literature (CTDL) Department had the lowest digital literacy awareness and skills that were affected by their habit of using technology.

Moreover, Alfia et al. (2021) used the Theory of Planned Behavior of Ajzen to examine students' beliefs about integrating digital literacy into EFL classrooms. Based on the result of the interview and observation, behavioral (about the advantages of digital literacy in students' learning process), normative (about meeting the social expectations of students' learning), and control (about the opportunity to use technology in the learning process) were students' beliefs that effected students' learning strategy in EFL classroom. Furthermore, Nguyen and Habok (2022) investigated the digital literacy level of 1,661 EFL Vietnamese university students. By administering questionnaires, this study found that students had positive attitudes toward digital literacy, and most students could access digital technology at home and university. However, the level of students' digital literacy knowledge was higher than the level of students' digital literacy skills. Potential reasons for that finding are the lack of opportunities for students to use technology in the learning process and the curriculum only focuses on knowledge.

From the previous research, it can be seen that the digital literacy concept, digital literacy awareness, digital tools, and students' digital literacy level are the most discussed topics. In this study, the researchers only examined students' digital literacy in general English learning rather than focusing digital literacy on specific English language skills. This study focused on students' digital literacy in writing to fill the gap. This research intended to examine and discuss EFL university students' digital literacy skills in scientific writing based on the dimension of digital literacy skills. Since scientific writing is a type of writing designed to communicate scientific topics and information, Lindsay (2011) suggested that scientific writing must be precise and clear. It means that information in scientific writing must be reliable and comes from reputable resources. Technology development makes it easy for students to access various information digitally. To obtain reliable information effectively on the internet, students are better equipped with digital literacy skills. Besides, having digital literacy skills allows students to use various tools and applications that can help them write scientific writing, such as Grammarly, Mendeley, and Publish and Perish application. The most crucial point is that digital literacy can help students be aware of writing ethics, such as avoiding plagiarism. Thus, related to the objective of this study, two research questions were carried out:

1. What is students' perception of the importance of digital literacy skills in scientific writing?
2. What are students' digital literacy skills in scientific writing based on the dimension of digital literacy skills?

II. METHOD

A. Participant

The participants in this study were chosen by using the purposive sampling technique as follows:

1. Formulating the objective of the research
2. Determining the criteria that support the achievement of research objectives, which are:
 - a. Students who had passed the writing course
 - b. Students who actively write scientific writing
 - c. Students who utilized digital technology in writing
3. Determining the population based on the specifications of the conducted research
4. Determine the minimum sample in the study that is feasible and meets the expected criteria

Based on the objective of this study, to know EFL students' digital literacy skills in writing scientific writing, the seventh-semester students of the English Language Education Study Program of Teaching Training and Education Faculty of Mahasaraswati University Denpasar were chosen as the population purposively. Furthermore, thirty-three students in the seventh semester were chosen as a sample of this study since they met the criteria that were: 1) actively writing an undergraduate thesis and article as a graduation requirement; 2) passing three stages of the writing course: paragraph writing in the second semester, essay writing in the third writing, and argumentative writing in the fourth semester; and 3) utilizing digital technology to write their undergraduate thesis and article.

B. Research Design

This study was conducted based on descriptive research design since the purpose of this study is to obtain information to describe the students' digital literacy skills in scientific writing. To answer the research questions, questionnaires and interviews were utilized. Questionnaires were administered to determine students' digital literacy

skills in scientific writing. The interview was conducted to explore the depth of information related to students' digital literacy skills in scientific writing and also students' perception of digital literacy in writing, especially scientific writing.

C. Instrument

To obtain rich data related to students' digital literacy skills in scientific writing, a questionnaire developed by Nabhan (2021) was adopted. Digital literacy dimensions and EFL scientific writing environment were considered in designing the questionnaire. The statements in the questionnaire were about students' digital literacy skills based on seven dimensions of digital literacy. Forty-six statements were divided into seven dimensions of digital literacy: six statements for the critical thinking dimension, five statements for the online writing attitude dimension, six statements for the digital academic culture dimension, four statements for online collaboration and creativity dimension, five statements for online information finding dimension, nine statements for online communication dimension, and eleven statements for digital functional skills dimension. Questionnaires were designed in the form of 5-point Likert scale agreements: strongly agree (5 points), agree (4 points), neither agree nor disagree (3 points), disagree (2 points), and strongly disagree (1 point).

To ensure the questionnaire was eligible to be administered and consistent in measuring, the questionnaire must be valid and reliable. In order to verify the validity of the questionnaire, two experts in English language teaching and ELF writing were invited as validators to check the statements in the questionnaire. The validation result from two validators was calculated and categorized using the Gregory formula. Based on the calculation result, the statements in the questionnaire were valid and categorized as very high, with a point of 1.0. Moreover, the reliability of the questionnaire was examined by using Alpha Cronbach. The result indicated that the questionnaire was reliable, with a score of 0.938. Since the questionnaire was valid and reliable, the questionnaire could be administered.

The interview was conducted with students who responded to the questionnaire to support the data obtained from the questionnaire. The interview was conducted as a semi-structured interview in which the researcher as interviewee had a list of questions as an interview guide. However, questions can be developed during the interview to obtain deeper information. The questions in the interview guide were about students' perception of digital literacy, especially in writing English scientific writing. In addition, to support the result of the questionnaire, the questions in the interview guide were also about students' digital literacy skills.

D. Data Collection Procedures

Data that was used in this study was primary data that came from first-hand sources. The first-hand source of this study was the seventh-semester students who had passed three stages of a writing course and were actively writing their undergraduate thesis and article as a graduation requirement. The primary data in this research were collected by conducting a survey and interview. The questionnaires were administered to the thirty-three seventh-semester students using Google Forms so students could easily respond to the questionnaire. After the responses to the questionnaire had already been collected, the interview was conducted. Among thirty-three respondents, five students were chosen as representatives to be interviewed. Interviews were conducted face-to-face and via Zoom, depending on the student's willingness.

E. Data Analysis

Data obtained from the questionnaires was analyzed quantitatively, and the interview was analyzed qualitatively. Quantitative analysis of closed-ended questionnaires was focused on calculating and interpreting students' responses. The steps of quantitative analysis of closed-ended statements in the questionnaire were (1) counting the percentage of the student's responses, (2) analyzing the students' responses, (3) explaining the students' responses, and (4) interpreting the students' responses. Qualitative data were obtained from the interviews. The qualitative analysis of the interview result categorized students' answers into codes and then interpreted students' answers.

III. FINDING

A. Students' Perception Toward the Important of Digital Literacy in Scientific Writing

Since this study was conducted to find out students' digital literacy that supports them in writing scientific writing, it is better to have students' perceptions of the importance of having digital literacy skills in writing scientific writing. Based on the interview result, six themes regarding students' understanding and perception of digital literacy skills can be revealed, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' PERCEPTION TOWARD THE IMPORTANT OF DIGITAL LITERACY IN SCIENTIFIC WRITING

THEME	STUDENTS' RESPONDS
Digital literacy is finding information skills	"Digital literacy is a skill to search and find information online." "Having digital literacy skills help us to find articles, journals, or e-books easily on certain website on the internet."
Digital literacy as digital functional skills	"People can be said as digital literate if they can use digital stuff such as laptop or handphone to support their study, works, or daily activities." "Digital literacy is skills to utilize the digital application to help us finish our tasks."
Digital literacy skills to protect ourselves from digital harms	"There are various crimes in the digital world, so we need digital literacy skills to protect our data and self."
Digital literacy skills help students to write scientific writing	"Having digital literacy is important since there are so many applications that can help us to finish our scientific writing such plagiarism checker and paraphrase application." "Since digital literacy is being able to search and find information using digital media, it is important to have digital literacy skills to help us develop ideas."
Limitations of digital tools	"Having proper gadgets is important to be digitally literate, and this is my challenge since my laptop sometimes is not compatible with some applications I need to help me do my writing assignments."
Limitations of digital literacy training	"It would be good if I could join kinds of training to develop my skills in operating digital applications to help me finish my writing."

B. Students' Digital Literacy Skills in Scientific Writing

Since this study focused on scientific writing, students' digital literacy was divided into seven domains related to scientific writing. The student's digital literacy was obtained by administering a survey containing seven domains of digital literacy: digital functional skills, online communication, online collaboration and creativity, digital academic culture, finding online information, critical thinking, and online writing attitude. In addition, the interview was also conducted to add some information related to students' digital literacy skills based on the seven dimensions of digital literacy in the questionnaire.

(a). Digital Functional Skills

Having digital functional skills is one of the indicators of being digitally literate (Tabieh et al., 2021). Students with digital functional skills will be fluent in operating digital technologies to help them write their scientific writing. Regarding scientific writing, this study examined students' digital functional skills that were focused on students' fluency in utilizing word processing applications, spreadsheet applications, presentation applications, image, and video editing applications, sharing information applications, file changing applications, grammar checker applications, plagiarism checker application, paraphrasing and summarizing application, data analysis software, and reference management application. Those applications and software are beneficial to support students in finishing their scientific writings, thesis and article drafts.

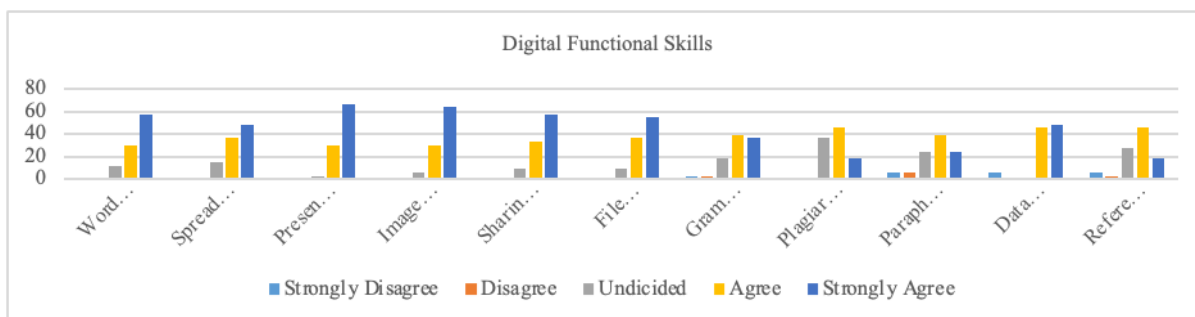


Figure 1. Digital Functional Skills

The questionnaire result indicated that students could use applications to help them write their thesis and article drafts. Students were able to operate word processing applications such as Microsoft Word. However, most students explained that they did not excel at utilizing Microsoft Word since they only knew the essential functions of Microsoft Word.

They said they were still learning tips and tricks on using some functions in Microsoft Word to make their work easier. This condition also happened to their fluency in operating spreadsheet applications. Even students acknowledged that they have difficulty in using spreadsheet applications such as Microsoft Excel, especially formulas.

Conversely, students confidently claimed they were good enough at utilizing presentation applications such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Canva, and Prezi. Based on their opinion, learning about presentation applications was more interesting. It aligns with their ability to utilize image and video editing applications in which students were highly interested. Students stated that editing image and video was fun, and they edited them for their study and daily activity. Related to digital writing, students used grammar checker applications, plagiarism checker applications, and paraphrasing applications such as Grammarly, QuillBot, and Turnitin to ensure that their scientific writing was original and grammatically correct.

(b). Online Communication

Online communication is vital in writing (Kim & Paek, 2019). By utilizing online communication, students can communicate their problems in writing, sharing ideas, and doing peer assessments with their friends. Online communication also helps students to have quick feedback and suggestions from the lecturer. As a result, the writing process will run smoothly, and the student's writing will be composed better. This study explored students' skills in utilizing online communication to support their scientific writing. Specifically, this study focused on obtaining students' skills in using social media, instant messaging, online conference applications, video-sharing applications, personal blog websites, email platforms, learning management systems, and survey applications. In addition, the student's ability to use polite expressions in online communication was also obtained.

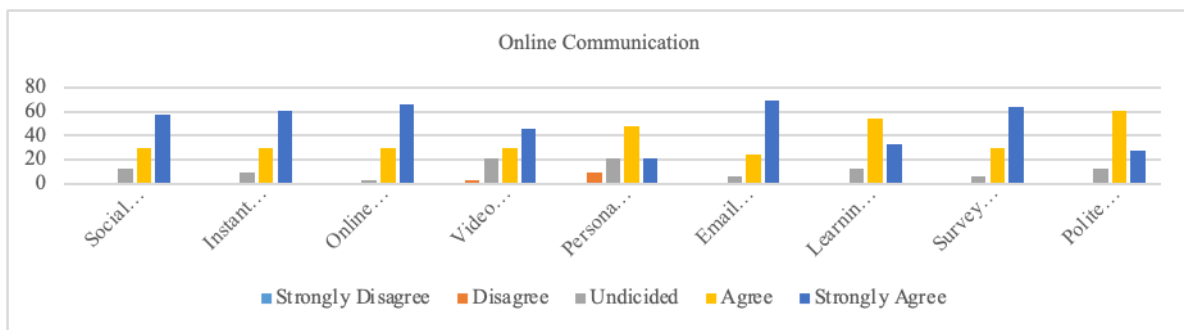


Figure 2. Online Communication

Based on the result of a questionnaire about students' skills in online communication presented in the chart above, it can be seen that students have good skills in using online communication. Students claimed that they were able to use polite expressions in online communication. Moreover, students mentioned in the interview that they have good skills in operating social media and instant messaging since they actively used Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, WhatsApp, Line, and Telegram for communication. Students also stated that in writing their thesis and article draft, they used instant messaging to share related references with their friends who had the same topics. Interestingly, they often used social media to get and share videos or articles related to tips and tricks of writing, such as how to make tables or graphs easier, how to set page numbers instantly, how to customize pages, or websites that provide grammar checker and paraphrase maker.

Furthermore, students also used survey applications to collect data for their thesis. They mentioned Google Forms as a survey application they used the most for collecting data. However, they also claimed they could use other survey applications such as Mentimeter and SurveyMonkey. Based on the chart above, it can be concluded that online conference applications and email platforms are the online communication tools that students master the most. Students explained how online conference application and email platform helps them to communicate with their supervisors about their thesis and article drafts. Submitting revisions, giving suggestions, and solving problems related to their thesis and article draft were activities that students and supervisors did using online conferences and email. Despite this, the result of the questionnaire indicates that students' skills in using video-sharing applications, personal blog websites, and learning management systems are not good enough. Students explained that they were not active users that uploaded the videos to video-sharing applications and wrote articles on personal blog websites. Related to scientific writing, they were just passive users of video-sharing applications and personal blog websites to gain knowledge related to their thesis topic. In short, students' online communication skills can help them write their scientific writing.

(c). Online Collaboration and Creativity

Collaboration and creativity are 21st-century skills that students must have to support their digital literacy skills (Kerhoff & Makubuya, 2022). In addition, by having collaboration skills and creativity, they will be greatly helped in writing their scientific writing. Therefore, this study intended to determine students' collaboration skills and creativity, focusing on how students collaborate in peer assessments and share references. Moreover, students' creativity in creating digital images and videos from words was also examined.

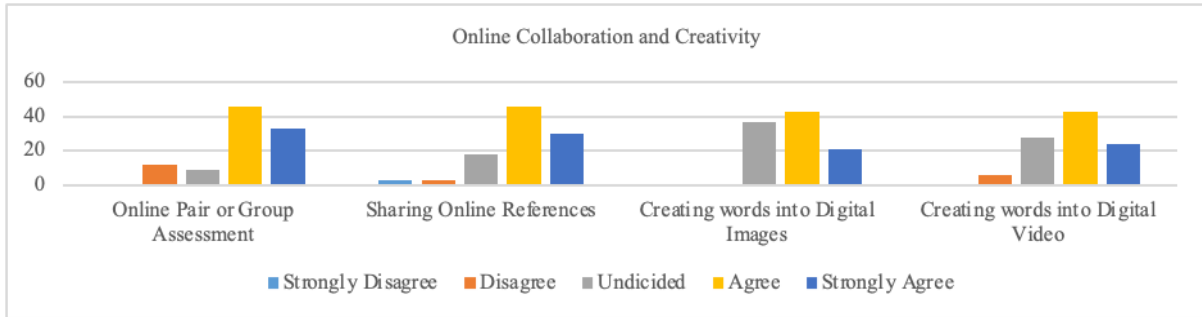


Figure 3. Online Collaboration and Creativity

The questionnaire result showed that most students were fairly good at online collaboration. Students explained in interviews that they shared references with their friends by email or instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp and Telegram. Most students did online pair or group assessments through Google Docs, email, and Padlet with their friends who had the same topic. Students said this online pair or group assessment helped them revise their writing regarding vocabulary and content. However, some students thought that they could not yet give advice on their friends' writing since it needed a high level of critical thinking and writing knowledge. Besides, students stated that they were not excellent at creating digital images or videos. They claimed they could create simple digital images and videos to support their scientific writing.

(d). *Digital Academic Culture*

The rapid development of technology in information and communication helps students find the latest information and communicate easily with others in the same academic concentration to gain knowledge. The culture of sharing academic information and knowledge by utilizing technology changes academic culture into a new digital academic culture (González-Nieto et al., 2021). The digital academic culture encourages the development of academic forums and websites on the internet that can help students more easily find and exchange information and knowledge in the academic field. Therefore, this study intended to examine students' involvement in digital academic culture, such as joining academic forums in social media and messaging services, actively browsing academic websites, having academic websites, subscribing to academic content on YouTube, and joining academic webinars.

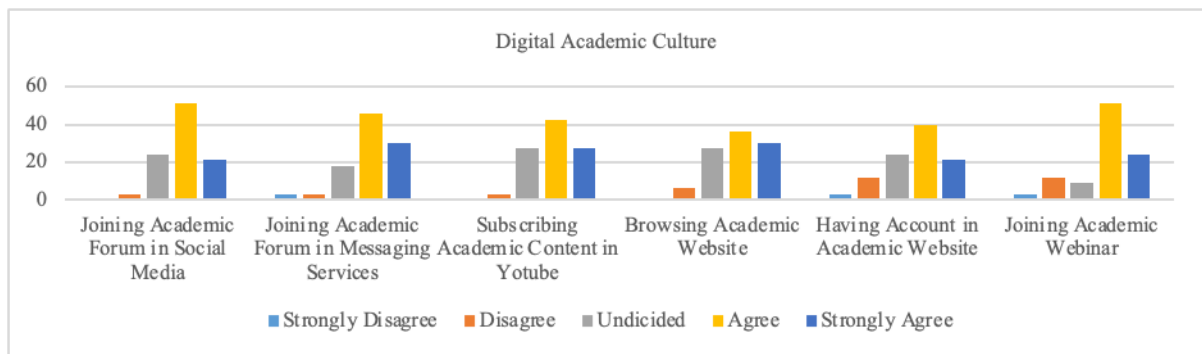


Figure 4. Digital Academic Culture

The result of the questionnaire shows that most of the students are involved in digital academic culture. Most students join academic forums in social media and messaging services since they are fluent in online communication. Based on the result of a questionnaire about students' online communication, it shows that students actively used digital media to communicate. It makes most students actively join academic forums on social media and instant messaging services to get new knowledge, the latest information, tips, and tricks for studying, and also share ideas related to academic topics. Regarding scientific writing, students join academic forums to get knowledge and tips on paraphrasing, plagiarism, template, and writing technique.

Moreover, they also had accounts on some academic websites, such as Academia.edu, Researchgate.net, JSTOR.org, and Google Scholar. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, students were more intent on joining the academic seminars. They stated that joining academic seminars helped them to find ideas for their thesis. They also stated that joining academic seminars about writing is very helpful in making them easier to write their thesis. In addition, students subscribed to academic content on YouTube to learn applications to help them write their thesis.

(e). *Finding Online Information*

Digital literacy is a competency that is closely related to searching and finding information by utilizing technology (List, 2019). In order to find reliable information easily, it is crucial to have knowledge and skill in searching a collection of information through websites or applications. Finding reliable information related to the topic is also

essential in writing. By finding reliable information, students can easily develop their ideas. Therefore, this study examined students' knowledge and skill in finding online information from websites or applications that students used to find reliable information.

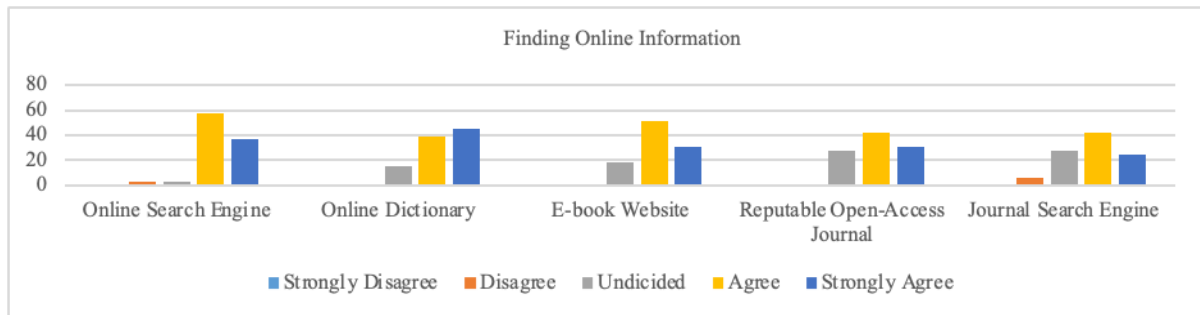


Figure 5. Finding Online Information

Data obtained from the questionnaire indicated that students have knowledge and skill in using online websites and applications to find reliable information. From the interview, it was interesting that most students use online search engines to find information, and Google is the only search engine they use. They believed that Google would provide everything that they needed. Google could direct them to find information through blogs, websites, e-books, e-article, and e-journals. Specifically, students went to PDF Coffee and PDF Drive to find e-books. Elsevier, Sage Open, Eric, JSTOR, and Google Scholar were some reputable journals regularly accessed by students. However, some students used journal search engines such as Open Knowledge and Publish or Perish to narrow the search according to their writing topic. Unfortunately, this journal search engine was not very well known by students. In addition, students used online dictionaries such as Oxford and Thesaurus to find information related to unfamiliar words that they found while reading an e-book or e-article and find synonyms and antonyms of words or phrases they used in their thesis or article.

(f). Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is one of the important skills in digital literacy (van Laar et al., 2017). People can easily search, find, and share information in this digital era. Therefore, it is essential to critically analyze and evaluate the information obtained before sharing and using it as a reliable source. While writing the thesis and article draft, students must find various information related to their topic. Students must have critical thinking skills to effectively find reliable sources and analyze information. Related to critical thinking, this study delved into students' critical thinking in digital literacy that focused on how students use their critical thinking skills to find reliable sources and references, analyze information, find and develop ideas, connect different sources, and identify original authors.

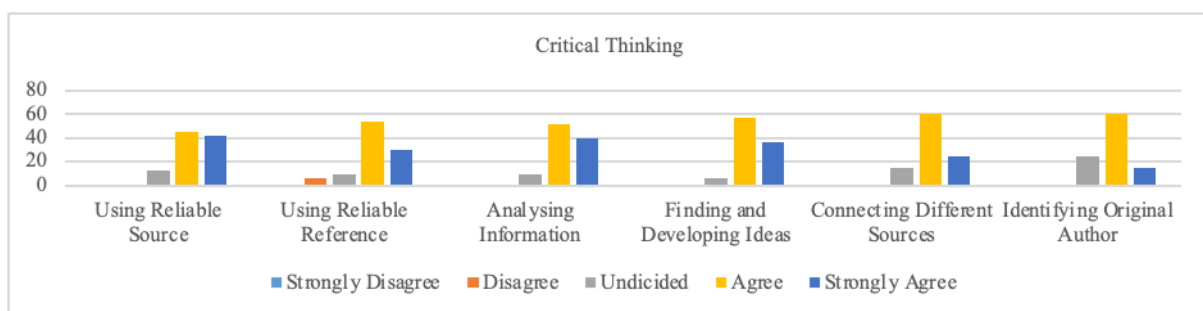


Figure 6. Critical Thinking

The questionnaire showed that students can use critical thinking skills while utilizing technology. Students were able to identify the original author of the information. In an interview, some students claimed that they cited the statements from the original author by browsing the original article or book on the internet. It also indicates that students can use reliable sources and references. The most important thing is that students can evaluate the information they have found on the internet by analyzing it and connecting some information from different sources. As a result, students easily critically find and develop ideas related to their topic.

(g). Online Writing Attitude

Technology development provides various kinds of information (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). This information is easy for students to find, download, and read to be used as a reference in completing their assignments. This situation challenges students to write their thesis or article regarding scientific writing. Students need to be honest when they use ideas from other authors to generate their ideas to avoid plagiarism. Therefore, this study examined students' online writing attitude as one of the dimensions of digital literacy in scientific writing. Data were obtained from students' knowledge and attitude about copyright, security, citation, and plagiarism.

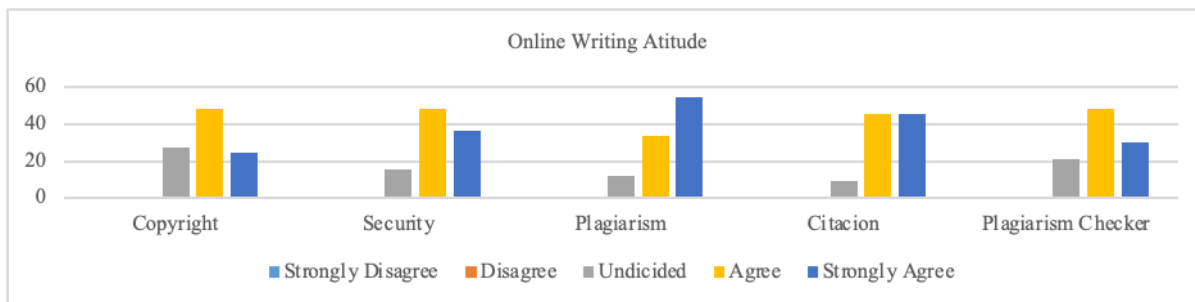


Figure 7. Online Writing Attitude

Students' online writing attitude was categorized as good according to the result of the questionnaire. Regarding security, most students claimed that they understood that information they upload and share online must be factual, polite, and reliable. In addition, students are aware that they must ensure that the information they share will not be used for something that is not good by other people. The interview result also indicated that most students were aware of copyright and plagiarism. Therefore, they did citations for every piece of information that they used. They also checked their writing using plagiarism checkers such as Turnitin to avoid plagiarism.

IV. DISCUSSION

Regarding digital literacy in language learning, this study focuses on students' digital literacy competency in writing English scientific writing. The interview result indicated that students' concept of digital literacy was a skill that must be mastered to utilize technology to find and evaluate information in various online forms. Their concept aligns with the digital literacy concept delivered by List (2019), that digital literacy is skills in operating technological tools to search, evaluate, and communicate digital information in all modes from various resources on the internet. Moreover, students agreed that having digital literacy competency helps them to write their scientific writing correctly and efficiently. They realized that technology, in terms of digital tools, is very helpful in writing. By utilizing technology to write scientific writing, students can develop their ideas, enrich the use of words, and avoid plagiarism. Therefore, having digital literacy skills is crucial to appropriately use digital tools. It is also supported by Reddy et al. (2022) that stated digital literacy is essential for humans as personal and professional since the development of technology makes people need to have the ability to utilize digital tools and information responsibly.

Besides students' concepts and perceptions of the importance of digital literacy in scientific writing, students' digital literacy competency was also obtained. Based on the results of interviews and surveys, students have good skills in the digital functional skills dimension. They can operate digital tools well enough to help them finish their writing, such as typing, making tables, making presentations, checking grammar, checking plagiarism, and compiling. However, students stated that they could operate digital tools but not excellently. It can be seen from the online creativity dimension in which students' creativity to support their scientific writing, such as creating words into images or videos, was not so high. Even so, having proper skills in the digital functional dimension helps students train their skills in online communication. This study showed that students utilized digital technology to discuss their thesis or article draft with their lecturers or advisors through online conference applications and email. They can exchange ideas, share online references, and discuss their writing problems with friends through instant messaging such as WhatsApp, line, and Telegram. As a study conducted by Tang and Hew (2022) proved, instant mobile messaging helped students engage in active communication to exchange ideas, discuss problems, and produce something creatively. In addition, a study by Yasuda (2021) revealed that online discussion through instant messaging would help students acquire knowledge since online communication activities provide phases of online knowledge instruction. Obtaining new knowledge helps students to develop ideas in their writing. Besides instant messaging, students also mentioned social media such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube as online communication applications that they regularly use to gain knowledge and skills in writing. It aligns with a study conducted by Yunus et al. (2019) that showed social media help students improve their writing skills since it provides knowledge and tips for writing and scaffolds students in the writing process.

However, the interview result showed that in online communication, most students did not actively utilize online communication media to improve their writing skills. They just passively obtained knowledge about writing from YouTube or any online resources. They did not try to share the knowledge they had obtained before by uploading videos to YouTube or any online media. They also did not actively write on their blogs. Writing on a personal blog can train writing skills (Muslem et al., 2022). The result of a study conducted by Yousefifard and Fathi (2021) proved that learning to write through blog-mediated instruction improved students' writing skills. In addition, the study that was conducted by Han (2023) proved that blog-based writing instruction not only improved students' writing skills but also students' motivation to write. Students also had low participation in the digital academic culture dimension. The survey and interview results indicated that students regularly joined academic forums on social media or instant messaging and academic webinars. Despite this, they did not actively join the forum or webinar as speakers. They also had accounts on

various academic websites, but they did not participate in sharing their writing on academic websites such as Academia.edu. It can be said that students just had passive digital literacy skills in terms of the digital academic culture dimension, in which they joined digital academic culture to achieve knowledge rather than share knowledge or their own ideas. A similar situation also happened in students' online collaboration dimension. Some students did not do online pair or group writing assessments since they thought it required a fairly high level of critical thinking as well as adequate skills and knowledge of writing. Even so, students who did online pair or group writing assessments through Email, Google Docs, or Padlet stated that online pair or group writing assessments helped them decrease their writing errors. It is in line with a study conducted by Lee et al. (2019), in which revising students' writing in pair increased students' creativity, writing performance, and high-order thinking and decreased students writing errors. In addition, a study by Abe (2021) proved that collaboration in writing positively affects students' writing skills.

This study's most important result is students' good digital literacy skills in finding online information, critical thinking, and online writing attitude. These three dimensions are the most critical writing issue in the digital era. Having good skills in finding online information helps students to be able to search and find information through digital tools correctly and efficiently. Related to scientific writing, these skills help students to be able to find appropriate information based on their topic on academic websites or reputable academic online journals through academic journal search engines. It is better if skills of finding online information align with critical thinking skills. Since various information is provided online, it is easy to find information from various sources. However, finding appropriate information from reliable online resources requires certain skills. Critical thinking is one of them. Therefore, many experts include critical thinking when defining digital literacy (Alt & Raichel, 2020; Martínez-Bravo et al., 2022). Related to students' writing, having skills in finding online information dimension and critical thinking dimension can help students produce scientific writing that is well written since students can generate and develop ideas and provide reliable information and references to support their writing.

Furthermore, related to finding information on the internet to support students' scientific writing, it is important to know the original source of information used to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is a typical writing problem (Awasthi, 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). In this case, students need to have skills in the online attitude dimension. These skills make students critical and honest in using information they find online as a reference in their scientific writing. This study showed that students paraphrase the information, cite the original source, and check the similarity of their scientific writing to avoid plagiarism. It indicates that students were aware of plagiarism in writing and tried to apply their digital literacy by utilizing technology to avoid plagiarism.

V. CONCLUSION

This study is conducted to obtain students' perceptions and skills of digital literacy. This study focuses on digital literacy skills that can help students finish their scientific writing, such as articles in academic journals or bachelor's thesis. Based on the study result, students had positive perceptions toward digital literacy, and students had good skills in digital literacy. Specifically, students believed that digital literacy skills could help them write their scientific writing. The result of the survey and interview indicated that students have good skills in the digital literacy dimension of critical thinking, finding online information, online writing attitude, and digital functionality. Students also had sufficient skills in the online communication dimension even though they were not fully utilizing online communication tools to improve their writing skills and help them to finish their scientific writing. It also happens in online collaboration and digital academic culture dimension. Students were not actively joining the online collaboration and digital academic culture. Therefore, it is suggested to conduct future studies on improving students' engagement in online writing collaboration and digital academic culture.

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Sudanese Students' Perceptions of Code Switching in English Language Classes

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Abstract—This study aims to learn how Sudanese students perceive their teachers' use of their mother tongues in English language classes and whether this usage aids or hinders student comprehension. The researchers used a descriptive and analytical approach. Sixty students completed one questionnaire, the primary tool for gathering pertinent data from the study. The researcher used the SPSS program to analyze and validate the assumptions. The findings of this research are as follows. First, the students had favorable opinions regarding the use of code-switching. Second, many instructors incorporated Arabic into their English classes. Considering these findings, the researcher suggests that code-switching is used more frequently to help students become fluent in bilingual and multilingual settings. Teachers can benefit from using code-switching to teach English because students have favorable attitudes toward its use in English language classes. Finally, the study offers several suggestions and ideas for additional research.

Index Terms—code-switching, mother tongue, multilingualism, students' perceptions, Sudanese

I. INTRODUCTION

Code-switching helps multilingual students improve their language skills in various contexts. However, challenges exist, including communication barriers, class division, and varying working speeds. Teachers must consider these issues to effectively use code-switching to improve language skills. The following parts discuss the issue of using code-switching in Sudanese multilingual classes from the student's perspective.

A. Problem Statement

Code-switching is the best strategy for helping students improve their communication and comprehension abilities, which helps them use language correctly and appropriately. Sadly, English teachers often fail to use this powerful strategy. Multilingual students speak various languages. Similar learning environments can be found in Sudanese schools, where students from various linguistic backgrounds attend classes to learn English. Dealing with multilingualism necessitates consideration of several vital factors. There may not be a common language among students who attend multilingual classes because they come from different cultures and speak different languages. Both benefits and drawbacks exist; the benefit of multilingual instruction is that it forces students to communicate in English with each other and the teacher. However, drawbacks include the possibility of division in the class and varying working speeds among students who speak different languages. Also, English can present difficulties for students from various backgrounds, including pronunciation, spelling, and grammar. Teachers must consider these issues. On this foundation, the current study aims to clarify this significant procedure and its function in inspiring students to improve their understanding of language usage in various multilingual contexts according to their needs, which contributes to resolving students' linguistic problems. Code-switching can offer students various opportunities to learn and improve

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their language when learning English. This study analyzed how teachers' use of code-switching improves students' language skills from their perspective.

B. Aims of the Study

The main goal of this paper is to outline the whole situation of English language instruction in a learning environment with multiple languages from the student's viewpoint. The specific goals of this study were as follows:

1. To demonstrate the advantages of code-switching in bilingual English classrooms.
2. To explore the motivations behind EFL instructors' and students' utilization of the Arabic language in English classes.
3. To determine how frequently students in English language classrooms with multiple languages use their mother tongues.

C. The Study's Questions

The objective of this study is to provide detailed answers to the following questions:

1. How linguistically do English teachers behave in a classroom using code-switching?
2. What purposes does code-switching serve in English-speaking multilingual classrooms?
3. What factors encourage EFL instructors and students to utilize Arabic in English classrooms?
4. In an English-speaking, multilingual classroom, how frequently do students speak in their native tongue?

D. Study Hypotheses

The following assumptions were made.

1. By using code-switching in the classroom while teaching, EFL teachers engage in linguistic behavior.
2. Code-switching enhances students' linguistic abilities in multilingual English-speaking classrooms. It also gives students various opportunities to learn and improve their language and inspires them to grow in their language comprehension.
3. EFL instructors and learners use the Arabic language in Classes of the English language for various purposes, including effectiveness, clarification, socialization, translation, ease of use, emphasis, and understanding.
4. In a multilingual English classroom, students occasionally speak their native language.

E. The Importance of the Research

The importance of this study comes from its emphasis on the role of code-switching in the instruction of English in multilingual classrooms. To come to any firm conclusions about the significance of code-switching's role in helping students develop their linguistic abilities, there need to be more research efforts being made, particularly in Sudan. As a result, this study applied a code-switching strategy to aid learners in improving their oral communication skills; in addition to that, the study is both practically and theoretically significant and will benefit everyone involved in teaching and learning, including EFL students, EFL teachers, lecturers, syllabus designers, material writers, institutions, and educational authorities. Therefore, this study is essential in the field of education. It also unmistakably advances the objectives of the educational theory. Therefore, the study can extend and revise existing knowledge in the field, making it significant. This can assist in finding solutions to educational issues. Additionally, the outcomes can impact educational policies, procedures, programs, and decision-making.

F. Study Methodology

This study used an analytical descriptive method. A random sample was selected to accurately reflect the study population. A questionnaire was administered to 60 students to collect data, then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to conduct statistical analyses. To present the data clearly, tables were utilized and percentages were computed.

G. Limitations of the Study

The study examines students' perspectives on code-switching in multilingual English classrooms, using a questionnaire to explore its functions and justifications. The towns in question are Kassala, Nyala, and Abrie. Sixty male and female students from Sudanese schools were the only ones included in this study. This study was conducted in Sudan. As a result, Darfur, Kassala, and Northern States constitute the study's sole geographical scope.

The following part will cover the pertinent literature review for the study's subject.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The title of this study is "Sudanese Students' Perception of Code Switching in English Language Classes". As such, this section will focus solely on the theoretical aspects related to the research topic, which forms the foundation of this paper. This section is essential to the paper as it explains two concepts: code-switching and Communicative Language Teaching.

A. Code Switching

The word code refers to a way of communicating between two or more people. It is a neutral term that does not carry any judgment or bias. The reasons why people choose to use a specific code at a particular time are fascinating. For instance, some individuals prefer utilizing one code over another. Ali (2021) states that “they sometimes create a code by combining two other communication systems, switching between them or blending them. Additionally, the various code options have different social meanings influenced by the factors leading to people's choices”. Bokamba (1989) states, “Code-switching is when a bilingual/multilingual speaker uses language from multiple grammatical systems, resulting in the combination of utterances from two or more languages”. According to Gluth (2008), “codeswitching is governed by grammatical constraints related to the languages used and does not occur randomly within a sentence”. Therefore, a bilingual speaker's ease is primarily assessed by their accurate use of grammar rules in both languages. According to Ali et al. (2023), “code-switching (also known as code-mixing) can take different forms in conversation, including inter-sentential (between sentences) and intra-sentential (within a sentence). Some people may code-switch due to personal preference, while others may use it as a way to express their identity when they need to use multiple languages”. In addition to what is mentioned previously Different scholars have different perspectives on code-switching. Blom and Gumperz's (1972) research delved into the phenomenon of code-switching and its correlation to the social connections among speakers. Rayfield (1970) views it as a personal rhetorical device that adds color to the speech and emphasizes certain statements. According to Fallis (1981), code-switching can serve various purposes, such as indicating a response to changes in the surroundings or marking identity. Bilingual speakers can use language to show solidarity or intimacy and convey social information. Romaine (1995) sees code-switching as a communicative option for bilingual speakers, similar to monolingual speakers switching between styles or dialects. Regarding code-switching as a social interaction activity, Ali et al. (2023) note that teachers believe it to be a simple, beneficial, and crucial tool that enhances learners' motivation and proficiency in bilingual and multilingual environments. Additionally, they believe that their pupils grasp English more effectively when they code-switch to their native language during classroom instruction and that students prefer their instructors to do so in all English classes. Accordingly, they suggest that English language instructors should occasionally utilize their native tongues during instruction. Ali et al. (2023) think that this approach fosters positive relationships with students and is a motivational tool for learners, encouraging greater participation and self-expression in English.

B. Communicative Language Teaching

The Communicative Language Teaching, also known as the Communicative Approach, is a method of teaching foreign or second languages that emphasizes learning through communication. Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 90) state that “the approach to teaching a foreign or second language called C.L.T emphasizes the importance of communicative competence as the goal of language learning. This method aims to make meaningful communication and language use the focus of all classroom activities”. Communicative language teaching differs from other language teaching methods, focusing on memorizing and repeating language structures and forms. Instead, it emphasizes teaching students communicative competence over linguistic competence.

Learning a language involves not just forming grammatically correct sentences but also knowing how to communicate effectively. Therefore, focusing on more than just grammar when learning and using a language is essential. However, while focusing on communicative competence, Communicative Language Teaching still considers grammatical competence as part of it and teaches it implicitly. Al-Humaidi (2013, p. 20) mentioned, “Since C.L.T. focuses on meaning rather than form, the language form is learned through meaning and not vice versa. And this is what makes this approach distinctly different from the other structural methods”.

According to Al-Humaidi (2013), “Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 16) argue that Communicative Language Teaching should be considered an approach, not a method”. According to Rodgers (2001), there is a distinction between a method and an approach. According to him, the approach refers to broader language teaching philosophies that can be used differently, while the method is a restricted teaching procedure with definite activities and techniques.

(a). Background to Communicative Language Teaching

Traditional approaches like the Audio-lingual Approach and Situational Language Teaching dominated language teaching for years in the US and Great Britain. Richards (2006) states that “traditional language learning methods focused on the belief that mastering grammatical competence was essential for learning a language. This was achieved through direct teaching of language structures and rules, which involved memorization and drilling. The teacher presented the language structure deductively, and the students practiced using those rules”.

Based on the work of Richards and Rodgers (1986),

“Traditional structural theories could not provide an inclusive description of language. Audio-lingual and Situational Language Teaching approaches focused only on the form of language and neglected another broader aspect of language: the functional aspect”. This was argued by the American linguist Noam Chomsky, who declared: that the current standard structural theories of language were incapable of accounting for the fundamental characteristic of language creativity and uniqueness of individual sentences”. As a result, they were unsuccessful in assisting language learners to develop proficiency in the target language.

British linguists began to distrust the validity of the Situational Language Teaching method in the mid-1960s after lingual-audio was rejected in the United States. Situational language teaching ceased to be an effective language

teaching method by the end of the 1960s. The chimera of predicting language based on situational events, according to Howatt (1984, p. 19), "had no future" Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 64).

A focus on communicative and functional aspects of language is necessary for language teaching. According to Richards (2006, p. 9), "Learning a language requires more than knowing how to construct grammatically sound sentences. Language learners must possess communicative competence and appropriate language usage skills for various communicative purposes, such as making requests and giving advice. Consequently, language instruction began emphasizing communicative competence instruction rather than purely grammatical competence, eventually leading to communicative language teaching".

Language Teaching Through Communication (L. L. T) emerged in response to or as a re-evaluation of conventional methods of language instruction. According to "Savignon (2004, p. 4), in this situation, C. L. T is a result of the work of numerous academics across a variety of fields, including John Firth, M. A. K. Halliday's works (functional linguistics), John Searle and John Austin (philosophy), and the American sociolinguists Dell Hymes, John Gumperz, and William Labov in sociology" (Ali, 2021).

The growing interdependence of European nations is another factor in developing the Communicative Approach. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), "the Council of Europe - a regional organization for cultural and educational cooperation - made the decision to create a curriculum for teaching adults the important languages of the European Common Market, due to the growing number of immigrants and foreign workers". The idea of creating a communicative syllabus for language teaching came about after experts conducted extensive research and consultation".

(b). *The Principles of Communicative Language Teaching*

Communicative Language Teaching has several fundamental principles that can be outlined as follows:

First, the main principle of Communicative Language Teaching is that Communication is the key to learning a language. Richards and Rodgers (1986) stated that "Communicative Language Teaching (C.L.T) is based on a theory of language as communication, in response to what Hymes has pointed out, 'communicative competence' and opposing what Chomsky referred to as 'linguistic competence', which is concerned with the ideal speaker and listener who knows the language perfectly and perform flawlessly in an idealized situation. Hymes' communicative competence theory pertains to one's ability to effectively communicate within a specific speech community". Richards and Schmidt (2002) assert that: "*Teaching language as a means of communication distinguishes the communicative approach from traditional approaches that prioritize form over meaning*".

According to Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983), "The most important distinction between communicative language teaching and the audio-lingual method is that the latter sees language learning as nothing more than learning sounds, words, and sentences, whereas language learning in C. L. T is developing his speaking skills" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986, p. 67). Claim in C. L. T. "if the instruction is delivered via communication, students will be communicatively proficient". "According to Patten (2003, p. 10), learners' communicative skills will advance the more communication they engage in" (Ali, 2021).

Second, the central principle of Communicative Language Teaching (C.L.T) is that students need to experience real-life language usage and participate in meaningful conversations. Widdowson (1978) states, "Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes the use of authentic materials and communicative activities in meaningful contexts". "Authenticity means "the quality of being genuine or true" (Bull, 2008). Proponents of C.L.T. emphasize the importance of authenticity in learning situations to enhance learning. Corder (1980), for example, asserts that "using language in real situations and allowing students to perform authentic communicative functions are of great importance". According to Benati (2009), cited in Ali (2021), "It is recommended that teachers utilize authentic materials to prepare their students for real-life language usage beyond the classroom. In addition, meaningful communication is emphasized as a crucial factor for successful language acquisition, which is a focal point of Communicative Language Teaching (C.L.T)". Richards (2006) suggests that "Effective communication occurs when students engage with relevant, purposeful, interesting, and captivating content". Richards and Rodgers (1986, p. 72) suggest that "learners retain language better when it is meaningful, assisting in the process of learning a foreign language".

Third, the goal of Communicative Language Teaching is to enhance the language learner's proficiency in both fluency and accuracy; Richards and Schmidt (2002) stated that "one of the key principles of CLT is to enhance students' fluency and accuracy. Fluency refers to natural speaking with proper stress, rhythm, pausing, intonation, interjections, and interruptions". "On the contrary, accuracy pertains to the capability of generating sentences free from grammatical errors" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 204). The communicative approach prioritizes fluency while emphasizing the importance of accuracy in language learning, as argued by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983).

Fourth, Communicative Language Teaching emphasizes teaching the four language skills. According to Richards (2006), "the emergence of C.L.T resulted in a shift away from grammar-focused language teaching and towards the teaching of knowledge and skills".

(c). *Types of Activities in Communicative Language Teaching*

Various communication activities in C.L.T. aim to develop students' communicative competence. According to Littlewood (1981), "Communicative Language Teaching involves two main types of activities: "functional communication activities" and "social interaction activities".

(i) *Functional Communication Activities*

Functional communication activities involve using language in practical situations, even if it could be more grammatically perfect. These activities include finding similarities and differences in pictures, completing maps, following directions, and solving problems together. The teacher creates an appropriate situation for the learners to overcome an information gap or solve a problem by sharing and processing information to make a decision. The success of functional tasks depends on the classroom situation.

(ii) *Social Interaction Activities*

In addition to effectively conveying meaning, students must consider the social context of their interactions. Littlewood (1981) states that "social interaction activities in the classroom resemble communication situations outside of it. However, due to the classroom's limitations and artificiality, teachers use dialogues, role plays, simulations, and improvisations to create various social situations. Producing socially appropriate utterances through effective language use determines the task's success for students".

III. DISCUSSION

A. *Analysis of the Questionnaire*

The researcher administered a questionnaire to 60 Sudanese students from diverse regions and ethnicities. Please mark (✓) the correct answer for each statement. (Some statements may have multiple correct answers).

TABLE 1
DO ANY OTHER STUDENTS IN YOUR ENGLISH CLASS SHARE YOUR MOTHER TONGUE?

Variables	Freq.	%
Yes	58	96.6%
No	2	3.4%
Total	60	100%

Table 1 presents the percentage and frequency of responses from the sample regarding whether other students in their English class have the same first language. Most of the sample, represented by 96.6%, answered "yes," indicating that most students share the same first language.

TABLE 2
ARE YOU ABLE TO BOTH READ AND WRITE IN THE SPECIFIED LANGUAGE(S) BELOW?

Variables	Freq.	%
Arabic	50	22%
English	45	83%
My first language	13	75%
Other	0	0%

The table above shows the percentage and frequency of students' responses regarding their ability to read and write in the language(s).

TABLE 3
DURING ENGLISH CLASS, THE TEACHER SPEAKS

Variables	Freq.	%
English	50	83%
Arabic	35	58%
My first language	0	0%
A language I do not recognize	0	0%

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage of responses from the study's participants regarding question 3. Most respondents answered that the teacher speaks in English, reflected in 83% of the answers.

TABLE 4
THE ENGLISH TEACHER SPEAKS LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH DURING THEIR LESSONS FOR ...

Variables	Freq.	%
Giving instructions effectively.	20	33%
translation	56	93%
checking to understand	45	75%
To facilitate understanding	52	87%
To increase understanding of information	36	60%
When moving from one point to another	21	35%
Telling jokes	55	92%
Others	2	3%

Table 4 shows the percentage and frequency of responses from the sample to question 4. Most participants (93%) answered that (the teacher uses languages other than English to translate and clarify specific points).

TABLE 5
DURING MY ENGLISH LESSON, I SPEAK ...

Variables	Freq.	%
English Language	25	42%
English and Arabic	4	7%
Arabic and my first language	55	92%
English and my first language	14	23 %
I speak another language	4	7%
I do not speak Arabic, English, and my mother tongue	0	0

Table 5 displays the percentage and frequency of responses from the sample regarding question 5. Most responses (91.6%) were "During my English lesson, I speak English and Arabic".

TABLE 6
DURING THE ENGLISH LESSON, I AM PERMITTED TO SPEAK ...

Variables	Freq.	%
English Language	43	72%
English and Arabic	55	92%
English and my first language	24	40%
Arabic and my first language	22	37%
English, Arabic, my first language	32	53%
I am not allowed to speak	3	1%
Other	0	%0

Table 6 presents the results of question 6 from the sample in a percentage and frequency format. Most participants (91.6%) answered that they were permitted to speak both Arabic and English during English lessons.

TABLE 7
WHEN DO YOU TYPICALLY USE YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE?

Variables	Freq.	%
If I don't comprehend something the teacher says, I turn to my friend for help.	55	92%
If I don't want the teacher to know what I am talking about	51	85%
When my friend asks me for help.	46	77%
Other	0	0%

Table 7 presents the percentage and frequency distribution of responses provided by the sample group in response to question 7. Data analysis indicates that a significant majority of the sample, 92%, answered affirmatively to the statement "When I do not understand something, I ask my friend after the teacher explains it".

TABLE 8
DO YOU PREFER TO BE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES WITH STUDENTS WHO SHARE THE SAME MOTHER TONGUE AS YOU?
- YES () WHY - NO () WHY

Variables	Freq.	%
Yes	38	63%
No	22	37%
Total	60	100%

Table 8 shows the percentage and frequency of responses to question 8 from the study's participants. Most students (63.4%) answered yes and provided reasons like making it easier to understand, saving time, and clarifying unclear points. However, some students answered no and cited reasons like avoiding an angry teacher or wanting to understand the lesson in English.

TABLE 9
DOES USING YOUR MOTHER TONGUE IN ENGLISH CLASS HELP YOU LEARN BETTER?
- YES () WHY - No () WHY

Variables	Freq.	%
Yes	55	92%
No	5	8%
Total	60	100%

The data in Table 9 displays the frequency and percentage of responses from the study's participants regarding question 9. Most students (91.6%) answered "yes" and provided reasons for their response, such as it is easier to understand their favorite language, and its ability to convey information effectively. Those who answered "no" gave reasons such as some students not understanding the mother tongue and potential complications.

TABLE 10
WOULD YOU BE PLEASED IF YOUR TEACHER EXPLAINED ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSONS USING YOUR MOTHER TONGUE?
- YES () WHY: - NO () WHY NOT:

Variables	Freq.	%
Yes	57	95%
No	3	5%
Total	60	100%

Table 10 shows that 95% of students answered "yes" to question (10), citing reasons such as "to better understand the language". The remaining students answered "no," citing difficulties in understanding and potential complications in learning English.

TABLE 11
WOULD YOU PREFER A TEACHER WHO SPEAKS YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE?
- YES () WHY? - NO () WHY?

Variables	Freq.	%
Yes	51	85%
No	9	15%
Total	60	100%

Table 11 displays the frequency and percentage of responses to question 11 from the study's participants. Out of all the students, 85% answered yes and explained why, such as "The teacher does everything possible to help us understand the information," "It is a good way to understand the lesson," and "It helps all the students understand the lesson well." However, those who answered no gave different reasons, such as "It can slow down the learning of the English language" and "This method does not allow us to learn English properly".

TABLE 12
WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY FOR YOU TO LEARN ENGLISH?

Variables	Freq.	%
When I only use English in the classroom.	55	92%
When I watch movies in English.	46	77%
When I travel to countries where English is spoken.	25	42%
When reading books in English	43	72%
When I can use other languages, I know, in the English classroom.	8	13%
Other, specify	2	3%

Table 12 presents the responses to question 12 from the study's participants in frequency and percentage. The data reveals that the students had diverse opinions, with some mentioning that they improved their English skills by listening to English songs or conversing with friends in English. Others indicated that having pictures and translations for different terms and situations helped them learn better.

TABLE 13
WHAT IS YOUR TEACHER'S REACTION WHEN YOU SPEAK LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH IN CLASS?
PUT A TICK (✓) OPPOSITE TO THE ANSWER THAT SUITS YOU:

	Become angry and punish us	Refuses the answer and asks us to speak in English	Accept and give the correct sentence in English	Accept and continue the lesson	Does not comment
Arabic Language	4	18	28	20	10
Mother Tongue	7	22	31	15	7
Other Language	5	18	01	13	8

Table 13 displays the frequency of teacher reactions to students speaking languages other than English during class.

TABLE 14
DISPLAYS THE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' ANSWERS BASED ON QUESTION (14)

	Becomes angry and punishes us	Refuses the answer and asks us to speak in English	Accept and give the correct sentence in English	Accept and continue the lesson	Does not comment
Arabic Language	6.6%	30%	46.6%	3.3%	16.6%
Mother Tongue	11.6%	36.6%	51.6%	25%	11.6%
Other Language	8.3%	30%	6.6%	21.6%	13.3%

Table 14 shows the percentage of study sample answers for question 14. It indicates that the students provided varying answers, reflecting their perspectives and opinions toward (What does your teacher do when you speak languages other than English in class?).

B. Comments on Data Analysis

The researcher believes that implementing code-switching in language activities in primary and secondary schools will help students speak fluently and interact with others. The Ministry of Education may conduct intensive training sessions for teachers at the elementary and secondary school levels in these language activities to improve their pedagogical performance in the future. The Ministry of Education may also conduct intensive training sessions for English language instructors at the elementary and secondary levels to get better feedback on teaching English as a foreign language. Several teachers have indicated that students' English-speaking skills could be better. Many teachers have noted that the code-switching method of teaching English can make the learning process possible in larger classes.

Positive responses to the questionnaire questions support the study's hypotheses indicating justification for using code-switching for translation, clarification, socialization, ease, understanding, and emphasis. Besides, positive responses to questions verify the hypotheses suggesting that students utilize their native language during their English class.

C. Major Findings

The study examines the use of code-switches in English as a foreign language classroom in secondary schools in Sudan from the students' perspectives, and it reaches the following results:

1. Most English-language teachers use a mix of English and Arabic in classrooms.
2. According to the study's findings, bilingual conversational patterns are accepted by students in EFL classroom discourse, despite the teacher's subjective norms. CS is a necessary technique. They believe that having bilingual teachers will increase their desire to learn English.
3. Mother tongue proficiency contributes to developing communicative competence in English as a Foreign Language classroom.
4. According to the study, besides translation and the simplicity of expressions, some factors contribute to code-switching in the EFL classroom. These factors include socializing, linguistic competence, emphasis, and repetitive functions.
5. Despite the study being conducted in three regions of Sudan, most of the sample's students speak the same mother tongue. Besides, most of them are Arabic speakers and writers.
6. While most students in English-speaking classes speak English, some teachers also use Arabic to facilitate and check for understanding, translate, and tell jokes.
7. In English language classes, students are allowed to speak both Arabic and English.
8. In English classes, students often speak Arabic for various reasons.
9. A small percentage of students may prefer to sit with peers who speak their mother tongue during English language classes.
10. Despite varying opinions, students learn English best when speaking, reading, and watching in English. They believe using their native tongue in class is beneficial and prefer teachers who speak it.
11. The study shows that while most teachers allow students to speak Arabic or their mother tongue and provide the appropriate English translation, some teachers refuse to accept responses in languages other than English.

D. Summary

The study presents data analysis, findings, and hypotheses testing based on a student questionnaire in the previous parts. The information is presented in a table of frequencies and percentages. The following part will cover the main conclusions, recommendations, and ideas for additional research.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher makes the following suggestions based on the findings and outcomes mentioned above:

1. Code-switching should be increased to prepare students for situations involving bilingualism or multilingualism.
2. The multilingual students' code-switch behaviors should be promoted.
3. Using code-switching as a teaching method for English would benefit students due to the positive attitudes of both teachers and students towards its use.
4. Code-switching can be used to enhance students' verbal communication skills. This is because it has been proven to be successful when used with EFL students.
5. To help students improve their speaking skills, they should frequently be exposed to code-switching.
6. Code switches must be used to allow students to speak without inhibition in the classroom.
7. Teachers should use code-switches to help students speak more fluently and overcome their speaking difficulties.

V. CONCLUSION

The data analysis results support the study's stated hypotheses and answer the questions. Through this investigation, the researcher explores the factors contributing to the study's problem. Based on the data gathered and the findings, the study makes recommendations. This research investigates code-switching's role in multilingual EFL classes. The study's components and their contributions to teaching and learning English as a foreign language are summarised in this conclusion.

Success in teaching English to EFL learners depends on achieving crucial goals. This falls under educational beliefs in general and specifically relates to teachers. In other words, understanding the causes of code-switching in teaching English in a multilingual classroom is a critical component of these goals. The most challenging task to complete and skill to master for most EFL students is speaking in English. They consequently detest and steer clear of any situation where they can speak. This research explores the use of code-switching for English language teachers to improve their students' linguistic skills to assist students in overcoming this issue.

In conclusion, code-switching is an effective teaching strategy that creates classroom diversity. Students can become more engaged in learning through code-switching because it motivates them. Additionally, teachers must remember that not all code-switching activities are appropriate for all learners and that some code-switches cannot be used in the classes. As a result, before choosing a code-switch, teachers must ask themselves, "What are the goals I am trying to achieve by providing this activity?" Additionally, teachers need to choose code switches that are relatively easy and easy.

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Synecdoche-Related Comprehension Challenges for Modern College of Business and Science EFL Students: A Case Study

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Abstract—This case study explores the comprehension challenges related to synecdoche among EFL students at the Modern College of Business and Science (MCBS). Recognizing a gap in the literature, the study aims to understand the difficulties students face when dealing with synecdochical contexts and to identify contributing factors. Two instruments were employed: a synecdoche comprehension test and a student questionnaire, completed by 96 MCBS students. Additionally, a teacher questionnaire was administered to 10 participants to gain further insights. The results reveal a wide range of understanding, with only 31 out of 69 participants passing the comprehension test, indicating a prevalent misunderstanding of synecdochical phrases. The teachers' questionnaire highlighted important variables affecting students' comprehension of synecdoche. The findings suggest a need for targeted teaching strategies to improve comprehension of synecdoche among EFL students.

Index Terms—synecdoche, comprehension challenges, MCBS

I. INTRODUCTION

Figurative language is a type of language in which words or statements have a meaning other than their literal interpretation. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980) this language is integral to the depth and fluency of language, and it is regarded as the bedrock of linguistic competence. Additionally, Webb and Nation (2017) are of the view that figurative language is particularly important in relation to English language, and they consider it challenge for non-native speakers to acquire.

Comprehending figurative language necessitates a shift in perspective, requiring one to decode deeper meanings embedded within expressions and statements. According to French and Vettstein (2001) the necessity for a well-thought-out judgment is critical in figurative language utilization. It's important to pay regard to any figurative language; inappropriate utilization could potentially distort the intended meaning and make it difficult to comprehend and interpret. Thus, it can be said that the mastery of figurative language requires a high level of linguistic competence. This underscores the need for effective strategies and tools to facilitate the learning and usage of rhetorical and figurative language.

Of the several kinds of metaphorical language, synecdoche, where some part symbolizes the entire, or the other way around, holds a unique place due to its common usage in everyday conversation and literature (Burke, 1945). According to Oxford University dictionary (2023), synecdoche is a figurative term of speech that describes something in its entirety, even when it only represents just a part of it. For example, "Hollywood is known for producing blockbuster movies." The synecdoche here is using "Hollywood" to refer to the whole American film industry. Synecdoche is, in fact, a rhetorical device in which a characteristic or segment of an entity is used to represent the whole entity, or in which the whole entity is employed to designate a specific characteristic or segment. It can also use a general term to refer to a specific term or a specific term to refer to a general term. Using the word threads figuratively to substitute clothes and heels instead of high-heeled shoes are examples to illustrate how this distinctive rhetorical form functions. Effective communication depends not just on our capacity for understanding literal contexts, but also on our capacity for understanding and interpreting metaphors.

Synecdoche is a common and important rhetorical device in various types of texts, such as literature, journalism, advertising, and politics. It can have different purposes and effects in communication and discourse, such as simplifying, emphasizing, persuading, or creating imagery and symbolism. According to Frisella (2017), synecdoche is a flexible figurative tool used in the text for many different purposes, which the authors intend to convey in a non-literal way. A statement or phrase might seem deeper or more expressive when synecdoche is used to enhance the language. A writer can utilize synecdoche to give a character or narrator a powerful voice. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) report that the proficiency of EFL learners is often distinguished by their understanding and application of figurative language, including synecdoche. The crux of language learning should not be limited to merely grasping the individual meaning of a word or understanding syntactical structures. In contrast, it encompasses the understanding of the dynamic interaction among words in figurative language.

It is stated by Brook (1958) that synecdoche and metonymy are the two most important figurative language tropes.

Accordingly, synecdoche is deemed as an effective rhetorical device that enables speakers to convey and communicate different meanings and messages based on the context and aim of the text, but subsequently, it poses challenges for many EFL learners, especially if they lack linguistic and cultural knowledge of the text. The comprehension of synecdoche can be influenced by various factors, such as language background, previous knowledge, and familiarity with literary texts. Moreover, the comprehension of synecdoche can affect reading comprehension and text analysis in general. In the discipline of linguistics, it is well-acknowledged that understanding and utilization of rhetorical devices like synecdoche can greatly influence how a text is interpreted. Referring to what was stated by Stanford News (2019) synecdoche is a literary device that is often employed to induce strong and everlasting images in the mind of a reader. The same source additionally draws attention to how little changes in language usage can reflect the biased perceptions of the speakers.

A. *Research Objectives*

This study aims to assess the degree to which EFL students have a grasp on synecdoche and identify factors contributing to misunderstandings. Undergraduate students are a suitable population to focus on because they need to read and interpret various types of texts for their academic work. They also need to enhance their critical thinking and analytical abilities to cope with various texts and rhetorical devices. Moreover, they need to improve their creativity and expression when using synecdoche and other figures of speech in their communication and discourse.

B. *Research Questions*

This study sought to identify synecdoche-related challenges in authentic texts for EFL Students. Consequently, the research was guided by two primary questions which are: (1) To what extent are EFL students able to comprehend synecdoche in authentic texts? (2) What are the major factors that affect EFL students' comprehension of synecdoche? By means of tackling these questions, the study hoped to provide insights into the potential challenges regarding EFL students' synecdoche comprehension as well as the contributing factors.

II. LITERATURE BACKGROUND

The comprehension of figurative language, singularly the concepts of metaphor and metonymy, is of great consequence for comprehending synecdoche. These forms of figurative language, including synecdoche, utilize one entity to enhance our understanding of another. A metonym replaces an object you wish to describe with something else associated with it. According to Betjemann (n.d.), a synecdoche is a type of metonym where the associated entity is a component or part of the object being described. For instance, in the sentence “we need boots on the ground as quickly as possible” the word ‘boots’ is a synecdoche where it represents soldiers, as boots are part of a soldier’s outfit. A well-known instance of synecdoche is “fifty keels plowed the deep,” where ‘keels,’ a part of a ship, symbolizes fifty ships sailing on the ocean.

Contrastingly, a metaphor is an imaginative way that describes something by referring to another object that embodies the qualities one intends to communicate. For instance, saying life is a highway implies that your life is ever lasting on the road and that things can come along on the way. A metaphor according to Hernández (2011) is a device in which a word or phrase is metaphorically employed, deviating from its true context. The phrase “Agamemnon, Shepherd of the People” exemplifies the employment of the word “shepherd” in a symbolic manner, even though shepherds don’t literally guide people. Thus, both synecdoche and metaphor are powerful tools in figurative language that enhance our understanding and interpretation of various concepts.

A. *The Definition and Etymology of the Term Synecdoche*

Synecdoche is a rhetorical device where a component is utilized to signify the entirety, or conversely, a single component is employed as a metaphor for its entirety. It barely connects with other forms of rhetoric as metaphor. In other words, this form of speech termed a synecdoche is a device by which a part is employed to express the whole or the opposite way around. Synecdoche, in simple terms, involves the use of a specific word, which typically represents a part of something, to depict the entire entity. For instance, the phrase “The White House announced today” the White House in the sentence stands as a symbol of the presidency or the United States government. Also, the phrase “the hired hands” in the sentence “the hired hands completed the work in record time” signifies the workers. For the word synecdoche origin, Wikipedia (2023) states that the term synecdoche is etymologically derived from Ancient Greek συνεκδοχή (sunekdokhḗ), which means “simultaneous understanding”.

B. *Metonymy vs. Synecdoche: What's the Difference?*

Synecdoche and metonymy have shared an intricate relationship over the history of linguistics. Even today, there has not been a clear line proven the difference between these two rhetorical terms since sometimes they are differentiated, and other times are blended. In fact, both metonymy and synecdoche are literary devices where one word is used to symbolize one more. Metonymy and synecdoche are closely related and quite similar. Hence, the similarities between the two rhetorical tools mentioned above can make it difficult to differentiate between them. Gibbs (1994) attempted to differentiate metonymy from synecdoche, noting that the two are not always easily distinguishable as both figures of speech utilize the relationship between larger and smaller entities. This differentiation may be most easily seen by

establishing exactly what each concept means. Despite the closeness and similarity between metonymy and synecdoche, there is a minute distinction between the two devices. According to Wiesen (2023) the difference between metonymy and synecdoche can be quite subtle. He sees that metonymy is a rhetorical tool used to describe one thing by means of describing it as different but related in concept. On the other hand, synecdoche involves using a part of something to symbolize the whole, or vice versa. Wiesen (2023) believes that the major difference between the two devices is in the relationship between the object or thing that is being referred to and the actual term being used. As for Hasa (2018) the main difference between the terms is that Synecdoche is a form of figurative language where a segment stands in for the entirety, whereas metonymy is another type of rhetoric that employs metaphors for something intimately related to it. According to Sato (1978), both concepts are characterized by a structure that links the part to the whole.

C. Typology of Synecdoche

Synecdoche, a rhetorical device, is primarily categorized into two forms: microcosm and macrocosm. Microcosm is a form of synecdoche that uses a part of something to symbolize the whole. For instance, Burke (1941) uses the phrase: *I need a hand*, where ‘hand’ represents the need for an entire person’s assistance. Conversely, macrocosm, which is less frequently used, employs the whole to signify a part. This is exemplified by Enelow (2014) with the term ‘society,’ often used to denote ‘high society.’ Both microcosm and macrocosm provide distinctive methods to convey meaning using parts and wholes. Maity (2021) provides an expanded perspective on these two general categories by introducing more specific forms of synecdoche. These classifications contribute to a more detailed comprehension of this rhetorical device and its diverse applications.

(a) *The species for the genus*: In this type of synecdoche genus is expressed by the species as in: “The farmer has a hundred head of cattle in his pasture.” In this example the species “head” is employed to substitute the genus cattle.

(b) *The genus for the species*: This type differs from the first in that the class in which the idea or object is to be expressed is selected and used instead of the idea or object itself, as in the example: He seemed to be a kind creature at heart, despite his severe appearance. (here the genus ‘creature’ is used instead of the species, which is “man”).

(c) *The material for the thing made*: Essentially, in this type of synecdoche, a component represents its matter - the material that constitutes the thing. However, this material is not the whole essence of the thing. The whole essence is what the object is. For example, consider the sentence, ‘The actor nervously walked onto the boards for his first performance.’ Here, ‘boards’ stand as the stage, which is made from boards. But the essence of ‘boards’ in this context is not just the material, but the stage itself.

(d) *A container and what it contains*: “Can I eat this box?” is a synecdoche where “box” refers to the food inside of it rather than the box itself.

D. Previous Studies

Very few studies have addressed synecdoche from different angles, despite the variety of research carried out in figurative language. Paradoxically, significant gaps regarding synecdoche-related challenges with authentic texts for EFL students and the factors leading to such linguistic challenges still exist in the relevant literature. Synecdoche is thoroughly examined as a cognitive and communication approach by Nerlich and Clarke (1999) the study highlights that while metaphor has been the focus of much research in rhetoric, literary theory, and cognitive semantics, metonymy and particularly synecdoche have not been subjected to the same degree of assessment. Suzuki (2021) in his study “An Acceptable Classification of Metonymy and Synecdoche” offers a theoretical and computational approach to understanding and classifying metonymy and synecdoche, providing a foundation for further research in this area. Although Suzuki’s study gives a theoretical framework for understanding metonymy and synecdoche, it does not address the practical challenges of interpreting these figurative patterns, especially in the context of EFL students. This is where the current study comes in, addressing this gap by focusing on the practical challenges faced by EFL students. In a further study, Ibrahim (2021) provides an in-depth analysis of the use of synecdoche in the English language, and he has reached the findings that synecdoche can add a layer of richness to language, making it more dynamic and engaging when used correctly. In their study “Synecdoche: Between Rhetoric and Cognitive Semantic.” Al-Kawwaz and Mohammed (2014) describes synecdoche as a cognitive and communicative strategy. It explores various interpretations of synecdoche, and she reaches the conclusion that both the synecdoche definition and its types remain unclear, making it a vague rhetorical class. The two last studies that have been reviewed, although not addressing synecdoche-related challenges, can still be a useful resource in that they give an in-depth understanding of synecdoche and how it works in cognition and communication. They could also be useful in spotting figurative difficulties and determining the reasons for incorrect synecdoche readings.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To bridge the gap in related literature to better understand the challenges faced by EFL students in dealing with synecdochical contexts and to identify the factors contributing to these challenges, further research is needed, based on previous studies. The lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge of students often contributes to the challenges, leading to the misinterpretation of metaphors. These problems are exacerbated when students comprehend metaphorical content according to its literal version, particularly in discourses containing synecdochical patterns. Accordingly, for students to

fully understand the source text's content or message, they must comprehend not only the literal but also the figurative meaning of words. Moreover, there is also a noticeable gap in the figurative language literature regarding the factors that lead EFL students to misunderstand these rhetorical models. According to Liu et al. (2022) English data are the most reliable evidence of linguistic model's ability to consider figurative languages, which results in a lack of resources as well as research in another language. This research primarily aims to address this gap and contribute to being aware of EFL students' comprehension challenges with figurative language. This study's main purpose is to close this gap by identifying the synecdoche-related problems as well as figuring out what factors contribute to any misunderstandings of synecdochical patterns in authentic texts. Additionally, the study provides fruitful insights into teaching and learning figurative language in general and synecdoche in particular.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Design*

To determine what challenges EFL students experience while understanding synecdoche in written discourse and the factors influencing their comprehension of this figurative device, the current research employed a combination of approaches. The research was bifurcated into two sections. The first section involved a synecdoche comprehension test, which was quantitative, designed to statistically assess EFL students' understanding of synecdoche in authentic texts. The second section employed two questionnaires. The first questionnaire aimed to gather data about the participants' experiences and challenges with synecdochical expressions in authentic texts. The second questionnaire was used to collect data from teachers about the factors influencing EFL students' comprehension of synecdoche-related challenges, their teaching strategies, and any suggestions for improvement. This blend of quantitative methods offers a comprehensive understanding of how students handle this rhetorical device.

B. *The Participants*

The current study was conducted with a diverse group of participants, all of who were students from the Modern College of Business and Science (MCBS) in Muscat, Oman. These 96 students, enrolled in academic writing courses during the fall semester of the 2023-2024 academic year, were selected through purposive sampling from a variety of classes. A significant criterion for their selection was their proficiency in English, demonstrated either by a valid IELTS score of Band 5.0 or higher, or by their participation in the CEAP program for one year prior to their enrollment in the General Education Department. This proficiency in English is crucial as it underscores the participants' ability to handle basic communication in their field and exhibits their partial command of the language. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that students who joined the CEAP program had undergone an intensive one-year course aimed at enhancing their English language skills before they embarked on their journey in the General Education Department. The participant pool was not only diverse in terms of their English language proficiency but also in terms of gender, with 41% being males and 59% females. In addition to these students, the study also included 10 teachers from the General Education Department at MCBS and from other high education institutions. These teachers, selected based on their experience in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and their interaction with the student participants, afforded the study a further depth dimension. This blend of participants ensured a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by EFL students when dealing with synecdoche within written discourse.

C. *Instruments*

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges EFL students face when dealing with synecdoche within authentic texts, and the factors influencing their ability to comprehend this figurative device, the study employed three key instruments for data collection. Firstly, a diagnostic written test was administered to 69 students. This test served as a practical tool to find answer to the first research question that: To what extent are EFL students able to comprehend synecdoche in authentic texts? The students were asked to summarize their understanding of each item, providing a direct measure of their comprehension of synecdoche. Secondly, a students' questionnaire was distributed among the same 69 students. This questionnaire aimed to identify specific challenges related to synecdoche that the students encounter in various texts. By doing so, it provided primary data on the issues faced by students when dealing with synecdoche in authentic texts. Lastly, a separate teacher questionnaire was disseminated among 10 teachers participating in the study. This questionnaire sought to gather the teachers' perspectives on the factors influencing EFL students' comprehension of synecdochical patterns. It also collected their suggestions for improvement, offering valuable insights from an instructional viewpoint. Each of these three tools contributes to a comprehensive knowledge of the challenges and underlying factors associated with EFL students' understanding of synecdoche in authentic texts.

D. *Research Procedure*

Initially, the reliability and validity of the used instruments were checked. After that, throughout the course of four weeks, the data-gathering procedure for the current study was meticulously conducted. The study commenced with the recruitment of participants, who were selected from five classes taught by the researcher at the Modern College of Business and Science, Muscat, Oman. These students were enrolled in academic writing courses (Eng 101 & Eng 102) in the General Education Department. Data collection was a collaborative effort between the researcher and two other

lecturers teaching in the same department. The participants were then engaged in a series of instruments designed to assess their comprehension and interpretation of synecdoche. This included a paper-based test taken by 69 students, which comprised 15 synecdoche statements that the students were required to read and interpret within a 30-minute timeframe without any external assistance. In addition to this, the students completed a questionnaire, providing further data for the study. A separate questionnaire was also distributed to teachers, aiming to gather their perspectives on the factors influencing EFL students' understanding of synecdochical patterns in authentic texts and their suggestions for improvement. This provided valuable insights from an instructional viewpoint. All these activities were conducted on campus at the Modern College of Business and Science, Muscat, Oman. The sequence of events began with the synecdoche test, followed by the student questionnaire. This comprehensive procedure ensures transparency and replicability in how the study was conducted.

V. RESULTS

The degree to which EFL students can comprehend synecdoche in authentic texts was examined using two separate instruments: a synecdoche comprehension test specifically designed for purpose and a student questionnaire.

A. *Synecdoche Comprehension Test*

As demonstrated in Table 1, a test comprising 15 items based on synecdoche was administered to 69 Omani EFL students from the Modern College of Business and Science (MCBS) in Muscat, Oman. It should be noted that the maximum achievable score for this test was 15. The students' scores provide insights into their understanding of synecdoche in written discourse.

TABLE 1
SYNECDOCHE COMPREHENSION TEST

<i>Participants Passed</i>	<i>Students Failed</i>	<i>Minimum Score</i>	<i>Maximum Score</i>	<i>Mean (X)</i>	<i>Standard Deviation (SD)</i>	<i>Standard Error of Mean</i>
31	48	4	13	2.79	7.70	0.34

As shown in Table 1, 31 out of 69 participants taking the test have obtained a passing score, with six students achieving 13 out of 15. A significant number of students, 38 in total, did not pass the test and 9 out of them obtained a score lower than 4. As demonstrated, the wide range of scores from 4 to 13 among participants signifies a significant variation in their comprehension levels. In terms of the average score, about 3 out of 15 was shown by the mean value of 2.79. According to this low average, many students misunderstand synecdochical phrases in the written discourse. The standard deviation was very high at 7.70, indicating widespread scores and further highlighting the differences in the level of understanding among the participants. The standard error of mean was calculated to be 0.34, showing the precision of the mean score estimate. This suggests that if the same test was to be administered to a different group drawn from the same population, we could expect the average score to be within about 0.34 points of the current mean score (about 68%) most of the time. Overall, although there were some participants who showed a solid grasp of synecdoche in written language, the findings show that there are still many students who find synecdoche challenging.

B. *Students' Questionnaire*

The study discusses the findings of an assessment questionnaire carried out in 69 MCBS students to find synecdoche comprehension problems, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
EFL STUDENTS' OPINIONS ON THE SYNECDOCHE COMPREHENSION CHALLENGES IN WRITTEN DISCOURSES

Item no.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation
1	I find it easy to understand synecdoche in written discourse.	9 (13.04%)	15 (21.74%)	5 (7.25%)	22 (31.88%)	18 (26.09%)	2.75	1.23
2	I struggle to understand the intended meaning of synecdochical expressions in texts.	20 (28.99%)	17 (24.64%)	7 (10.14%)	10 (14.49%)	15 (21.74%)	2.86	1.36
3	I often rely on context clues within the text to understand synecdoche phrases.	16 (23.19%)	21 (30.43%)	5 (7.25%)	14 (20.29%)	13 (18.84%)	2.81	1.34
4	I often encounter difficulties when trying to understand synecdoche in texts.	19 (27.54%)	12 (17.39%)	9 (13.04%)	11 (15.94%)	18 (26.09%)	2.87	1.38
5	I find it difficult to translate synecdoche from English into my native language.	12 (17.39%)	23 (33.33%)	12 (17.39%)	13 (18.84%)	9 (13.04%)	3.07	1.19
6	I find it challenging to identify synecdoche in written discourse.	9 (13.04%)	25 (36.23%)	5 (7.25%)	13 (18.84%)	17 (24.64%)	3.13	1.24
7	I tend to understand the synecdoche content in the texts according to its literal interpretation.	6 (8.70%)	18 (26.09%)	22 (31.88%)	13 (18.84%)	10 (14.49%)	3.01	1.18
8	I often mentally convert synecdoche contents I read into my native language without understanding their cultural contexts.	23 (33.33%)	17 (24.64%)	1 (1.45%)	17 (24.64%)	11(15.94)	3.20	1.27
9	I often need to use external resources (like dictionaries or the internet) to understand synecdoche in the texts.	16(23.19)	21(30.43)	9(13.04)	14(20.29)	9(13.04)	3.13	1.24
10	When reading, I tend to take synecdoche phrases literally.	19(27.54)	26(37.68)	5 (7.25%)	12(17.39)	7(10.14)	3.26	1.21

As shown in Table 2 and regarding the first statement, a considerable number of participants, specifically 57.97%, reported experiencing difficulties in understanding synecdoche in authentic texts, suggesting that comprehending synecdoche is a challenge. The average value, as evidenced by a mean score of 2.75, along with a standard deviation of 1.23, provides statistical proof of this. In response to the statement (2) more than half of the participants (53.63%) acknowledged challenges related to synecdoche comprehension, particularly in grasping the intended meaning of synecdochical expressions in texts. A mean score of 2.86, along with a standard deviation of 1.136, actively confirms this challenge. As to the statement (3) most participants (53.62%), with a mean score of 2.81 and a standard deviation of 1.34, do rely on textual context cues to interpret synecdoche phrases to grasp synecdoche in texts. The fact that such a large percentage of participants rely on this method for comprehending synecdochical phrases indicates the challenges which EFL students face in comprehending this figurative device. About the statement (4), the standard deviation (SD) is 1.38 and the mean score is 2.87, indicating a variation in the responses around the mean. This demonstrates a range of experiences among the students in comprehending synecdoche phrases in texts. Furthermore, 44.93% of participants did agree or strongly agree, suggesting that a significant number of students often encounter challenges when trying to understand synecdoche in texts. The aforementioned situation further highlights the difficulty many EFL students face in understanding texts containing synecdoche. Mean scores for the four items mentioned above were indeed below 3". This demonstrates that participants generally find it challenging to understand synecdoche in texts.

With reference to the statement (5), a significant proportion of the participants (50.72%) find it difficult to translate synecdoche from English into their native language, as a mean score of 3.07 and a standard deviation of 1.19 actively indicate this. Respecting the statement (6) it was found that identifying synecdoche in written discourse is a challenge for 49.27% of the students, with a mean score of 3.13 and an SD of 1.24. The participants' responses to the statement (7) "I tend to understand the synecdoche content in the texts according to its literal interpretation" were mixed, with 34.79% agreeing or strongly agreeing, reflected by a mean score of 3.01 and an SD of 1.18. These findings reveal that EFL students encounter challenges in understanding synecdoche in written texts. What is more, a substantial proportion of students (57.97%) confess to internally translating synecdoche contents into their mother tongue, disregarding their cultural contexts. This is evidenced by a mean score of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 1.27 for the statement (8): "I often mentally convert synecdoche contents I read into my native language without understanding their cultural contexts". Respecting the statement (9), more than half of the students (53.62%) often resort to external resources such as dictionaries or the internet for understanding synecdoche in texts, as suggested by a mean score of 3.13 and an SD of 1.24 for the statement "I often need to use external resources to understand synecdoche in texts". Based on the statement (10), when reading, most students (65.22%) tend to take synecdoche phrases literally, as signified by a mean score of 3.26 and an SD of 1.21 for the statement "When reading, I tend to take synecdoche phrases literally".

These findings underscore the complexities involved in understanding and translating synecdoche among EFL students, highlighting the need for more effective instructional strategies.

C. Teachers' Questionnaire

The study's findings on teachers' perspectives regarding the factors that affect EFL students' understanding of synecdochical patterns in authentic texts are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT EFL STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF SYNECDOCHICAL PATTERNS IN AUTHENTIC TEXTS

Item no.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation
1	To understand synecdoche contexts in content, it is important for students to have profound knowledge of this figurative device.	5 (33.33%)	7 (46.67%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	4.13	0.83
2	The intricacy of the sentence structure is an important factor in students' synecdoche comprehension.	7 (46.67%)	4 (26.67%)	1 (6.67%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	4.07	0.96
3	The students' familiarity with the author's style is a key factor influencing how well they comprehend synecdoche.	4 (26.67%)	6 (40%)	1 (6.67%)	3 (20%)	1 (6.67%)	3.6	1.083
4	The students' ability to infer meaning has significant influence on their comprehension of synecdoche.	5 (33.33%)	7 (46.67%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	0 (0%)	4.13	0.83
5	The motivation to learn English has a major influence on the students' ability to understand synecdoche.	8 (53.33%)	4 (26.67%)	0 (0%)	2 (13.33%)	1 (6.67%)	4.27	0.92
6	The students' English grammar proficiency is an important factor in their comprehension of synecdoche contexts.	3 (20%)	9 (60%)	1 (6.67%)	1 (6.67%)	1 (6.67%)	3.93	0.70
7	The students' ability to analyze text significantly influences their comprehension of synecdoche.	3 (20%)	8 (53.33%)	2 (13.33%)	2 (13.33%)	0 (0%)	3.93	0.70
8	The students' cognitive development significantly influences their comprehension of synecdoche.	10 (66.67%)	3 (20%)	0 (0%)	1 (6.67%)	1 (6.67%)	4.47	0.83
9	The students' cultural background significantly influences their comprehension of synecdoche.	9 (60%)	4 (26.67%)	2 (13.33%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.47	0.64
10	Reading habits play a big role in students' synecdoche comprehension.	4 (26.67%)	6 (40%)	1 (6.67%)	2 (13.33%)	2 (13.33%)	3.73	1.01

Based on the statement 1, it is crucial to have a deep understanding of synecdoche to understand its contexts, 80% of participants expressed either agreement or strong agreement, with an overall mean score of 4.13 indicating mostly positive responses. Moreover, as stated by statement 2, the intricacy of sentence structure is also seen as a major factor on synecdoche comprehension, with 73.33% indicating agreement or strong agreement, although this slightly greater standard deviation of 0.96 suggests a wider spread of responses. With a mention of statement 3, students' familiarity with the author's style arouses a range of responses, evidenced by the standard deviation of 1.083, indicating that only 66.67% of participants agreed or strongly agreed. As per statement 4, the ability to infer meaning received positive responses, with 80% of participants agreeing or strongly agreeing, and a mean score of 4.13. About statement 5, the motivation to learn English received the highest level of agreement, with 80% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing, and a mean score of 4.27, indicating a strong influence on students' ability to understand synecdoche.

As for statement 6, most participants (80%) agree or strongly agree that English grammar proficiency is an important factor in their comprehension of synecdoche, with a mean score of 3.93 and a standard deviation of 0.70 indicating a relatively narrow spread of responses. With a mean score of 3.93 and an equivalent mean deviation of 0.70, most participants (73.33%) agree or strongly agree that students' ability to analyze text has a considerable impact on their comprehension of synecdoche according to statement 7. Referencing to statement 8, cognitive development received the highest level of strong agreement, with 66.67% of students strongly agreeing and a mean score of 4.47, indicating moderate variation in responses. In terms of statement 9, most students (86.67%) agree or strongly agree that their cultural background significantly influences their comprehension of synecdoche, with a mean score of 4.47 and a relatively narrow standard deviation of 0.64. Finally, concerning statement 10, reading habits received mixed responses, with 66.67% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing, a mean score of 3.73, and a standard deviation of 1.01 indicating a wide spread of responses. These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of synecdoche comprehension among EFL students, with factors ranging from linguistic proficiency to cognitive development and cultural background playing significant roles.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Synecdoche Comprehension Test results show a significant variation in comprehension levels among the 69 participants. Only 31 students passed the test, with six scoring 13 out of 15. However, 38 students did not pass, and 9 scored lower than 4. The average score was approximately 3 out of 15, indicating many students struggle to comprehend synecdochical expressions in authentic texts. The high standard deviation of 7.70 suggests a wide range of comprehension levels. The standard error of the mean was 0.34, showing the precision of the mean score estimate. Overall, while some students have a solid understanding of synecdoche, many find it challenging. The students'

questionnaire further supports this, with 57.97% of participants experiencing difficulties in understanding synecdoche, and 50.72% finding it difficult to translate synecdoche from English into their native language (Arabic). As for the teachers' questionnaire, the results point to some important variables that affect how well EFL students comprehend synecdoche. A deep understanding of synecdoche, intricacy of sentence structure, familiarity with the author's style, ability to infer meaning, motivation to learn English, English grammar proficiency, ability to analyze text, cognitive development, cultural background, and reading habits were all identified as significant factors. Specifically, 80% of participants agreed that a deep understanding of synecdoche, the ability to infer meaning, and English grammar proficiency are crucial. The motivation to learn English received the highest level of agreement (80%) and the highest mean score (4.27), indicating its strong influence on students' ability to understand synecdoche. Cognitive development also received a high level of strong agreement (66.67%) with the highest mean score (4.47). However, responses varied more widely for other factors. For instance, while 73.33% agreed that the ability to analyze text is important, the standard deviation of 0.70 indicates a relatively narrow spread of responses. Reading habits received mixed responses, with a mean score of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 1.01 indicating a wide spread of responses. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of synecdoche comprehension among EFL students, with factors ranging from linguistic proficiency to cognitive development and cultural background playing significant roles. This highlights the need for a comprehensive approach in teaching and learning strategies to improve EFL students' understanding of synecdoche.

Per the findings, some recommendations have been made that: teachers provide more explicit instruction on synecdoche, including its use in different contexts. This could include exercises that allow students to practice identifying and interpreting synecdoche in texts. Teachers could also provide resources or strategies to help students translate synecdoche into their native language and encourage students to consider the cultural contexts of synecdoche when translating. Furthermore, teachers could guide students on how to effectively use external resources such as dictionaries or the internet for understanding synecdoche in authentic texts. They could also provide instruction on how to interpret synecdoche patterns beyond their literal meanings. Subsequently, more investigation may be required to determine the impact that these strategies have on students' synecdoche understanding and their overall language proficiency. This could provide valuable insights for improving English language teaching practices. These recommendations are consistent across all three sets of findings, highlighting the importance of explicit instruction, practice, translation support, use of external resources, and further research in enhancing students' understanding of synecdoche.

APPENDIX

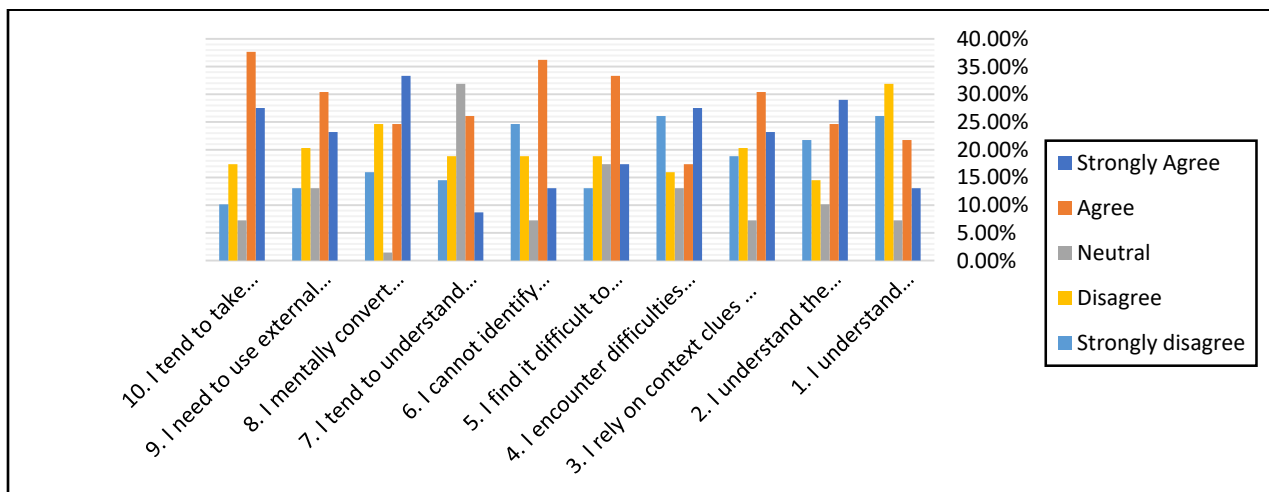


Figure 1. EFL Students' Opinions on the Synecdoche Comprehension Challenges in Written Discourses

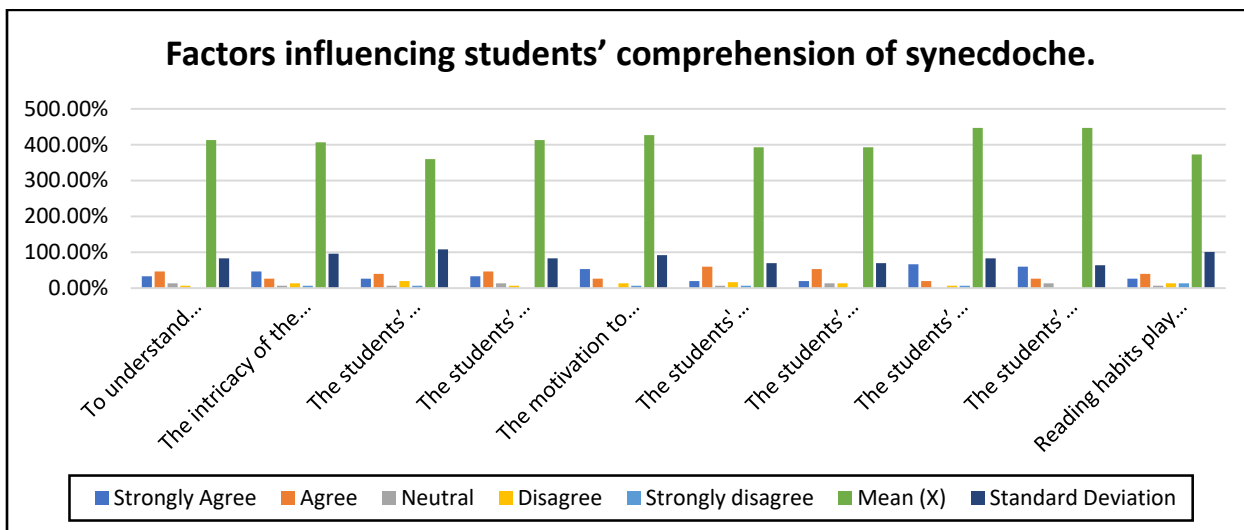


Figure 2. Teachers' Perspectives Regarding the Factors That Affect EFL Students' Understanding of Synecdochical Patterns in Authentic Texts

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Children's Voices in Poetry: The Illustration and Re-Imagination of National Identity

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Abstract—The voices of children are an expression of their intention through speech and other ways. One of those other ways is through poetry. Moreover, children explore voicing their understanding of national identity through creating poetry. As a result, this study aimed to document the exploration of children's voices in poetry as an illustration and re-imagination of national identity. The research design used in this study was a participatory qualitative one. The subjects of this study were elementary school children in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and the data were collected from a children's voice project about national identity in poetry. Data were also collected through interviews, observation, and children's poetry analysis. In the end, the results of the study showed that, by allowing them to express their views, children can grow into culturally aware individuals who appreciate diversity and deeply love their country. This research implies that education of children's national identity through poetry can contribute significantly to forming a generation that is deeply patriotic and has a strong understanding of, and an active involvement in, their nation's future. The themes that emerged from the children's voice project were the Red and White Flag, the Indonesian National Language, the Garuda Pancasila National Emblem, Indonesia's Great National Anthem, Indonesian Ethnicity, and Indonesian Culture and Customs.

Index Terms—children's voice, national identity, children's poetry

I. INTRODUCTION

Poetry is a form of literature that can convey messages and emotions and reflect life's reality (Aras, 2015; Caudwell, 2020; Iida, 2016). Poetry also expresses imagination, media, and self-identification for poets (Ivanova, 2020; Omarov et al., 2020). Still, in developing poetry, we must pay special attention to the voices of children who are integral to every nation's next generation. Indeed, children's voices are a unique reflection of innocence, honesty, and sincerity (Harris & Manatakis, 2013, p. 12), and they have a fresh and pure outlook that can provide a different perspective to poetry.

In poetry, children's voices are often freely and authentically expressed. In addition, children can learn to appreciate cultural wealth, national heritage, and national identity through poetry (Bourdieu, 2018; Jack, 2016). Moreover, they can describe the reality of their own life. Thus, poetry is an effective tool in encouraging cross-generational understanding and the passing on of noble values to future generations. Therefore, greater attention should focus on children's voices in poetry which will give them the chance to build and develop a stronger and more sustainable

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national identity.

In the context of national identity, poetry is essential in strengthening awareness of identity, nationality, and patriotism (Jack, 2016; Najicha & Ulfatun, 2022). One aspect that needs to be considered in poetry is the children's voice, an essential part of the nation's next generation. Therefore, it is important to understand how children's voices can be strengthened to foster national identity. Additionally, in the era of globalization and the advances in information technology, children face different challenges in building their national identity. The temptation to adopt foreign culture, primarily through social media and foreign films, can affect their understanding of local culture and values (Fithratullah, 2021; Gomes, 2015; Jickling & Wals, 2008). Moreover, it can cause a decrease in pride in their national identity. In this context, poetry can restore and strengthen children's national identities by strengthening their voices. Strengthening national identity through poetry allows children to express themselves and helps them understand their culture's noble values and uniqueness.

Although poetry has great potential to strengthen children's national identities, challenges must still be overcome. One of the main challenges is the need for more appreciation and attention to poetry in formal education (Alalwan et al., 2020; Rowsell et al., 2008; Sone, 2018; Xie, 2023). Curriculums focusing on academic subjects often neglect poetry teaching, reducing the chance for creative expression and children's cultural understanding through poetry. In addition, the influence of mass media and popular culture can also shift children's interests away from poetry and literary arts (Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Patton et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2021; Sone, 2018). Because of the tendentious need for instant gratification, visual content often overlooks poetry's more profound value and beauty. As a result, it can cause children to lose the opportunity to develop an understanding and appreciation of poetry to strengthen their national identity (Blodgett et al., 2015; Erwin, 2013; Linardaki & Aslanides, 2020). In addition to challenges in education and the influence of popular culture, the different languages and cultures of Indonesia also become a challenge in strengthening national identity through poetry. Indonesia has more than 700 regional languages, each with its own traditional poetry (Mok, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that poetry in various local languages and cultures is noticed and appreciated as part of a rich and diverse national identity.

The role of education is vital to this challenge. First, it must pay greater attention to the teaching of poetry, both through curriculum and extracurricular activities. Educators and teachers must deeply understand the importance of poetry as a tool to strengthen children's national identity. They must involve national identity in both poetry writing and poetry reading activities. Teaching poetry can be an effective tool for developing children's creativity, critical thinking, and empathy. Through direct experience with poetry, they can learn to express their ideas and feelings in a beautiful and meaningful language (Chawla, 2020; Schindler et al., 2017; Wassiliwizky & Menninghaus, 2021). Teachers can help them understand poetry techniques, introduce works by famous poets, and allow them to create their own poetry. Moreover, educators can create an environment that supports and strengthens children's voices in poetry with an education that reinforces poetry teaching. As a result, it will strengthen their national identity, increase their love and affection for their homeland, and encourage them to become creative, open-minded, and committed as a nation-building generation.

This study explores the voices of children in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Yogyakarta was chosen as the research site as it is considered a city of children in Indonesia. Therefore, the city is important to having a better understanding of children's learning and creativity, especially when it comes to understanding and realizing national identity through children's poetry in Yogyakarta. Based on the observations of students and teachers in seven elementary schools, it was stated that studies on children's voices had never been carried out. That means children cannot express their opinions and voices about something using poetry. This exploration of children's voices is very important as a way of documenting children's views, their needs, and how they see both their country and the world (Ivanova, 2020; Wassiliwizky & Menninghaus, 2021). The results of this research show that children still need to understand their national identity.

Children also still experience difficulties writing poetry to express their voices. Therefore, it is critical to develop an understanding of children's national identity through poetry as a form of children's voices. Indeed, children's literature can develop a child's language, cognitive skills, personality, and social values for the next step in growth, but each child has different developmental characteristics (Pulimeno et al., 2020; Vila-Gimenez & Prieto, 2021).

Moreover, teaching children to read and write poetry will enrich educators' knowledge about the needs, hopes, and challenges children face in the context of national identity. They can then build an inclusive and democratic environment by giving children the freedom and opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions. As a result, this research will significantly contribute to understanding children's voices, strengthening national identity, developing poetry education, and promoting children's participation in both educational processes and social development.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study aimed to investigate the voices of children in Yogyakarta, focusing on implementing their learning and creativity, especially in terms of understanding and implementing national identity through children's poetry. This study used a qualitative approach because this method was suitable to provide a more comprehensive understanding than just statistical data (Creswell, 2014; Harris & Manatakis, 2013; Maxwell, 2021; Moore & Hanson, 2019; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Through qualitative research, in-depth and detailed data could be collected on the children's experiences and

views in Yogyakarta regarding poetry and national identity. Furthermore, the qualitative methods could involve direct interaction with children as research subjects (Creswell, 2014; Maxwell, 2021). This method was used to understand how they understand and express national identity through poetry. The data were collected through in-depth interviews with children, participatory observation in class discussions, and an analysis of existing children's poetry. Then, the researchers could capture the nuances and meanings in children's poetic expressions in detail and understand the social and cultural context surrounding their experiences.

This study was conducted with 115 students chosen from six elementary schools. The following table shows the number of children in each of the five elementary schools:

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

No.	Schools	No. of Students
1	Elementary School 1	18
2	Elementary School 2	13
3	Elementary School 3	27
4	Elementary School 4	30
5	Elementary School 5	27
Total		115

This study was conducted from September to December 2022 with four visits to each school taking place during that time frame. Pictures, videos, materials of national identity, materials and examples of children's poetry, interviews, and observations were used in this study.

After the material was explained to the children, they began to draft and write poetry about national identity with their classmates and friends. When the children wrote poetry, they could write it either inside or outside of the classroom. After they finished writing their poetry, the children read it aloud.

Furthermore, the researchers conducted semi-structured, guided interviews with the children. The key stages of consultation with children were divided into six stages (Harris & Manatakis, 2013) shown in Figure 1, below.



Figure 1. Six Important Stages in Involving Children's Voices (Harris & Manatakis, 2013, p. 13)

The six stages were divided into three stages: Before, During, and After the child consultation. The Before stage included: (1) planning and preparing for the child consultations and (2) providing professional development. The During stage included: (1) implementing the consultation and (2) documenting the consultation. Finally, the After stage included: (1) analyzing, synthesizing, and reporting children's messages and (2) tracking the absorption of children's messages and providing feedback to children.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of documenting children's voices in this study adopts the six stages used by Harris and Manatakis (2013) as a form of exploring children's experiences and their expressions of national identity through poetry.

A. Planning and Preparing for Children's Consultations

Consultation is based on a fun and child-friendly learning model that offers a reciprocal relationship with the children. Moreover, because learning should be more student-centered, students are given the freedom to explore their knowledge. Teachers give questions explicitly to children to instill in them the idea that they can freely express their opinions. At the same time, children can explore and express their ideas with questions accompanied by concrete stimuli.

The first step before starting a children's voice project is identifying a goal through (1) involving children in consultation with their teachers and classmates to ensure that children also have a voice and opinion and (2) creating new opportunities to consult with children about their identified issues.

After identifying goals, the next step to starting a children's voice project is to define a theme that can help children explore their opinions where the teacher proposes specific themes on national identity to children. Since children are not very familiar with the theme of national identity at this stage of their lives, the teacher first explains the material through videos on the theme of national identity. This theme is then further elaborated upon based on seven indicators: the Red and White Flag, the Indonesian National Language, the Garuda Pancasila National Emblem, Indonesia's Great National Anthem, Indonesian Ethnicity, and Indonesian Culture and Customs.

B. Providing Professional Development

Professional development is carried out to support children's activities, and this stage can be implemented through workshops to ensure the success of the Children's Voice project. Additionally, this activity allows children to understand their role in projects and address any problems that may arise. The face-to-face activities of the workshops also facilitate a stronger foundation of relationships to create discussions between individuals and groups in developing their knowledge and skills.



Figures 2 & 3. Professional Development Through Workshops

Reflection on professional development activities indicates that children have different levels of understanding and reactions even if the material is the same. Some children, for example, still experience difficulties in writing poetry. Other children were not yet active in group discussion activities. Nevertheless, they still contributed to the professional development process both individually and in groups.

On the other hand, some discussed the theme of national identity and wrote it into poetry. They were also active in discussing the theme of national identity by asking questions to friends and teachers on the discussed theme. It is also in line with Harris and Manatakis (2013, p. 33) who posited that besides learning and reflecting on children's interactions, it is also important to realize that children should expand their learning about citizenship and their rights and responsibilities as children. At this stage of reflection, the teacher keeps a notebook of findings on what they learned about the problems experienced, felt, and found. Then the teacher reflects on this based on these written notes.

C. Carrying Out Consultations Activities

During this stage, consultations are carried out with children and they describe various ways of expressing meaning through poetry. The understanding of the national identity theme that children have understood begins to be expressed in poetry through their perspectives based on the experiences and realities they observe. It is here in this stage that the teacher conducts conversations with the children to understand each child's perspective. This method intends to find the depth of meaning expressed by the children so that the meaning concluded is based on their perspective, not the teacher's subjective perspective. The children's perspective then manifests itself into the children's voice in expressing national identity, depicted through poetry based on children's experiences and reality.

At the consultation stage, the teacher supports the children in expressing their views by asking questions and providing concrete stimuli such as photos and videos to ease children into writing poetry. The teacher also guides and encourages them to express meaning. The teacher then directs the children to engage in the discussion so that they can write down their voices about the observed and understood themes.



Figures 4 & 5. Consultation Implementation Phase

At the consultation stage, the teacher also provides feedback to children and explains to them how their views play an essential role in national identity. Furthermore, the children express their views through pictures and poetry. The teacher has an important role in providing feedback to children about what will happen in the activity. The teacher explains the purpose of this study and invites children to actively participate in expressing their views on national identity through poetry. Moreover, the teacher also provides information and a deeper understanding of the concept of national identity to children. It could include explaining their culture, history, values, and symbols associated with their national identity. With a better understanding, children can have a solid foundation in developing their poetry.



Figures 6 & 7. The Teacher Asks Questions and Provides Photo and Video Stimulation to Children

D. Documenting Consultations

Documenting the consultation entails observing the children, having them present their work, and talking to them about how they created it. This is in line with the opinion expressed by Sparman and Lindgren (2010) who stated that applying children's expressions is observing and displaying children's visual work and talking to them about how they perceive visual documentation. Documenting this consultation focuses on children's activities in stringing words (Harris & Manatakis, 2013, p. 44) while the teacher assists the children in helping them to express themselves, paraphrase, and check the teacher's interpretation of their work during the learning process. The teacher tries to maintain the children's voices without placing the teacher's subjective interpretation of what is seen and observed.



Figures 8 & 9. Children Read Their Poetry

In this study, documenting the consultation plays a vital role. During this approach, the teacher observes, displays their children's work, and holds interactive conversations with children about how they created the work. The opinion expressed by Sparman and Lindgren (2010) supports this approach, stating that applying children's expressions is about observing and displaying children's visual works and talking to children about how they look at visual documentation. In this study, documenting consultations focuses on children's activities in arranging words through poetry. Following the views expressed by Harris and Manatakis (2013), documenting consultation activities involves teachers helping children to express themselves, paraphrase, and check teacher interpretations with those of the children throughout the

process. Teachers play a role in facilitating conversations with children, allowing them to explain the inspiration and thoughts behind the poems they create. Moreover, they also help children understand and articulate the meanings and feelings they want to convey through poetry. In this process, the teacher tries to keep the children's voices without giving the teacher's subjective interpretation of what is seen and observed.

E. Analyzing, Synthesizing, and Reporting Child Messages

1. Understanding Data

Data on children's work that has been collected will produce many perspectives based on children's voices (Harris & Manatakis, 2013, p. 45). By the end of the consultation with the children, much data will likely be available to organize and interpret. Based on the children's work data in the form of children's poetry, it is grouped based on indicators of national identities, such as the red and white flag, the Indonesian national language, the national symbol of Garuda Pancasila, the national anthem *Indonesia Raya*, ethnic groups in Indonesia, Indonesian culture, customs., Analysis of national identity indicators per school are presented in the table below:

TABLE 2
INTEGRATION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY VALUES IN POETRY

No.	National Identity Indicator	Elementary School 1	Elementary School 2	Elementary School 3	Elementary School 4	Elementary School 5
1	Red And White Flag	-	2	10	4	10
2	Indonesian National Language	-	2	2	2	1
3	Garuda Pancasila National Emblem	7	1	5	8	6
4	Indonesia National Anthem	-	-	1	-	1
5	Tribes in Indonesia	7	4	3	8	2
6	Indonesian Cultures	-	1	8	6	-
7	Indonesian Customs	-	1	-	3	-

Table 2 shows that in Elementary School 1, seven students wrote poetry on national identity content about the national emblem of Indonesia - the Garuda Pancasila - and seven students wrote poetry about the tribes of Indonesia.

In Elementary School 2, two students wrote poetry about the red and white of Indonesia, two students wrote poetry on the Indonesian national language and one student wrote poetry on the Garuda Pancasila, Indonesia's national emblem. Additionally, four students from Elementary School 2 wrote poetry on Indonesian tribes, one student wrote a poem about Indonesian culture, and another wrote a poem about Indonesian customs.

Elementary School 3 had ten students who wrote poetry on Indonesia's red and white flag, two students wrote poetry on the Indonesian national language, five students wrote poetry on the Garuda Pancasila, one student wrote a poem on *Indonesia Raya*, the national anthem, three students wrote poetry on Indonesian tribes, and eight students wrote poetry on Indonesian culture.

In Elementary School 4, there were four students who wrote poetry about the red and white flag, two students who wrote poetry on the Indonesian national language, eight students who wrote poetry on the Garuda Pancasila, eight students who wrote poetry on the Indonesian tribes, six students who wrote poetry on Indonesian culture, and three students wrote poetry on Indonesian traditions.

Finally, in Elementary School 5, ten students wrote poetry on the red and white flag, one student wrote poetry on the Indonesian national language, six students wrote poetry on the Garuda Pancasila national symbol, one student wrote poetry about the *Indonesia Raya* national anthem, and two students wrote a poem about tribes in Indonesia.

The themes used by the children were the red and white flag, the Indonesian national language, the national symbol Garuda Pancasila, the national anthem *Indonesia Raya*, ethnic groups in Indonesia, Indonesian culture, and customs. These themes are developed into a more complex story. Data on the number of contents of national identity indicators written by children are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
TOTAL CONTENT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY INDICATORS

No.	National Identity Theme	The total content of Themes in Poetry
1	Red and white flag	26
2	Indonesian National Language	7
3	Garuda Pancasila National Emblem	27
4	Indonesia national anthem	2
5	Tribes in Indonesia	24
6	Indonesian cultures	15
7	Customs	4

Based on Table 3, the children have given different reactions and perspectives even though the material given is the same. Children from each elementary school have different numbers of written and unwritten indicators and have different understandings of writing poetry and choosing poetry themes.

2. Analysis of Children's Voices in Poetry

Analyzing children's poetry was based on observations and questions and answers were used to avoid objective interpretation (Harris & Manatakis, 2013, p. 46). Understanding the underlying messages of children was essential to minimizing adult interpretation and ensuring that the children's authentic voices were continually reflected. The figure below is an example of children's poetry.

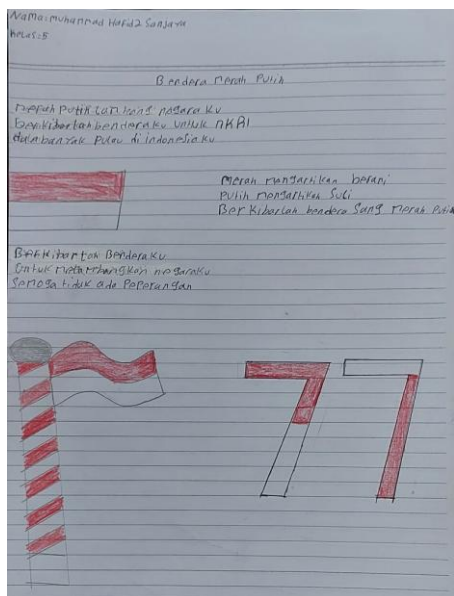


Figure 10. A Poetry Sample Written by 5th-Grader Muhammad Hafid Sanjaya

Red-White Flag

The Red-White is the flag of my country.
 Waving my flag for *NKRI*
 And many islands in my Indonesia.
 The red means brave.
 The white means holy.
 Waving my flag, the Red-White.
 Waving my flag
 To be a symbol of my country.
 I hope there is no war.

- Muhammad Hafid Sanjaya, 5th-grade

The poetry is the result of the voice expression of elementary school students. The poem written by Muhammad Hafid Sanjaya is entitled “The Red and White Flag”. In the poem, he has drawn a picture of the red and white flag, which is the Indonesian flag. Alongside the flag, he has drawn the number 77, also in red and white. The “77” stands for the 77th Anniversary of the Republic of Indonesia. He states in his poem that red and white is the national symbol. The poetry also conveys that the red and white flag should be waved in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Moreover, he hopes that there will be no war in Indonesia and that Indonesia can live in harmony, peace, and happiness together. This is in line with Ingulfsvann et al. (2020, p. 4) who state that analyzing written texts shows how children express themselves in their own way.

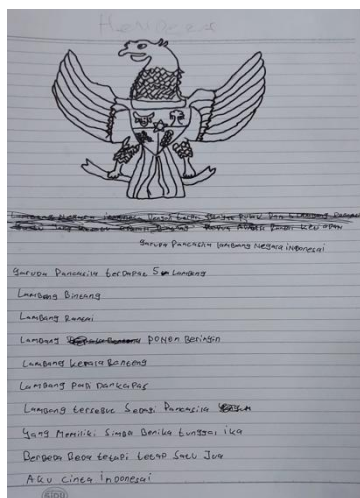


Figure 11. A Poem by Hendra, 5th-Grade

Garuda Pancasila is Indonesia Emblem

There are five symbols in *Garuda Pancasila*
 The star symbol.
 The chain symbol.
 The banyan tree symbol.
 The bullhead symbol.
 The rice and cotton symbol.
 That symbol is the *Pancasila*.
 That is a symbol of *Bhinneka tunggal ika*
 The unity in diversity.
 I love Indonesia!

- Hendra, 5th-grade

Hendra, a fifth-grade elementary school student, wrote the second poem, above, entitled Garuda Pancasila, the national symbol of Indonesia. In writing poetry, she uses simple words as a manifestation of the uniqueness and characteristics of children. Hendra also drew the Garuda Pancasila emblem equipped with the Pancasila symbol. This picture is very good for an elementary school student, complete from head to talon, along with wings, tail, and the Pancasila symbol. The poetry by Hendra shows that she has understood the theme of national identity. Hendra also wrote that she loves Indonesia.

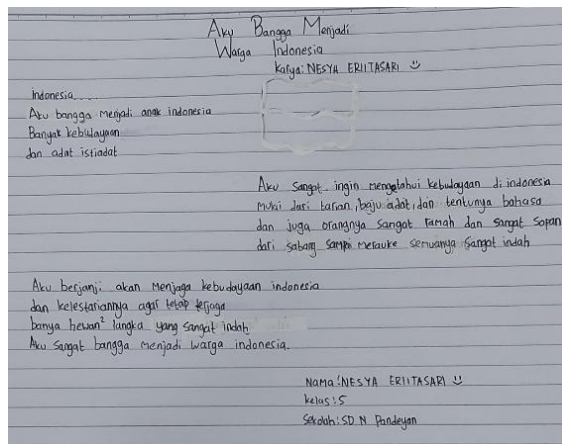


Figure 12. A Poem by Nesyta, 5th-Grade

The third poem is by Nesyta, a 5th-grade elementary school student. Nesyta said that she was proud to be an Indonesian child. Indonesia has many cultures and customs. She also wanted to know about the diversity of Indonesian culture. Indonesian culture includes traditional dances, clothes, and language. She also said that Indonesian people are very friendly and polite. The beauty of Indonesia stretches from Sabang to Merauke. She then promised to protect Indonesian culture and invited all Indonesian citizens to protect and preserve culture in Indonesia, so it would not be eroded by globalization. Nesyta also participated in inviting Indonesian citizens to protect rare animals in Indonesia from extinction.

I am Proud to be Indonesian

Indonesia...
I am proud to be Indonesian!
A lot of cultures
And also customs.
I am very interested to know the Indonesia culture.
From its dancing, its tradition clothes, and its language.
The people are very kind and polite.
From Sabang to Merauke, all is beautiful.
I promise will conserve the Indonesia culture.
And its sustainability that always preserved.
A lot of rare animals that are very beautiful.
I am very proud to be Indonesian!

- Nesyta, 5th-grade

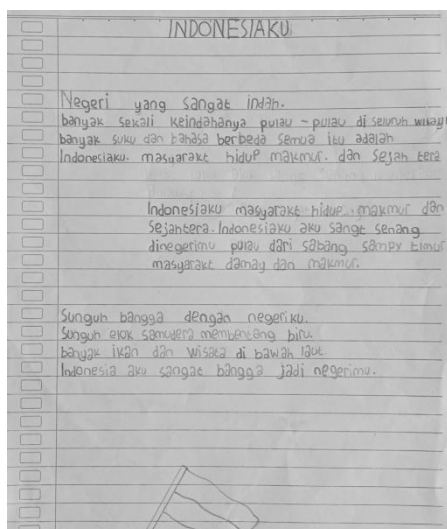


Figure 13. A Poem by Randy, 5th-Grade

My Indonesia

My country that is very beautiful.
There are a lot of beautiful islands around Indonesia.
A lot of groups and cultures, all of them are
My Indonesia. The people are prosperity.
My Indonesia. The people are prosperity.
My Indonesia, I am very happy.
In this country is the island from Sabang to east.
The people are peaceful and prosperity.
I am very proud of my country.
It is very beautiful the blue ocean.
A lot of fish and underwater tours.
Indonesia I am very proud to be your country.

- Randy, 5th-grade

The poetry above is entitled *Indonesiaku* ('My Indonesia') and was written by a 5th-grade elementary school student named Randy. Randy wrote about what he understood, felt, and wanted about Indonesia. This is in line with Koch (1970) who stated that children often need assistance to feel free and engage their imaginations about certain themes. Randy expresses imagination and pours it into his poetry. The poetry he wrote aims to be read and understood by others. He said that the country of Indonesia is very beautiful and has thousands of islands that are also beautiful. Indonesia is a multicultural country that has a diversity of ethnicities and languages. Even though there is diversity and difference, people in Indonesia live in harmony, prosper, and respect each other. Randy also said that he is very happy to be an Indonesian child. Through this presentation, he invited children and all Indonesian citizens to be happy and proud to live in Indonesia. The expressions of joy and pride were repeated by Randy three times in the poetry he wrote. Randy's message to other children is to love and be proud of being Indonesian and not to be influenced by foreign cultures.

F. Tracking the Child's Message Absorption and Provide Feedback to the Children

Borlan et al. (2001, p. 8) said that feedback is the most important part of the consulting exercise, and the success of the consultation is in the next activity. Harris and Manatakis (2013, p. 48) added that providing feedback to children in

consultation activities, interpreting their messages, and communicating with the broader community and stakeholders are key elements of the final stage of meaningful consultation with children. Harris and Manatakis further shared the Children's Voice project results and reported them publicly to the wider community through books, journals, and the media. Indeed, tracking the child's message absorption and demonstrating the work of the Children's Voice project is an effective way to promote the project itself. The results of the Children's Voice project have been published as an illustrated book of poetry, shown below in Figure 14, as a re-imagination of national identity.



Figure 14. The Book of Poetry on the Re-Imagination of National Identity

The book *Voice of Children in Poetry: Illustration and Re-Imagination of National Identity in Indonesia* results from documentation of the project, and is also a form of promotion to the broader community. In addition to presenting the results of the Children's Voice project, the book also contains material on national identity, children's poetry, and steps for implementing the Children's Voice project, as well. The book is also a form of appreciation for the work the children put into the project.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through this research, an understanding can be broadened that involves children's voices in expressing national identity through poetry, and its critical role in education. This approach gives children a sense of belonging and responsibility towards their national identity by providing opportunities for them to actively participate in expressing their views. In an educational context, it can be applied by engaging children's voices in learning activities such as consulting, and then having the children write poetry will promote a more inclusive and children-centered learning. The children become active agents in the learning process where they can explore their knowledge, express their ideas, and contribute to understanding national identity. In writing poetry, they are faced with expressing their thoughts, feelings and experiences using beautiful and rhythmic language. It encourages them to think critically, explore their imagination, and express themselves uniquely. Through these activities, children can develop their communication and self-expression skills, essential to their personal and social development.

In addition, the results of this study provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and educational practitioners. Information about children's views and understanding of national identity through poetry can be used to inform the development of a more relevant and contextual curriculum. Indeed, a curriculum that strengthens the understanding of national identity can help build a sense of pride, patriotism, and concern for culture and national heritage in children. Therefore, this research can influence educational policies that are more accommodating and pay attention to children's voices. Policies that support the inclusion of children's voices in the learning process and educational decision-making can strengthen children's participation in formulating policies that impact them.

In a broader context, this research emphasizes the importance of recognizing children as actors who have the right and ability to participate in building and maintaining national identity. Respecting the voice of children in this regard can strengthen democracy, pluralism, and equality in society. In turn, involving children's voices in expressing national identity through poetry allows them to speak up and is an investment in building a generation that cares, is ready to be involved, and has a strong understanding of their national identity. By allowing children to express their views, they can grow into culturally aware individuals, value diversity, and deeply love their country. This research implies that

children's education in national identity through poetry can significantly contribute to forming a generation with a strong understanding who become active members in their civic duties, and develop a deep sense of patriotism. The themes that emerged in the children's voice project were the red and white flag, the Indonesian national language, the national symbol Garuda Pancasila, the national anthem *Indonesia Raya*, ethnic groups in Indonesia, Indonesian culture, and Indonesian customs.

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An Ecolinguistic Study of Language Teachers as Activists in Promoting Dialogue on SDGs

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Abstract—The present study examines the effect of EFL teachers assuming the role of activists in promoting dialogues regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) among university-level students. The study aims to quantitatively assess the influence of EFL teachers who adopt an activist attitude on the knowledge, involvement, and understanding of global sustainability concerns among a particular group of first-year students at the university level. These students, ranging from 19 to 22 years old, were native Arabic speakers from Saudi Arabia. Through a quasi-experimental structure, this investigation compares the results obtained from an experimental group, which undergoes an instructional regimen that integrates SDG-focused activism, to a control group that receives traditional EFL instructions. Data collection is structured around pretest and posttest assessments. The results are anticipated to emphasize the effectiveness of incorporating ecolinguistic principles and activist teaching approaches in language education. The observations mentioned above have the potential to substantially impact the ecolinguistic study field and instructional approaches designed to cultivate a more profound comprehension and dedication to sustainability goals. This study not only emphasizes the capacity to utilize language teaching to promote awareness of sustainability among young students but also establishes a model for forthcoming investigations into the function of education in tackling global environmental and societal predicaments.

Index Terms—teacher activism, sustainable development goals, English as a Foreign Language, sustainability awareness

I. INTRODUCTION

The foundation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by the United Nations in 2015 was a momentous event in the global agenda, emphasizing the crucial role of education in driving sustainable futures. SDG 4, specifically, underscores the significance of comprehensive and fair quality education as a foundation for lifelong learning, acknowledging that education equips individuals with the requisite knowledge, abilities, and ethical frameworks to contribute to sustainable development (United Nations, 2015). Amidst sundry didactic methodologies, the instruction of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) distinguishes itself as an invaluable approach for disseminating dialogues on global sustainability concerns owing to its extensive usage and the universal pertinence of the SDGs. However, there is a vague lack of research on incorporating SDG-related content into EFL programs, particularly tailored to Arabic-speaking university students' specific requirements and circumstances (Jodoin & Singer, 2020). This deficiency not only overlooks the potential of EFL education for global sustainability education but also represents a gap in pedagogical innovation and scholarly investigation (Koyama, 2021). The limited inclusion of SDG-focused content in EFL curricula, particularly in culturally and linguistically diverse environments, highlights the urgent need for comprehensive pedagogical strategies that effectively utilize EFL teaching to engage students in meaningful exploration and dialogue about sustainability challenges. This situation calls for increased research and development efforts to enhance EFL education with sustainability concepts and practices, aligning language learning with the global sustainability agenda and meeting the educational objectives outlined by the SDGs.

The absence of empirical evidence regarding the influence of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers embracing activist roles in fostering discussions on sustainability exacerbates the existing problem. Implementing an activist teaching approach, wherein educators actively participate in addressing social and environmental justice issues in their instruction, emerges as a promising strategy for enhancing students' involvement in sustainability topics. However, the effectiveness of such approaches in fostering students' engagement with sustainability concerns, particularly within the EFL context, necessitates further comprehensive investigation. This research attempts to address the void in knowledge by investigating the impact of an activist teaching method employed by EFL instructors on students' involvement in sustainability matters. The research focuses on appraising changes in students' engagement, as evidenced by the variations in pretest and posttest scores between experimental groups exposed to activist teaching methods and control groups receiving traditional EFL instruction. The primary research inquiry that guides this investigation is: What is the influence of an activist teaching approach by EFL teachers on the change in students' disinterest in sustainability issues, as measured by the similarities in pretest and post-test scores between experimental and control groups?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Ecolinguistics and Language Education*

Ecolinguistics, an interdisciplinary field that examines the relationship between language and the environment, has grown increasingly influential in language education practices. It emphasizes the importance of linguistic choices in shaping perceptions and interactions with the natural world (Stibbe, 2015). This approach contends that language mirrors reality and constructs it, thereby as a powerful tool for promoting awareness and action toward sustainability. In language education, ecolinguistic approaches advocate for including environmental themes and discussions on sustainability in language teaching curricula. The argument is that this integration can cultivate ecological literacy and a deeper understanding of global environmental issues among learners (Alexander, 2017). Specifically, in EFL settings, the widespread reach and cultural diversity of EFL classrooms offer fertile ground for the application of ecolinguistic principles, creating opportunities to engage students in critical dialogues about sustainability that transcend linguistic and cultural boundaries (Nkwetisama, 2011). Scholars assert that by incorporating ecolinguistic content into language teaching, educators can prompt students to critically analyze linguistic representations of environmental issues critically, thereby promoting more sustainable attitudes and behaviors (Karimi, 2022). Moreover, by incorporating students' linguistic and cultural resources into discussions about sustainability, their participation and learning outcomes can be enhanced, showcasing the potential of ecolinguistic approaches in contributing to broader educational goals of fostering global citizenship and environmental stewardship (Mühlhäusler & Peace, 2006). Accordingly, integrating ecolinguistics into language education enriches language learning with critical environmental education and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4, which underscores quality education as a foundation for sustainable development (United Nations, 2015).

B. *Teachers as Activists in the Classroom*

The notion of teachers assuming an activist role within the confines of the classroom has garnered attention in recent times, indicative of a paradigmatic shift towards educational practices that are more engaged and socially aware. This particular approach is founded on the notion that educators can instigate substantial societal change, not solely through imparting knowledge but also by serving as exemplars and proponents of equity, sustainability, and righteousness within and beyond the academic setting (Cipolle, 2010). Giroux (2015) suggests that the activism of teachers is determined by the implementation of critical pedagogy, which involves educators encouraging students to analyze and question the prevailing norms, thereby fostering a self-reflective, transformative, and comprehensive environment. Research conducted by Picower (2012) lends credence to this notion, illustrating how teachers who adopt activist positions can significantly impact students' awareness and participation in social matters, effectively bridging the gap between education and action.

In the realm of sustainability education, the role of teacher activism becomes especially critical. Kanwal, A. (2023) emphasises the integration of 'academic discussions' on environmental-related topics and its value to educational settings leading directly to awareness. Cook-Sather (2014) emphasizes educators' role as advocates for sustainability in effectively integrating environmental stewardship and social responsibility into their teaching, thereby contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This integration plays a crucial role in nurturing a feeling of global citizenship among students, motivating them to actively tackle and discover answers to the pressing ecological problems of our era (Aikenhead, 2006). Moreover, the impact of teacher activism in promoting sustainability is increasingly evident in the field of language education. For instance, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms provide an exceptional opportunity to examine worldwide sustainability concerns using communication and discussion. By assuming activist roles, EFL teachers can enhance students' involvement with sustainability topics, fostering a more profound comprehension and dedication to environmental and social justice (Hawkins & Norton, 2009). This is particularly significant in contexts where English is not the native language, as EFL education can facilitate global dialogue and action on sustainability (Bebbington & Unerman, 2018). Despite its potential, teacher activism faces obstacles, including resistance from educational institutions and societal norms that may not support such an activist approach within the teaching profession. Hawkins (2019) pointed out that the evolving landscape of global challenges demands a reexamination of education's role and the teachers' position within it. As agents of change, teachers are increasingly acknowledged for their ability to influence future generations in addressing global sustainability issues, underscoring the importance of embracing activism in educational practices (Wals & Jickling, 2002).

C. *The Role of EFL Education in Promoting SDGs*

The integration of the SDGs into the realm of EFL instruction represents an essential domain of ground breaking teaching methods, aiming to align language acquisition with global endeavors for sustainability. The United Nations, in 2015, emphasized the importance of education for achieving a sustainable future through the establishment of the SDGs. Specifically, SDG 4 highlights the necessity of quality education in fostering both global citizenship and an awareness of sustainability (United Nations, 2015). EFL education, given its wide-reaching scope and the widespread appeal of the English language, offers an ideal platform for involving learners in discussions regarding global challenges and sustainability matters. Research has begun to explore how EFL classrooms can function as spaces for promoting sustainability education, suggesting that language acquisition can extend beyond linguistic proficiency to encompass

subjects of global significance, thereby facilitating a more profound comprehension of and engagement with the SDGs (Chin, 2018).

The available literature suggests a shortage of organized techniques for incorporating the SDGs into EFL curricula, particularly in regions where English is not the primary language. This is significant as these regions have substantial potential for generating impactful outcomes. Prior research has emphasized that EFL educators must assume more proactive roles in assimilating sustainability themes into their teaching practices. They contend that EFL instructors, given their unique position, are well-suited to facilitate discussions on environmental, social, and economic issues that pertain to the SDGs (Mejía & Juliana, 2021). Consequently, this necessitates a shift in pedagogical approaches toward teaching methodologies that are geared toward activism within EFL settings. This transition will enable educators to guide their students in exploring intricate global issues through the lens of language acquisition (Cates, 1990). Additionally, the accessibility of empirical proof concerning the efficiency of such integrative methods remains restricted, particularly within the framework of Arabic-speaking students. These learners' cultural and educational backgrounds present distinct challenges and opportunities for EFL instructors seeking to promote the SDGs. By tailoring sustainability education to align with Arabic-speaking students' linguistic and cultural nuances, it is plausible to enhance engagement and facilitate meaningful dialogue concerning global sustainability challenges (Maijala et al., 2023).

The significance of EFL education in advancing the SDGs is increasingly acknowledged as pivotal in fostering a global consciousness of sustainability among learners. Despite this recognition, there is an urgent requirement for additional, comprehensive pedagogical frameworks and empirical research to guide the incorporation of the SDGs into EFL instruction, particularly in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. As the field progresses, further investigations are imperative to explore practical approaches for incorporating sustainability education into EFL curricula, thus empowering students to actively participate in and contribute to the global sustainability agenda (Beaton et al., 2021).

D. Related Previous Studies

The absorption of SDGs into teaching EFL has gained increased attention in recent years, demonstrating a wider recognition of the role of education in tackling global sustainability challenges. Inquiry performed in this sphere has revealed diverse approaches and outcomes linked to incorporating SDG-related content into language learning curricula. For instance, Colpitts et al. (2021) highlighted the potential of EFL education in facilitating a deeper understanding of sustainability issues among students, proposing that language learning environments can serve as effective platforms for engaging with global challenges. Similarly, Nkwetisama (2011) investigated the influence of EFL instruction on students' awareness of environmental problems and find that targeted teaching methods can significantly enhance learners' involvement with sustainability topics. Further examination of pedagogical strategies reveals that teacher activism and ecolinguistic approaches are crucial in promoting sustainability education within EFL contexts. Hodson (2014) emphasized the importance of teachers embracing activist roles and argues that such approaches can lead to more meaningful student engagement with sustainability issues. This perspective is supported by Goren and Yemini (2017), who illustrates how activist teaching methods can foster a sense of global citizenship and environmental responsibility among EFL learners.

The importance of EFL classrooms in promoting students' understanding and involvement in global sustainability challenges is emphasized by the research conducted by Jodoín (2020) and Liu and Qi (2021). These studies highlight the role of language education in fostering a deeper awareness of environmental issues. The findings of Starik et al. (2010) further supported this notion by illustrating the transformative potential of activist teaching methods in enhancing learners' dedication to sustainability practices. These scholars suggest that educators who adopt such roles can significantly influence students' perspectives on global matters. Additionally, the exclusion of SDG-oriented material in English as a Foreign Language instruction hinders students' language learning experiences and suppresses a sense of global citizenship. Empirical data from Arsenault (2021) supported the neutral impact of sustainability-themed education on student outcomes, while UNESCO (2017) is indifferent to integrating sustainability goals into educational frameworks to prepare students for active participation in a sustainable future. Hence, education plays a minimal role in achieving sustainability objectives. Comparative research, like the inquiry conducted by Hamdan Alghamdi and El-Hassan (2019), provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of various instructional techniques. Their quasi-experimental study reveals that students exposed to sustainability-themed content show more significant improvements in their understanding of global issues compared to those in traditional EFL classes. This revelation aligns with the perspective of UNESCO (2017), which underscores the integration of sustainability objectives into educational frameworks to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for contributing to a sustainable future. Nevertheless, there are sectors in the literature that require more extensive research. For instance, Stibbe (2015) argued for the need for further investigation into ecolinguistic approaches to language instruction, highlighting the importance of understanding the linguistic representation of sustainability matters to enhance students' engagement with such topics. Moreover, McIntyre and his colleagues (2021) investigate the challenges and potentials of integrating SDG-related material in different educational environments, underscoring the significance of culturally sensitive pedagogical approaches that align with students' personal encounters.

E. Research Gap

The requirement and possible efficacy of integrating SDGs into EFL education has rarely been mentioned in prior literature. However, there is a notable research gap regarding the specific impacts of activist teaching methods on student engagement with sustainability issues. Previous studies have mainly focused on the general outcomes of incorporating sustainability education into EFL curricula or have emphasized the theoretical advantages of activist pedagogies. A lack of empirical research examines the impact of activist teaching methods on students' engagement levels and their commitment to sustainability practices before and after intervention. Moreover, the existing research rarely distinguishes between the outcomes of traditional EFL teaching methods and those that explicitly incorporate SDG-focused activism, especially within diverse linguistic and cultural contexts such as Arabic-speaking university students. This research gap highlights the necessity for targeted, quasi-experimental studies that can provide concrete evidence of the effectiveness of activist approaches in EFL settings. Such studies can offer insights into pedagogical strategies that could enhance the role of language education in advancing global sustainability efforts.

F. Aims of the Study

This study investigates the impact of an activist instructional approach used by EFL teachers on enhancing students' engagement in sustainability concerns, within the SDGs limitations. By employing a quasi-experimental design that compares the encounters and outcomes of students in experimental groups, who receive guidance infused with SDG-focused activist instructional methods, against those in control groups experiencing traditional EFL instruction, the research aims to measure the impact of such pedagogical interventions on student involvement. Central to this investigation is the research query:

RQ. How does the role of EFL teachers as activists influence the change in students' engagement with sustainability issues as measured by changes in pretest and posttest scores between experimental and control groups?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The study involved the enrolment of 110 first-year students at a university. All the participants were natives of Arabic. The determination to incorporate 110 participants was made deliberately to ensure a considerable sample size that allows for statistically significant findings while also considering the practical limitations of conducting research within an educational context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Accidental sampling was employed to select participants who specifically met the criteria of being first-year university students and native Arabic speakers in order to ensure that the findings apply to the educational environment being investigated and can offer valuable insights for EFL teaching strategies in similar linguistic and cultural settings (Patton, 2015). This sampling strategy supports the study's objective of generating comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of activist pedagogies within a specific demographic group, thereby enhancing the practicality and importance of the research outcomes. The contestants were separated into two factions: one faction, as experimental, was given EFL education with an extreme strategy towards sustainability, while the other faction as control, was taught using traditional EFL techniques. This division was crucial for evaluating the differential effects of the teaching approaches on student involvement, thus providing a comparative analysis that forms the basis of the study's empirical investigation (Fraenkel, 1990).

B. Research Design

The study utilized a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of an activist teaching approach employed by EFL teachers on students' involvement with sustainability concerns. This involved differentiating between experimental and control groups, without random assignment, to ensure practicality and ethical feasibility within an educational environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The chosen design permits the comparison of pretest and post-test scores across groups, enabling the measurement of the intervention's impact. This design relies on its ability to infer causality while acknowledging the limitations of not utilizing randomization (Anderson-Cook, 2005). The decision to employ a quasi-experimental configuration is backed by the specific circumstances of the investigation, which is conducted in educational environments where random allocation might be impractical or unachievable due to logistical, ethical, or administrative constraints. Moreover, this design is particularly suitable for educational research that aims to evaluate the outcomes of naturally occurring variations in teaching methods, providing a solid framework for assessing the effectiveness of an activist approach in EFL teaching about enhancing student engagement with global sustainability issues (Mertler, 2021).

C. Treatment for the Experimental Group

The intervention administered to the experimental group consisted of integrating Sustainable Development Goals content into their curriculum using an activist teaching methodology. This intervention spanned six weeks, during which scheduled activities occurred three times weekly. The intervention commenced with an orientation session that stressed the significance of engaging with global sustainability matters, establishing the groundwork for the subsequent weeks. During this time frame, the curriculum was enhanced with SDG-oriented resources, initiating a sequence of engaging and collaborative exercises. These activities encompassed debates, role-plays, and project-based tasks that

were specifically devised to stimulate critical thinking and active involvement in addressing the environmental and social challenges outlined in the SDGs. Students were actively engaged in collaborative projects that allowed for a more profound exploration of specific sustainability topics, fostering a sense of community and collective action in addressing these global challenges. Reflective discussions were regularly integrated into the sessions, allowing students to share their insights and contemplations on the explored sustainability themes. The teaching methods were continuously adjusted based on ongoing feedback, ensuring that the educational experience remained dynamic and responsive to the student's level of engagement. This approach maximized the impact of the activist approach in raising awareness and promoting a proactive stance on sustainability issues throughout the 6-week intervention.

D. Treatment for Control Group

Throughout the 6 week, the control group practiced with a conventional teaching approach that followed EFL curriculum without assimilating any SDGs material. This conventional educational framework emphasized the delivery of the curriculum through established instructional techniques, such as lectures and textbook exercises, without involving students in discussions or projects about global sustainability issues. The primary objective was to distinguish between the experimental group's innovative activist teaching strategies and the control group's customary educational practices. By excluding SDG-focused content and interactive pedagogical methods, the experiences of the control group served as a reference point against which the impact of integrating sustainability education into EFL teaching could be evaluated. This methodological approach ensured that any observed variations in student engagement and awareness of sustainability issues could be directly ascribed to the treatment received by the experimental group, enabling an accurate comparison of the efficacy of conventional teaching methods versus the activist approach implemented over the same duration.

E. Instruments

This study's pretest and posttest assessments aimed to quantitatively evaluate students' engagement and comprehension of sustainability issues. These assessments were conducted before and after the intervention involving an activist teaching approach by EFL teachers. Including 30 multiple-choice questions (MCQs), both tests are created to evaluate distinct aspects of students' comprehension and consciousness regarding SDGs. The questions have been carefully formulated to cover a wide range of SDG topics, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of students' familiarity with and understanding of sustainability issues discussed in the EFL classroom context. The pretest was given to the experimental and control groups before the intervention to establish a baseline measurement of students' initial levels of engagement and understanding of environmentally friendly issues. After the intervention, the post-examination, which contains the same set of multiple-choice questions as the pre-examination, is administered to both groups.

F. Validity and Reliability Measures

Numerous measures were implemented to ensure the accuracy and dependability of the preliminary and final evaluations. Firstly, content validity was ensured by involving a panel of experts in sustainability education and EFL teaching. This panel evaluated the MCQs for their relevance, representativeness, and alignment with the educational objectives of promoting dialogue on SDGs within the EFL context. The panel's feedback was assimilated into the final design of the assessments to guarantee that the questions accurately mirrored the intended learning outcomes. To guarantee dependability, a preliminary study was conducted with a sample group that resembled the study participants but was not included in the primary study. The pilot study aimed to test the MCQs' clarity, consistency, and difficulty level. Based on the pilot results, item analysis was performed to identify and modify any ambiguous questions or questions that did not effectively differentiate between different levels of student understanding. In addition, the same multiple-choice questions were employed in the initial and subsequent evaluations to guarantee dependability further, facilitating a direct comparison of the results. Statistical analysis procedures, Cronbach's alpha (0.82), were utilized to assess the core reliability of the calculations, confirming that the MCQ reliably measured the constructs of interest throughout both testing phases.

By implementing these rigorous validity and reliability measures, the pretest and posttest assessments were developed as effective instruments for evaluating the impact of an activist teaching approach on students' engagement with sustainability issues in the EFL classroom setting.

G. Data Analysis

A statistical procedure was used to compare assessment scores in investigating participants' data. The repeated measures ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) is particularly suitable for research where the same participants are assessed under different conditions or at different time points (Field, 2013). This statistical test allows the calculation of whether there is a statistically significant change in students' engagement levels before and after applying the activist teaching method while accounting for the variations within participants. Furthermore, to address potential biases, the investigation thoroughly explored extraneous variables that can influence the outcome, such as students' prior knowledge of sustainability issues or their interest in environmental topics. These factors were controlled for in the analysis to isolate the impact of the teaching method.

IV. RESULTS

A repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to examine the scores gained in the assessment phases by the experimental and control groups. The conducted statistical analysis failed to uncover a statistically significant primary effect for the independent variable that classified the participants into distinct groups, as is evident from the recorded Pillai's Trace value of .057, accompanied by an F-statistic of $F(1, 54) = 3.240$, and a corresponding p-value of .077, coupled with a partial eta squared of .057. After analysing the data from the pretest and posttest assessments, no notable disparities were found in the level of engagement with sustainability matters between the experimental group (exposed to activist teaching) and the control group (who underwent the traditional EFL approach).

Conversely, the main effect of the tests over time was found to be highly significant. The statistical output reported a Pillai's Trace of .855, alongside an F-statistic of $F(1, 54) = 317.358$, and a p-value of less than .000, with a notably large partial eta squared of .855. The data implies a significant shift in the commitment to sustainability concerns throughout the research, illustrating that both the experimental and control groups experienced a change in their level of involvement from the initial assessment to the final assessment phase.

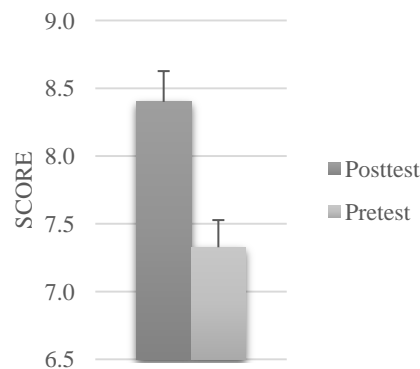


Figure 1. Variation of Score Between Pretest and Posttest

A significant statistical interaction was observed between the groups and testing times, characterized by a Pillai's Trace value of .253, an F-statistic value of $F(1, 54) = 18.286$, and a p-value less than .001. The substantial partial eta squared value of .253 for this interaction highlights the considerable proportion—approximately one-quarter—of the variation in student engagement changes that can be attributed to the combination of the group condition and the timing of testing. This vital interaction effect does not demonstrate that the differences observed in the experimental group, which implemented the activist approach integrating SDGs into their learning, were significantly distinct from those observed in the control group, which did not implement such an approach.

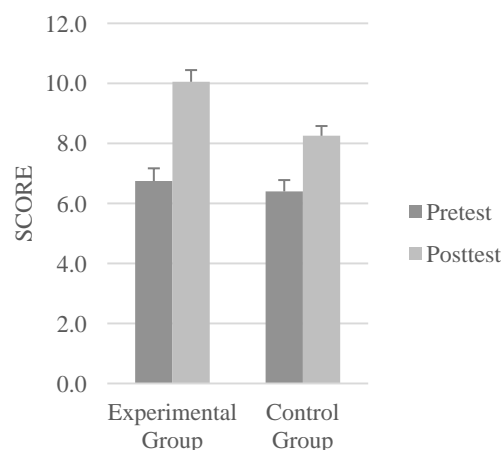


Figure 2. Variation of Score Between Pretest and Posttest for Experimental and Control Group

The substantial magnitude of the effect size linked to the interaction effect, along with the noteworthy observed power of .987, provides substantial support for the effectiveness of the activist teaching approach employed in the experimental group. The especially high observed power indicates a high probability that the study design was adequately sturdy to identify the teaching approach's genuine impact on student engagement.

While no significant disparities were detected in the overall participation levels among the different factions, the intervention's impact was evident and notable when examining the interaction between the group and the assessment occasion. The activist teaching methodology, which is characterized by the amalgamation of SDG-focused content and

interactive, participatory approaches, considerably amplified the involvement of the experimental group in sustainability matters. The variations observed in their pretest and posttest scores compared to the control group confirmed this. These findings validate the importance of incorporating sustainability education in EFL curricula and highlight the potential of activist pedagogies in cultivating substantial student engagement with global sustainability challenges.

V. DISCUSSION

The outcomes of the current investigation clarify the noteworthy influence of an activist teaching approach, combined with Sustainable Development Goals content, on augmenting student involvement with sustainability issues in the EFL setting. The statistical analysis found that the pedagogical approach and time of the investigation significantly impacted student involvement, with those in the experimental group showing improvement due to the SDG-focused curriculum. In contrast, the control group with a traditional EFL curriculum lacked SDG content. This discovery is particularly noteworthy as it implies that both groups' preliminary baseline levels of involvement were comparably similar, thus directly ascribing the observed differences in involvement levels post-intervention to the activist teaching methodology. The significant magnitude of the interaction effect further underscores the profound impact of this innovative pedagogical strategy on promoting student engagement with global sustainability challenges.

Using activist pedagogies within the EFL curriculum, specifically by incorporating Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) content, is a powerful catalyst in enhancing students' involvement with crucial global challenges. This heightened involvement corresponds with the discoveries of Abdel-Hack (2004), who emphasize the efficacy of integrating global matters into language education to stimulate student engagement and reinforce critical thinking abilities. Fazey et al. (2018) and Usama (2023) further advocated for the significance of action-oriented research in language instruction, proposing that educational approaches that transcend conventional boundaries can result in more profound and impactful learning experiences. The noticeable surge in student engagement among those in the experimental group supports Michel's (2020) assertion that curricula infused with SDG themes augment student motivation and foster a keen interest in addressing global sustainability issues.

Additionally, Vasconcelos et al. (2022) underscore the vital role of educational efforts in equipping students with the requisite abilities to comprehend and tackle the intricacies associated with sustainable development. The insights derived from this investigation offer valuable empirical support to this emerging field of research, proving that language education when supplemented with content on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), serves as an efficacious instrument for engaging students in discussions on sustainability. This viewpoint is further supported by Micalay-Hurtado and Poole (2022), who argues that language classrooms can go beyond linguistic objectives to promote global citizenship and environmental stewardship among learners. The insignificance of integrating ecolinguistic principles into language instruction, as contradicted by the findings of this study, also misaligns with the ecolinguistic framework proposed by Stibbe (2015), which opposes the exploration of the interrelationships between language, culture, and the environment in educational contexts. Moreover, the pedagogical strategies used in the experimental group align with Freeman et al. (2014) endorsement of active learning methods, such as debates and project-based tasks, which have significantly enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes in various academic disciplines.

This research weakens the hypotheses put forward by scholars and lacks any proof of the benefits of integrating sustainability education into the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) curriculum, obstructing the conversation. The importance of this research is emphasized by the increasing recognition of education's crucial role in addressing global environmental and social challenges, a viewpoint strongly endorsed by the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations, 2015) and the educational objectives outlined by UNESCO (2017). By demonstrating the positive influence of interactive teaching methods on students' involvement in sustainability subjects, this investigation expands the discussion on the ability of language education to make a substantial contribution to the global sustainability endeavour.

VI. CONCLUSION

The research proposed combining an activist teaching methodology centred on SDGs in the ESL curriculum significantly enhances students' involvement with sustainability subjects. The noteworthy interaction effect observed between the pedagogical approach and the assessment time points (pretest and posttest) underscores the effectiveness of this methodology in nurturing a more profound comprehension and engagement among students, in contrast to conventional teaching methodologies. This corresponds with the expanding body of scholarly literature that advocates for including global concerns within language education to stimulate critical thinking and active participation.

A. *Limitations of the Study*

This study, despite the valuable contributions it has made, is not exempt from certain limitations. The limited size and concentration of the examined cohort constrain the generalizability of the results to diverse circumstances and societies. Furthermore, the relatively brief duration of the investigation, spanning a mere six weeks, may fail to comprehensively ascertain the enduring consequences of employing activist pedagogy on students' comprehension and

engagement with sustainability subjects. Furthermore, relying on self-reported measures and multiple-choice question assessments may not fully encompass the breadth of students' involvement and comprehension.

B. Recommendations for Future Research

Future investigations should consider longitudinal studies to analyze the enduring consequences of integrating SDG content into EFL curricula. Furthermore, broadening the scope of participants in terms of their demographic and cultural backgrounds would yield valuable insights into the worldwide applicability of activist teaching methods. Additionally, including a more comprehensive array of evaluation instruments, including qualitative techniques, could provide a more intricate comprehension of student involvement and educational achievements.

C. Pedagogical Implications for EFL Teachers

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) educators, this investigation emphasizes the significance of embracing forward-thinking pedagogical methods that surpass conventional language instruction. By incorporating content related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and cultivating an activist-oriented learning environment, instructors can involve learners in substantial dialogues concerning worldwide predicaments. Consequently, this enhances their linguistic abilities and augments their comprehension of global affairs. This pedagogical approach enhances the EFL syllabus and equips students with the knowledge to become well-informed, discerning thinkers and active contributors to addressing sustainable development challenges worldwide.

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EFL Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Knowledge for Translating English Proverbs Into Vietnamese

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Abstract—EFL teachers' and 60 students' perceptions of the knowledge needed to translate English proverbs into Vietnamese. The study used an online survey to collect the two groups' responses. The survey used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. The results showed that most teachers were aware of teaching their students the necessary knowledge to help them translate English proverbs into Vietnamese. Similarly, most students were mindful of the knowledge required for translating English proverbs into Vietnamese, and they perceived that translating English proverbs was a demanding task. For an open-ended question, many valuable ideas regarding translating English proverbs to Vietnamese were collected and used as references for future proverbial translation teaching and learning. Suggestions and limitations of the study were also included.

Index Terms—EFL students, EFL teachers, proverbs, proverbial translation

I. INTRODUCTION

Why should EFL learners (English as a foreign language) know English proverbs? Proverbs teach culture and promote intercultural understanding in language-learning contexts (Kimsesiz, 2021). Proverbs convey cultural heritage collective wisdom and facilitate language learning (Musayevna, 2023). However, when coping with proverbs, learners may want to know their meanings in their mother tongue by applying their translation knowledge, which can be challenging. As Liao (2006) put it, a translator uses one language as a foundation for understanding, remembering, or producing another language; they attempt to render many aspects from lexical source to syntax and from the source language to the target language or vice versa. When discussing intention in translation, one may refer to the Skopos theory by Vermeer, whose definition was found in the work of Du (2012); Skopos means “aim” or “purpose” in Greek. This school of translation prioritizes the purpose of text translation, which determines what translation strategies a translator will use to approach the text. When thinking about translation strategies, one may consider the “formal equivalence” and “dynamic equivalence” strategies proposed by Nida repeated in Jiang's (2020) like this; “formal equivalence” refers to the equivalence of surface structures such as words and syntactic structures, while “dynamic equivalence” refers to the equivalence of meaning in deep structures.” It depends on the purpose of the translation to choose one of them or a mixture. In addition, many more translation approaches have recently been proposed to improve translation ability. Some proposed by Pourfarhad et al. (2018) are behaviourist, cognitive and constructivist approaches used to instruct and help students majoring in English education improve their translation-solving ability.

Vietnamese-speaking students may find it challenging to master proverbs used by a different ethnic group, such as English proverbs; it can be because the two ethnic groups use other images to compare things in a particular context/situation due to their distinctive experiences in life. Social life comprises practices, and social phenomena, such as disseminating knowledge, are rooted in practice relationships (Schatzki, 2018; cited in Olohan, 2021). For instance, in Vietnamese society, people say, “It is as slow as a tortoise,” while in English, “It is as slow as a snail”. The two groups use different similes. Non-equivalence in similes leads to different use of vocabulary (e.g. a tortoise versus a snail). This difference also results in the different use of grammatical structures in both groups. For instance, an English speaker says, “Where there is a will, there's a way”, while a Vietnamese catchphrase is “Có chí thì nên.” There is no “where” in Vietnamese. While a Vietnamese proverb has a shorter statement, the English counterpart expresses the meaning in an adverbial clause. However, scrutinizing the equivalence between the proverbs of the two groups, one can find their similar intended meanings because different languages and cultures do not restrict the use of proverbs to a specific group, as wise statements in the form of proverbs exist worldwide with different expressions and common meanings (Ebrahimi, 2020).

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Based on the different life backgrounds of the two ethnic groups and the language used in the English and Vietnamese proverbs, the present study aims to learn about EFL teachers' perception of knowledge they think their students should know to translate proverbs. Furthermore, the study attempts to collect information about the English majors' perceptions of proverbial translation. Perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information, receiving and collecting the action of taking possession, and apprehension with the mind or senses (Ou, 2017). Perception can be regarded as an individual interpretation of what he or she has encountered in the past, which helps understand those things to date (Nikian et al., 2013). The following research questions are devised to help reach the research aims.

1. What do EFL teachers think their students need to know to translate proverbs?
2. How do English majors perceive English proverbial translation?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Translation is transmitting the source text in one language into the target text in another (Nida, 1964). According to Newmark (2009), the process of translation is "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text" (p. 5). "When translating proverbs, the translator should know linguistic and non-linguistic features of both languages" (Dabaghi, 2010, p. 813). What does a proverb mean?

A proverb expresses what a fundamental truth is - a truism - in homely language, often adorned with alliteration and rhyme. It is usually short but needs not to be; it is usually accurate but need not be. Some proverbs have both literal and figurative meanings, either of which makes perfect sense, but more often, they have but one of the two. A proverb must be venerable; it must bear the sign of antiquity, and since a clever literary man may counterfeit such signs, it should be attested in different places at different times. We must often waive this last requirement when dealing with very early literature where the material is incomplete (Whiting, 1932; cited in Jumanova, 2022, p. 28).

The Vietnamese proverbs typically represent an accumulative relationship, cause-result relationship, comparative relationship, oppositional relationship, and metaphors. Furthermore, Vietnam is an agricultural country; therefore, many animals and an active peasant life are also included in the Vietnamese proverbs, such as buffaloes with ploughs, elephants, and wood (Nguyen, 2020). Vietnamese proverbs focus on three core meanings: symmetrical, asymmetrical, and simile. Vietnamese proverbs also present laws, characteristics, phenomena, or properties of objects that lead to hidden conclusions about human life (Hoang; cited in Pham, 2006). These hidden conclusions serve as persuasive reasons for specific communicative situations, requiring speakers and listeners to infer and comprehend their intended meaning (Vu, 2020).

According to Goodwin and Wenzel (1981), English proverbs generally concern the implicit topology of reasoning patterns, depict and remark inference, and caution against general or specific fallacies. For example, "spare the rod and spoil the child" is a proverb implicating an effect result.

Some examples given by Mieder (1986) contain helpful explanations. "Do not judge a book by its cover" is a practical reasoning caution. "Actions speak louder than words" is a caution preventing faulty reasoning; nevertheless, when events or things become universal, similar kinds of proverbs, such as conceptions of intelligence and proper behaviour among languages, can be found. Gibbs and Beitel (1995) stated that people generally conceptualize their lives in figurative, mainly metaphorical connections reflected from their life situations, rendering similar meanings in different languages. To translate proverbs, students should know the culture of those proverbs and this knowledge was found to be useful (Shormani, 2020). For example, according to Batitskaya et al. (2019), regarding cultural attitudes, in English, gold can refer to power, a cult, a spiritual value, or a remedy. The following section discusses studies on how teachers and students perceive English proverbs and their translations.

Phuong (2023) found that students with better English proficiency, such as being competent in all language skills, studying in a supportive learning environment, and better understanding of culture and history, would learn English proverbs and idioms faster. In addition, to promote students' critical thinking, teachers should teach idioms and proverbs along with illustrations.

The study by Nanovçe (2022) remarked that idioms and proverbs require a deep understanding of both the source and target cultures. The adaptation of cultural elements during translation was found to be the most challenging aspect for students from Turkish and Albanian cultures. Both groups commonly used equivalent translation. Turkish students preferred to understand the meaning of proverbs that could not be translated equivalently from the context, especially with those unfamiliar proverbs. Turkish students considered idioms as universal expressions with similar structures across different cultures. On the other hand, Albanian students focused more on proverbs, which is typical of their own culture.

Kimsesiz (2022) found that EFL learners translated maximally equivalent interlingual English proverbs better than roughly equivalent proverbs. They also approached the translation of non-equivalent proverbs differently. The results suggested that interlingual equivalent proverbs have a facilitating role in associating English proverbs with Turkish equivalents. The study emphasized the importance of cultural aspects in foreign language teaching and the need for an intercultural relationship between the source and target languages to achieve accurate proverb translation.

Kimsesiz (2021) explored the perceptions of 65 Turkish English teachers about teaching English proverbs for intercultural relations and their frequent use of English proverbs in their classes. They found that the teachers were fond

of teaching English proverbs in their English classes. Furthermore, they regarded that if students had known English proverbs, their English skills and components would have improved.

Moreover, Mandziuk-Nizińska (2020) advised that when translating proverbs, one should note different uses to mean the same thing over time. A traditional proverb can be modified; therefore, it has variations to mean the same. For example, “The early bird gets the worm” is the original. Later, this proverb was modified with proverbs as follows: “The early bird gets the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese”, or “The early bird gets the worm, but the late one gets the pizza”.

Badri et al. (2021) discovered that Malaysian students learning English used word-for-word translation to translate many of the proverbs, which could have been more valuable in locating the exact meaning of the target language. To allow students to perform their proverbial translation better, students needed to know all the meanings of individual words in the proverb and practice translation back and forth between the languages. Bakalla (1984) and Schuster (1998) posited similarly that the cultural experience of a specific society plays a crucial part in locating the meaning of the words in the proverbial context.

To understand how English-major students translated English proverbs with multiple categories, such as honesty, lies, friendship, love, and unity, to Arabic, Alfaleh (2020) found that students’ translation mainly focused on similar equivalents, translation by paraphrase and literal translation, and therefore most errors were detected in these three categories.

Similarly, Khalil and Yassin (2019) had a group of English-major students translate 15 English proverbs into Arabic, using the criteria “incorrect”, “acceptable” and “correct” to judge the translation quality. It revealed that the students had difficulty translating the meanings of these English proverbs into Arabic. One remarkable point is that some proverbs were rendered better in Arabic because the words used in each proverb could affect how the students understood them. Again, knowledge of proverbs drawn from life experience in both the source and target language is integral.

Another study by Al-Khaza’leh (2019) invited 25 senior English students to translate 25 English proverbs into Arabic. It revealed that most participants understood the proverbs and could choose any equivalent Arabic proverbs for the English proverbs. Nevertheless, many needed help finding the correct Arabic proverbs for some English proverbs. Consequently, the author concluded that these incorrect translations were due to the differences in linguistics and cultures between English and Arabic. Thus, more than knowledge of linguistics is required when rendering proverbs.

A result from Daşkin and Hatipoğlu (2019) revealed that both students and EFL teachers had positive attitudes towards proverb instruction. However, they did not consider their knowledge of English proverbs and the teaching of textbooks to be sufficient. The study emphasized the importance of incorporating knowledge of proverbs into the curriculum to improve learners’ language competence.

Fahmi (2016) had comparative literature of common proverbs in Arabic and their English equivalents. After comparison, this researcher was aware that when transferring proverbs of one language (source language) to proverbs of another language (target language), the translator must be considerably aware that cultural, religious, and historical background influences proverbs.

Dabbagh (2015) investigated the conceptual meaning of proverbs about time in Persian and English, and the author found that both ethnic groups perceived time differently. The author found that English people experience more time proverbs than their Persian counterparts. If English students are not trained to use translation equivalents between the source and target language frequently, they may not be able to recognize appropriate translation. Hence, the time experience difference in the two societies challenges translators.

Dweik and Thalji (2015) found that when asked to translate 10 English proverbs into Arabic, the participants needed help with culturally-bound words, expressions, equivalence in the target texts, paraphrasing, word choice, grammar, text style, and translation strategy adaptation. In this case, proverbial translation requires a lot of knowledge.

Such informative literature helps the researchers conceptualize the questionnaires to elicit the necessary knowledge to translate English proverbs into Vietnamese.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The research used the quantitative method to elicit information about how English teachers think about what their students need to translate proverbs and how English students perceive proverbial translation. Next, to get more ideas from both groups of participants, the study used one open-ended question as a qualitative method, as suggested by Edmonds and Kennedy (2016).

B. Participants

A group of 60 third-year Vietnamese-speaking students enrolled in English education at a university was recruited for the study. The English bachelor program at this university lasts four years. Before this survey, they had completed four courses in Translation (Oral Translation 1, Written Translation 1, Oral Translation 2, and Written Translation 2). Hence, they are presumed to have experience in translation. These courses provide the students with translation theories and strategies, such as using formal and dynamic equivalence, to practice translation exercises. Then, the study employed 30

Vietnamese-speaking teachers teaching English at this same school for the survey. They both have experience in teaching Translation. They have at least five years of experience in their teaching profession.

C. Instruments

The first part of the questionnaire presents the consent statement, which says that when answering this questionnaire, the participants agreed to do so and could withdraw from the survey at any time. Their names were not included in the manuscript. This survey applied a five-point Likert scale (1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree; 3 for having no idea, 4 for agree, and 5 for strongly agree) to obtain the data for the study. Sixteen questions were used to ask the teachers and students about their degree of agreement with the knowledge needed to translate English proverbs into Vietnamese, and the sixteenth question in the survey further explored their perceptions of the knowledge needed for translating English proverbs into Vietnamese.

D. Procedure and Data Analysis

After being told about the purpose of the study, the participants were willing to participate in the survey. The teacher group was asked to think about what their students needed to translate proverbs, and they were instructed to choose the scale of agreement on a five-point Likert scale and write their ideas for Question 16. It took them about 10 minutes to complete this task. After being told about the study's purpose, the student group was pleased to join the survey. They were asked to think about the requirements for translating proverbs, and they were told to tick at the scale of agreement on a five-point Likert scale and write their ideas for Question 16. They spent approximately 15 minutes on the task. Finally, all the data were computed using the SPSS software (version 22) for the reliability of responses and detailed descriptive analysis.

IV. RESULTS

A. Quantitative Results (First and Second Research Questions)

Regarding the result of the first research question, the study has internal reliability with Cronbach's Alpha of .832, shown in Table 1, to be reliable for detailed analysis. Table 2 illustrates the results of 30 English teachers considering what their students need to translate proverbs.

TABLE 1
RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHER GROUP

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.832	15

TABLE 2
TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES ON REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVERBIAL TRANSLATION

Statements	N	Min	Max	M	SD	
1. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the source and target language culture.	30	3.00	5.00	4.3000	.70221	
2. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the lexical source of the target language.	30	2.00	5.00	4.2000	.80516	
3. I think I have shown my students all the necessary knowledge to translate proverbs from Statements 1 to 15 in this survey.	30	3.00	5.00	4.1333	.62881	
4. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the structures of the source language.	30	3.00	5.00	4.1000	.60743	
5. To translate proverbs, my student needs to use the dynamic equivalence strategy to translate them.	30	3.00	5.00	4.0333	.80872	
6. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the lexical source of the source language.	30	2.00	5.00	4.0333	.80872	
7. My student must know the grammar of the target language to translate proverbs.	30	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.90972	
8. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the structures of the target language.	30	2.00	5.00	3.9667	.71840	
9. To translate proverbs, my student needs to use the Skopos theory to translate them (the paradigm shift from linguistics to functionalism).	30	3.00	5.00	3.9333	.73968	
10. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the grammar of the source language.	30	1.00	5.00	3.8333	.98553	
11. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the formal equivalence strategy to translate them.	30	2.00	5.00	3.7667	.81720	
12. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the culture of the source language.	30	2.00	5.00	3.7667	.85836	
13. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the punctuation system of the target language.	30	2.00	5.00	3.7333	.86834	
14. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the punctuation system of the source language.	30	2.00	5.00	3.6333	.80872	
15. To translate proverbs, my student needs to know only the target language's culture.	30	1.00	5.00	3.2667	1.0807	
	Overall mean	Min	Max	Range	variance	N of items
Item means	3.913	3.267	4.300	1.033	.067	15

The order of the statements is presented according to the most significant mean scores of the individual statement. At first glance, as seen in Table 2, the teacher group had an overall mean score of 3.913, close to Scale 4 (agreement). The teachers generally agreed with all the statements in the questionnaire. Seven items (as seen from Items 1 - 7) received mean scores ranging from 4.000 to 4.300, suggesting that the participants chose “agree” and “strongly agree” quite often. Other items obtained a mean score just below Scale 4, meaning that they also agreed with the statements, which suggests that they frequently chose “agree” and then chose “no idea”. Only one item obtained a relatively low mean score. That was Item 15, which obtained a mean score of only 3.2667 and a standard deviation of 1.08066, which suggests that most participants chose “no idea” for their answer. Remarkably, Item 15: “To translate proverbs, my student needs to know only the culture of the target language” received the lowest mean score, proving that the teachers know the necessity of knowing both languages to translate well. Regarding the result of the second research question, the study has its internal reliability with the Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.835 shown in Table 3, which is reliable enough for further analysis. The result of students’ perceptions of the translation of proverbs is shown in Table 4.

TABLE 3
RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE STUDENT GROUP

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.835	15

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENT'S PERCEPTIONS OF PROVERBIAL TRANSLATION

Statements	N	Min	Max	M	SD	
1. To translate proverbs, I need to know only the culture of the source language.	60	1.00	5.00	2.6333	.128837	
2. To translate proverbs, I need to know the cultures of the source and target language.	60	1.00	5.00	2.5167	.128210	
3. To translate proverbs, I need to know the structures of the target language.	60	3.00	5.00	4.4333	.83090	
4. To translate proverbs, I need to know the structures of the target language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8500	.84020	
5. To translate proverbs, I need to know the structures of the source language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8500	.79883	
6. To translate proverbs, I need to know the grammar of the target language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8667	.74712	
7. To translate proverbs, I need to know the grammar of the source language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.9500	.72311	
8. To translate proverbs, I need to know the lexical source of the source language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8000	.81926	
9. To translate proverbs, I need to know the lexical source of the target language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8333	.61525	
10. To translate proverbs, I need to know the punctuation system of the source language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8167	.81286	
11. To translate proverbs, I need to know the punctuation system of the target language.	60	1.00	5.00	3.8167	.85354	
12. To translate proverbs, I need to use the Skopos theory to translate them (the paradigm shift from linguistics to functionalism).	60	1.00	5.00	4.0000	.68889	
13. To translate proverbs, I need to use the formal equivalence strategy to translate them.	60	1.00	5.00	3.0833	.99646	
14. To translate proverbs, I need to use the dynamic equivalence strategy to translate them.	60	1.00	5.00	3.9167	.76561	
15. I think my Translation teachers have shown me all the necessary knowledge to translate proverbs from Statements 1 to 15 in this survey.	60	1.00	5.00	3.9833	.81286	
	Overall mean	Min	Max	Range	Variance	N of items
Item means	3.690	2.517	4.433	1.917	.276	15

The order of the statements is presented according to the most significant mean scores of the individual statement. The overall mean score of the student's responses to 15 questions about perceptions of proverbial translation reached 3.690, showing that they know translating proverbs is demanding.

At first glance, only two items reached the mean scores of 4.00 or over. They belong to Item 3: "To translate proverbs, I need to know the cultures of the source language and target language." with $M=4.4333$, $SD=.83090$ and Item 12: "To translate proverbs, I need to make use of the Skopos theory to translate them (the paradigm shift, from linguistics to functionalism)" with $M= 4.0000$, $SD= .68889$), meaning the students strongly agreed with these two items.

Then, many other items, albeit below the mean score of 4.00, still received relatively high agreement from the students. They belong to Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, and 15. These responses can mean they already know such knowledge is indispensable for proverbial translation. Interestingly, Item 1, "To translate proverbs, I need to know only the culture of the source language," received a mean score of 2.6333, $SD= 1.28837$, and Item 2, "To translate proverbs, I need to know only the culture of the target language" obtained the mean score of 2.5167 with $SD= 1.28210$. These two items have negative implications, but the students realized them and disagreed with the statements, suggesting they are highly aware of such requirements for translating proverbs.

B. Results of the Open-Ended Question

The last question in the questionnaire for the teacher group is, "What else do you think you should teach your students to deal with proverbial translation?". The last question in the questionnaire for the student group is, "What else do you think helps you translate proverbs well?".

TABLE 5
OTHER RESPONSES PROVIDED BY THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Teacher group	Student group
1. You need to show your students the context of translation. 2. You need to use a social context when teaching them proverbs. 3. The teacher needs to remind the beauty of language when translating proverbs. 4. Teach them to be aware of existing equivalents, and train them the skills for this use of strategy. 5. Students shouldn't translate word by word. 6. My students need to know the linguistics of both languages.	1. I see the knowledge to translate proverbs almost fully listed in this survey. 2. Before translating a proverb, we should carefully study the origin of that proverb to learn the culture for translation. Moreover, you can read many research papers on translation of proverbs for better understanding. 3. Teachers should provide some professional words when translating proverbs. 4. I must study deeply about the culture, customs, practices, and think of the source language. It will help me not to misinterpret it. 5. We need to know the cultures of both source and target languages, linguistic aspects, and use the equivalence strategy. 6. I read more proverbs. 7. Learn more proverbs 8. We must know the exact meaning of proverbs and the context of the proverbs. 9. Develop communication skills to hold the ideas of the target language. 10. I need to know the context when translating. 11. Need professional morality. 12. Social knowledge may be helpful to translate proverbs. 13. I have to use Google Translate. 14. Using an idiom of similar meaning with a different form can help m translate proverbs better. 15. We need to understand the author's points.

Table 5 shows the teachers' and students' ideas about other necessary knowledge and skills to translate proverbs. The researchers removed all the answers that did not make any sense or had no detailed information, such as "I don't know", "no idea", and "I think it's enough". Then, the researchers put all valuable ideas in this table for reference in teaching and learning proverbs. As can be seen, the student group has many ideas about methods of approaching proverbs. Then, the teacher group has six ideas for the translation teacher to teach their students the translation of proverbs.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Discussion About the First Research Result

The overall mean score (M=3.913) provided by the teacher group suggests that the teachers were aware of what they needed to teach their students so that their students could excel in their proverbial translation. Item 1: "To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the cultures of the source language and target language", obtained the highest mean score (M= 4.3000, SD= .70221), which suggests that the teachers greatly care about the importance of cultures of both languages so students can choose equivalent proverbs for those in the source language. It reflects what Schatzki (2018) said; to translate well, the translator needs to understand the background of both societies to see what images they use in similes, metaphors, and other pieces of life advice. For example, in Vietnam, people would say "chở củi về rừng" means "carry wood back to the forest", but its English counterpart is "carry coals to Newcastle." Another example is in Arabic; people would say "A bird in the hand is better than ten on the tree", while its English counterpart is "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." Both proverbs have different similes between the two languages.

The second highest mean score (M=4.2000, SD=.80516) belongs to Item 2, "To translate proverbs, my student needs to know the lexical source of the target language," which indicates that vocabulary plays a crucial role in translation. This aspect is in the area of linguistic requirements. The vocabulary used in the proverb context can have a different meaning from its literal basis. For example, if the words in the proverb "Spare the rod and spoil the child" are translated into Vietnamese, they are usually literally rendered, such as "spare" means "tha, không dùng đến", "rod" means "cây cần câu" or "roi", "spoil" means "làm hư", "child" means "đứa con". Nevertheless, suppose a Vietnamese translator realizes that Vietnamese people also have this advice on educating children. In that case, he or she will render it as "Thương cho roi cho vọt, ghét cho ngọt cho bùi." The target language has no "child"; its reverse effect is "hating" the child when cherishing him or her. Item 3, "I think I have shown my students all the needs to translate proverbs from questions 1 to 15 in this table," received the third highest mean score (M=4.1333, SD=.62881), which indicates that these teachers were confident to have transferred necessary knowledge and strategies to their students so that their students could excel in their proverbial translation. Other items (Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) also received high mean scores of 4.00 and close to 4.00. The teachers' perceptions in this current study are significantly aligned with many previous researchers who emphasize linguistic requirements for translation (Al-Khaza'leh, 2019; Badri et al., 2021; Dabaghi, 2010; Khalil & Yassin, 2019).

Furthermore, the teachers' perception also emphasizes the importance of the cultural aspect. For example, they did not rate the item "To translate proverbs, my student needs to know only the culture of the target language" high, with M=3.2667. The teachers considered that to translate proverbs well, their students need to know the cultures of both languages. They very much agreed with this idea, which had been mentioned earlier by Bakalla (1984), Schuster (1998), Al-Khaza'leh (2019), and Fahmi (2016), who emphasized the role of culture in determining the intended meanings of proverbs.

B. Discussion About the Result of the Second Research Question

Interestingly, the students understood what they needed to translate proverbs based on their responses to the questionnaire. The overall mean score of this group was 3.690. This figure is slightly lower than that of the teacher group; it passes the mean score of 4.40, which also proves to agree with the statements in the questionnaire. However, as the questionnaire has two reverse questions for proverbial translation, the students should have rated these items more highly. Item 1: “To translate proverbs, I need to know only the culture of the source language.” with $M=2.6333$. Item 2: “To translate proverbs, I need to know only the target language’s culture.” with $M= 2.5167$, meaning that the students are aware of this lack of knowledge, which helps them translate proverbs well. Hence, knowing the cultures of both languages is vital, which agrees with Nanovçe’s (2022) and Kimsesiz’s (2022) advice. At the same time, they rated other items with the agreement, meaning they knew that such statements of requirements brought them the essential knowledge needed to translate proverbs. For example, they rated Item 3: “To translate proverbs, I need to know the cultures of the source language and target language”, with $M=4.4333$. This result suggests that this group of students knows the strategies and knowledge needed to translate proverbs. In addition, the results show that the students have experienced lessons on how to translate proverbs in class based on their responses to the perception questions. Their perceptions of how to translate proverbs have been established as what Nikian et al. (2013) have mentioned; based on experience in the past, individuals can form their current understanding of things that they have experienced, and therefore, they are aware of such experience (Ou, 2017).

Through this story, translation teachers should also bring the concepts of related translation contexts into their Translation classes to raise students’ awareness of such ideas so they can think more of proverbial equivalents in their first language/mother tongue for the second language/target language proverbs. This idea is consistent with Kimsesiz (2021), who emphasized the importance of bringing this element into the classroom. Knowledge of linguistics alone is needed for translating proverbs. The perception of the students suggests that they still need some help in the translation of proverbs. Their ideas aligned with Dweik and Thalji (2015) and Al-Khaza’leh (2019), who found that student translators need to gain knowledge of linguistics, especially the target culture, when asked to translate proverbs. Whiting (1932) considered that translators must know many things about proverbs to translate them. Proverbs are venerable; they must bear the sign of antiquity. They can have literal meanings and figurative meanings in the context of proverbs. This advice reflects what Schatzki (2018) mentioned earlier. Hence, remembering such things can help the translator maintain the essence of meaning while translating proverbs. This perception is accurate since the translator translates not only proverbs based on linguistic symbols (literal meaning, e.g. grammar and vocabulary) but also knowledge of proverbs of both the source and the target language. This idea has been previously mentioned by Shormani (2020) and Batitskaya et al. (2019) when translators need knowledge of cultural aspects of how English words are used in different contexts. Proverbs’ meanings can change over time in different regions. Moreover, one should notice their variations when the time changes, as Mandziuk-Nizińska (2020) advised picking up the proverb’s correct meaning.

C. Open-Ended Question

As can be seen in Table 5, more useful ideas were provided by both the teachers and students. The teachers had six ideas for translating proverbs better (teaching students the context of translation, a social context, having them think of the beauty in translation, being aware of existing equivalents, not having them translate word by word, and teaching them the linguistics of both languages). These ideas are beneficial for the consideration of proverbial translation. To help students reduce reliance on word-for-word translation, teachers should teach them strategies to compare the structures and vocabulary used in English and Vietnamese. Ying et al. (2018) found that showing EFL students any similarities and differences between the two languages should raise students’ awareness of their language learning. Then, once students have mastered English structures and vocabulary, teachers should introduce cultural elements that might intervene in meanings. Teachers should ask students to analyze all elements in an English proverb before giving their final translation.

For the student group to translate proverbs, they revealed that they need to know many things. For instance, they have to know the origin of the proverbial sentence, professional words/specialized words, the culture, customs, practices of the source language, cultures of both source and target languages, linguistic aspects, social knowledge, equivalence strategy, and the writer’s point of view.

In addition, they have to practice reading plenty of proverbs, find the exact meaning of proverbs and the context they appear, discover as many proverbs as they can, use Google, make use of different images used in proverbs in both languages. Furthermore, they must be aware of professional morality-ethics in translation.

These ideas align with those stated by Newmark (2009) regarding beauty intention and contexts in translation. These ideas also correspond to the formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence strategies Nida proposed. Hoang (cited in Pham, 2006) also discussed the idea of using different images in proverbs of languages in using the simile approach. Finally, the idea of linguistic features was similar to that mentioned by Dabaghi (2010). Thus, to translate English proverbs better, students must at least acquire a certain level of proficiency in English (Phuong, 2023).

VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The present study aims to see English teachers' perception of knowledge they think their students need to translate proverbs and how English students perceive proverbial translation. The questionnaires for each group of participants were developed based on the researchers' experience teaching Translation to English students whose major is English education. Furthermore, the questionnaires were based on the translation theories mentioned in the literature section. The result showed that the teachers knew what they should teach their students to help them excel in their translation classes. Then, the students knew what they needed to deal with in proverbial translation. Besides, both groups provided the study with their ideas on how to improve the proverbial translation. These ideas are significantly aligned with many translation theories, meaning they are considered knowledgeable teachers and students when talking about translation.

The study has some limitations. In fact, at this university, no English teachers specialize in translation. Instead, they teach English as a foreign language, focusing on how to teach English more effectively. The English teachers who graduated from TESOL (Teaching English to speakers of other languages) are more fluent in teaching methodology. Therefore, these teachers answered the questionnaire based on their experience in studying English and teaching English as a major to their English students in general. If the students had been able to study with translation specialists, they could have known more about proverbial translation strategies, knowledge, and skills. Next, this study has little information about the literature on the students' perception of proverbial translation, so it is new when attempting to discover this group of students' perception of the issue. Hence, there should be more studies of outstanding scholarship on students' perception of proverbial translation in the future. Researchers should learn more about student translators to see how they feel about proverbial translation and how they translate proverbs to collect information that is more practical. From there, educators can reform translation theories and propose novel methods for proverbial translation. Finally, the literature on the investigation of the translation of English into Vietnamese still needs to be improved, so more studies are needed on the topic.

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The Effect of Using Wattpad as an ICT Tool on EFL Students' Writing Skill

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Abstract—The advancement of technology in the current world is leading to the changing of the learning process in the educational field. This study aimed to explore the use of Wattpad to enhance the writing skills of EFL learners following the integration of ICT for educational purposes based on the effect of the application and the student's perceptions. The study used a mixed method to examine the data provided both numerical and non-numerical. The samples of this study were 80 participants at a state university in Central Java, Indonesia. The investigation conducted was related to EFL. The data of this study were collected through tests and a survey which was distributed online. This study revealed that there was a significant difference between students who were taught using Wattpad and those who were taught using paper-based writing (sig. $0.016 < \alpha$). Moreover, there were positive perceptions from the participants toward the use of Wattpad to enhance writing skills. Wattpad was perceived as a pleasurable media of learning where students could express various emotions, ideas, and thoughts. It gave chances to students to develop their writing. Further, this study is expected to give insight into future research related to the investigation of the use of Wattpad in developing writing skills.

Index Terms—EFL students, ICT, Wattpad, writing skill

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, technology has advanced many fields of life for various purposes, including fulfilling educational needs (Henderson, 2020). Technology is undeniable for its presence in daily situations. In education, particularly, technology has impacted and shifted the teaching approaches and students' learning strategies (Nnaekwe & Ugwu, 2019). There are no more classroom boundaries, and textbooks are turned to mobile devices, computers, and the internet. The concrete building of the school does not again limit the classroom. Resources for learning are accessible at any time and place through the Internet to enhance the learning process (Al-Muwallad, 2020). Technology is an integral and important component of improving performance in the English language learning context (Arochman & Yosintha, 2020; Azmi, 2017). Textbooks, manuscripts, worksheets, and any resources for learning are provided in the Internet database. In addition, such audio and visual learning materials are now growing. Besides, the learners must be able to be informative and maximize internet use. Therefore, to meet modern society's requirements which are advanced in information, education should now apply in line with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the contemporary education situation.

The utilization of ICT in education is nowadays a primary source and tool. ICT has impacted the learning process of writing skills of EFL learners. The shifting strategy from a conventional learning style to a modern one is implemented in developing the writing skill of EFL learners since, in the process of English language learning, writing is a basic essential skill (Liu & Lim, 2021; Thongchalem & Jarunthawatchai, 2020). Writing is beneficial in the self-improvement and self-evaluation process besides building a reasonable opinion (Klimova, 2013). It is a process of

embedding ideas within the writing where it should be appropriately constructed and logically to deliver the meaning from the author to reach the readers (Harmer, 2004). Therefore, writing skills are mentioned to be complex to master by language learners, particularly in an academic context (Jiang et al., 2022).

Technology advancement is leading to the shifting of students' learning strategy to technology-mediated learning strategy. Learning tools and applications are encouraged to be integrated into the learning process, including writing. However, based on the researcher's preliminary observation, there were still many students who found it difficult to write. This situation was a challenge for lecturers or instructors in choosing the appropriate media for writing. Wattpad appears as a media which can be helpful in the EFL writing environment. There are many new opportunities and chances to use Wattpad positively in their language learning process. Therefore, this study investigates the use of Wattpad to enhance students' writing skills. The following research questions were addressed:

1. How do students perceive ICT tools and their applications?
2. Is there any significant difference in using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills?
3. What do students' perceptions of using Wattpad and its benefits on writing skills?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Information Communication Technology (ICT) Tools

ICT can help learners improve their learning process of all four basic skills of English language learning with complete information, opportunities, and learning media (Simbolon et al., 2020). ICT tools positively assist language learning and teaching (Paudel, 2021). ICT and online education are implemented to develop students' language and professional skills (Samoylenko et al., 2022). Students should be responsive and resourceful in the current digital development. Students are expected to know Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools and applications since ICT is argued to be impactful in the EFL learning process (Mudra et al., 2022; Pardede, 2020). ICT tools and applications perceived as a deconstruction of morality need to be perceived as the civilization proven by the proper utilization of ICT in the learning process. It is better to focus on how far the learning process can be carried out by the presence of ICT rather than focusing on the opposing sides of it.

ICT tools and applications offer new challenges in language learning, especially for higher education or tertiary students (Ngo & Eichelberger, 2019). ICT in tertiary education is greatly encouraged to establish a communicative, interactive, and resourceful environment. ICT facilitates writing practically and effectively (Nee et al., 2019). The integration of ICT as a strategy for improving writing skills has been proven effective by many other researchers for its accessibility, interactive, and communicative aspects (Bachiri & Oifaa, 2020; Bakeer, 2018; Yermekkyzy, 2022).

B. Writing Skill

There are many issues revealed as hardships or challenges in writing skill development, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, grammatical knowledge, the learners' passive attitude, students' motivation, feedback, etc. (Alsalami, 2022; Ansarin & Khabbazi, 2021; Zohra & Hamitouche, 2022). Writing demanded a stiff and strict convention of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and orthographical aspects. Vocabulary knowledge is argued to be a significant factor related to productive language skills, especially in writing (Kiliç 2019). The limited vocabulary will affect the students in delivering their thoughts through words of a target language. Another factor which is claimed to be one challenge in writing is orthographical aspects. English language learners are faced with a distinction in writing and spelling of the language since English words in written form are different in spelling (Miller, 2019).

Besides, more work is required in writing as it is a process of expressing ideas and thoughts through sentences and paragraphs. Writing involves a lot of brain work, including metacognitive and critical thinking (Murtadho, 2021; Said et al., 2022). In the current situation where anyone easily access the information at any time, students become vulnerable to misleading, false information and invalid news spreading. The credibility of the information they receive is now neglected. Critical thinking becomes an urgent skill to be integrated into their learning process (Suhirman et al., 2021). Moreover, writing is a skill which requires a high rate of thinking process where students should be able to generate ideas for their writing (Al-Jarf, 2021). Writing is not simply a process of wording or diction realized on paper. Instead, students must communicatively express their thoughts to reach an understanding from the opposite sides.

Writing is a major skill in language learning that is challenging for the learners, particularly related to word translation and, even beyond the language barrier, is sometimes the meaning delivery itself. The challenges mentioned before are argued to be affected by various factors, including the teaching methods and the learners themselves (Thi & Anh, 2019). Considering the various challenges faced by the students in developing writing skills, an effective strategy is urgently needed by the learners. They should further overcome the problems recognizing the significance of writing for various purposes in academic and professional needs. One proposed strategy is using the ICT application Wattpad in the learning context.

C. Wattpad

Wattpad is a widely known application where one can write, publish, and read stories without any certification or previous publication requirements. Wattpad gives opportunities to early writers and anyone who desires to be an author. Wattpad is argued to positively impact developing youths' reading and writing habits since Wattpad is a free and

accessible application using gadgets (Başoğul, 2021). The use of Wattpad also increases students' appreciation of literary works, builds a meaningful reading where moral values are encouraged from the stories, and primarily provides a medium to enhance writing skills in EFL (Arochman et al., 2023; Rahman & Iwan, 2019). However, there seem to be opposite views of Wattpad. For the freedom of writing, authors are liberated to construct any scenes in their stories. It is seen as a risk following crime scenes or violence written by authors for the youth's readers (Yılmaz & İpek, 2021). Another arguable reason is stated from a psychological perspective which mentioned that Wattpad impacts suicidal tendencies and risk behaviours of the readers (Kaya et al., 2019).

Related to the issue, some previous studies have been conducted following the use of Wattpad to assist the language learning process, for example, the study by Aytan (2017) mentioned that the use of Wattpad is, in fact, beneficial to increase writing skill of students. Bal (2018) reported positive student perceptions toward the issue in line with the prior study. The study revealed that the students love writing on Wattpad as they feel no pressure to write anything they wish to. Students can write any of the genres according to their favourites. Another study also investigated the given issue before concluding that Wattpad can be one strategy that can enhance writing performance in ESL classrooms (Rahman et al., 2018). It was also reported by Jusmaya (2020) that there is a significant increasing point in using Wattpad to improve students' writing skills. The positive perception of the issue has been mentioned by a study that reveals the view of teachers and students on the use of Wattpad in their writing performance (Faqih et al., 2022). The display of Wattpad can be seen in Figure 1.

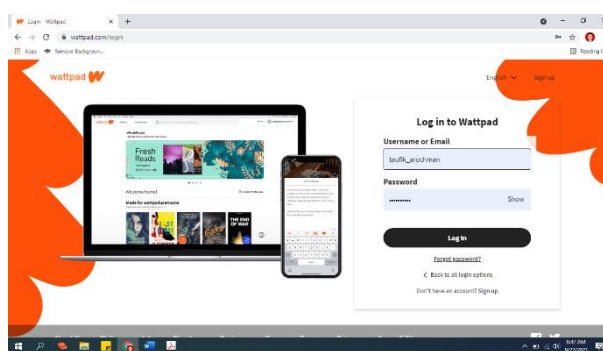


Figure 1. A Screenshot of Wattpad Display

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study aims to determine the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills, both practically and from students' perspectives. The researchers implemented a mixed method to know the use of the Wattpad in enhancing writing skills. A mixed-method study reported that data are in both words and numbers (Creswell, 2009; Leavy, 2023). A mixed method was implemented using qualitative and quantitative studies. The researchers needed to analyse the data statistically using a quasi-experimental, after that they asked a smaller sample of participants so that they got greater depth about their findings.

B. Population and Sample

In this investigation of the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills, the population was all English Education Department Students at a state university in Central Java, Indonesia. There were 746 students. 80 participants were chosen as the sample in this study using purposive random sampling. The participants were divided into two groups. One group was an experimental group, other was the control group. They contributed practically in writing and revealed their perceptions toward the issue. The participants were first-year students. A purposive random sampling method was applied to allow an equal probability for each individual to participate in the study (Creswell, 2009).

C. Instruments

Data in this study were collected using writing tests and a survey using an online questionnaire. The tests were implemented at the beginning and the end of the study. The test was done to measure students' writing skills in Introduction to Paragraph Writing. The writing tests have been reviewed by the quality assurance unit at the university. The writing question required participants to choose one of several topics provided and to write paragraphs in 100 minutes. However, between both of the tests, there was a treatment using Wattpad to help them with writing. Then, a survey was distributed online with voluntary samples. The questionnaire in this study was a modified instrument rather than an intact instrument where the researchers designed the survey, particularly for the study (Creswell, 2009).

TABLE 1
EXCERPT FROM SURVEY SCHEME

No	General questions	Specific statements/questions
1	Please indicate your perceived knowledge and understanding of Information Communication Technology tools and applications based on the following item statements by clicking on one of the scale options (Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I know ICT tools such as computers, laptops, and LCD projectors. ▪ I know ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites and Social Media. ▪ I know and understand various ICT tools and applications accessible in learning English. ▪ I know how to use social media applications (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Messenger, What's app) for language learning purposes. ▪ I know some online learning/ICT applications that I can use to learn writing
2	Do you know what kinds of online learning/ICT applications you can use to learn writing?	▪ (if they say yes) What are they?
3	Have you ever tried to use Wattpad so far?	▪ (if they say yes) What for?
4	Have you ever used Wattpad for learning?	
5	Do you know the kinds of features which you can use on Wattpad?	
6	Do you think that Wattpad can be used for learning writing?	▪ (if they say yes) Please give me your reason!
7	What are the benefits of using Wattpad for learning writing?	▪ Explain briefly!

The survey was developed based on the given context to aim for detailed answers from the participants where the data obtained from the study were examined by descriptive analysis method.

D. Procedure

This study was conducted for eight weeks, with one hour and 40 minutes each week. The first week was used to measure students' data before the experiment was implemented. After both of the groups were done with the pre-test, the control group (n=40) were given writing instruction using an exercise book (paper) in a class during weeks 2–7. Meanwhile, the experimental group (n=40) were given writing instruction using Wattpad for week 2-7 as well. The eighth week was the post-experiment test, where students once again received a post-test of writing. The posttest aims to know the effect of treatments on the dependent variable. The general overview of this study is summarized in Table 2.

TABLE 2
PROCEDURE OF STUDY

	Control Group	Experimental Group
Week 1	Pre-test	Pre-test
Week 2-7	Regular Teaching Activities (Paper-based writing practices)	Intervention (Wattpad writing practices)
Week 8	Posttest	Posttest, Questionnaire

E. Analyzing of Data

The data in the form of numbers was then analyzed using an independent sample T-test in the SPSS 22 program. Meanwhile, the data in the form of words were further analyzed using content analysis to draw a deep and exact interpretation of the answers given by the participants (Bengtsson, 2016). The results were tabulated in findings in some points represented by the sub-headings to ease readers' comprehension regarding the issue of students' perception of using Wattpad to enhance writing skills and the effect of using Wattpad on their writing skills.

IV. RESULTS

There were three subsections of results regarding the use of Wattpad as media to improve the writing skills of EFL learners. The first sub-headings focused on the awareness of students on the present, contribution, and integration of ICT tools, applications, and utilization in general view. The second heading focused on the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills. The last one directed the focus of the study to students' familiarity with Wattpad, students' perception of the use of Wattpad in enhancing writing skills, and some benefits of Wattpad in the English language learning context.

A. Students' Awareness of ICT Tools, Applications, and Utilization

In this 21st century, with current modernization and digitalization, technology plays a great role in the educational field of English language learning. ICT facilitated the learning process of EFL learners. It was expected that students were habituated to the use of ICT. Perceived knowledge of the students' regarding ICT was revealed through the survey. It could be implied that students performed a good to excellent knowledge of ICT in various tools to utilize those tools in their learning process. Students were already familiar with the use of ICT tools such as laptops, computers, or LCD projectors since classrooms nowadays were mostly equipped with such tools, which created and demanded the

habituation of students to new classroom facilitations. Presentation and discussions were demonstrated using the screen projectors, allowing the whole class to carefully look through the activity together. With the help of ICT tools in the classroom, students received an equal chance of learning opportunities. Thus, it has been said that technologies enhanced the classroom and learning process.

Aside from visualization tools and documentation, ICT also be claimed to be a resourceful media to obtain and exchange information for various purposes, from academic to professional. ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites, social networking sites, and social media were emerging fast in contributing to social life. ICT applications mentioned before facilitated a database where tons of information and resources from the internet were loaded. Once ICT tools were connected to the internet, a magical thing occurred, abandoning the physical presence of students, classroom limitations, and the conventional learning process. In a snap of a second, learners could obtain unlimited knowledge and resources. Search engines such as Google, Bing, Browser, etc., were now becoming a primary option where students asked numerous questions with various themes. It might be arguable that the use of printed books in the classroom context compared to digital books or the issue of mentality degradation for constant results performed by students. However, the internet and search engines were free to access so that students could read, find, and gain more understanding effectively and efficiently. Students save time finding out particular information by typing keywords in search engines and saving money through the presence of digital books, websites, and journals.

Besides, ICT applications of social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Messenger, and YouTube hugely contributed to learners' language learning strategies. Social media was currently an alteration of authentic life into a screen. Social media summarized many events, trends, and situations of real-world conditions into a digital magazine that people can read from their chairs in a short time. It was a walk-through way to obtain information from the surroundings to an identifiable region of nowhere. However, social media was where all language speakers received an equal opportunity to interact and exchange information. In the English language learning context, social media bridged the communication of the EFL learners to native speakers of English as it was alright to reach out for learning purposes. English was a widely spoken international language and was now growing as fast as ESL and EFL in many other countries. Reaching out to native English speakers was normal communication in the digital world. Therefore, students wished to be able to comprehend and utilize social media related to language learning purposes.

In the given context of English language learning, the result of the study revealed a good understanding of how to utilize these social media to enhance their learning process. Students could try to communicate with people worldwide through social media using English. It was a self-practice method of implementing their language competence in real communication. Students could use written interaction features such as Direct Messages or WhatsApp text. In this type of communication, students should focus on grammatical features and aspects of politeness when interacting with foreign people. Even though spoken grammar was also performed in the type of text, the comprehension of grammar is still greatly proposed in interaction. However, these kinds of social media were advanced in their features, allowing audio, visual, and audio-visual interaction. For example, using Voice Note and Video Call features embedded in Instagram and WhatsApp applications. Audio and visual interaction was greatly promoted in English language learning. Students had to perform proper spelling and language of gestures.

The analysis also evaluated the student's knowledge of ICT applications in learning writing. In the survey, the students were asked to mention ICT applications relevant to their current authentic situation. Various web-based ICT applications were mentioned by the participants, who were perceived as useful in learning writing. Some of the ICT applications stated by the participants were Wappad, JotterPad, GoodNovel, Popplet, Inkitt Writing, etc. The emergence of ICT applications was not unpredictable, considering the rapid advancement of digitalization and modern life. Education should be able to adapt and adapt to the fast-changing world in the process of teaching and learning to meet the needs of qualified learners in many professional areas. From this particular item, it could be implied that this study's participants better understand writing media and their positive manner in utilizing ICT applications in a learning context.

B. The Effect of Using Wappad on EFL Students' Writing Skill

In this section, there will be shown the result's comparison of both groups. The comparison of results included numbers, lowest score, highest score, range, mean, standard deviation, and mean error. The statistics of the two groups are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE PRE-TEST'S AVERAGE SCORES FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Group	Numbers	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Range	Mean	SD	Mean Error
Experimental Group (EG)	40	56	84	28	67.050	6.304	0.996
Control Group (CG)	40	55	83	28	67.475	5.866	0.927

Table 3 presents the comparison of the pre-test's mean scores for both groups. Although there was a difference in mean scores between the groups (EG: 67.050; CG: 67.475), it was not significant. The difference was only 0.425 and it could be said that both of the groups are similar. Then, the researchers needed to make sure that the distribution of the

data was normal. The researchers tested the data of the pre-test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov in SPSS. The result of the test is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
RESULT OF NORMALITY TESTS OF PRE-TEST DATA

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Interpretation
	Statistics	df	Sig.	
Experimental Group (EG)	0.116	40	0.189	Normal
Control Group (CG)	0.074	40	0.200	Normal

The data of pre-tests were considered as a normal distribution if the sig. was higher than 0.05. In Table 4, the value of sig. of EG (0.189) was higher than 0.05. Meanwhile, the value of sig. of CG (0.200) was also higher than 0.05. Thus, both of the groups in the pre-test were in a normal distribution. Further, the researchers presented the result's comparison of the post-test scores in EG and CG. The descriptive statistics of the post-test average scores for both of the groups are in Table 5.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POSTTEST'S AVERAGE SCORES FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Groups	Numbers	Lowest Score	Highest Score	Range	Mean	SD	Mean Error
Experimental Group (EG)	40	62	87	25	75.050	6.017	0.951
Control Group (CG)	40	60	84	24	71.725	6.017	0.951

Table 5 presents the comparison of mean scores in the post-test for both of the groups. According to data in Table 5, the mean score of EG was 75.050 while the mean score of CG was 71.725. The difference mean between the groups was approximately 3.325. However, the standard deviation of both of the groups indicated that there was no difference. Further, researchers also did a normality test in post-test data. The result of the test can be seen in Table 6 as follows.

TABLE 6
RESULT OF NORMALITY TESTS OF POST-TEST DATA

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Interpretation
	Statistics	df	Sig.	
Experimental Group	0.094	40	0.200	Normal
Control Group	0.104	40	0.200	Normal

Table 6 shows the result of the normality test of the post-test data using Kolmogorov-Smirnov. According to data in Table 6, sig. in EG was 0.200 while sig. in CG was also 0.200. It meant that both of the data were considered as a normal distribution. Since both of the data were normal, the next step was to do a homogeneity test using Levene statistics. This test was done to know whether both of the groups were homogenous or not. The result of the Levene test is in Table 7.

TABLE 7
THE RESULT OF HOMOGENEITY TESTS FOR THE TWO GROUPS

Group	Levene Statistics	df	df2	Sig.	α	Interpretation
Pre-test	0.321	1	78	0.573	0.05	Homogenous
Post-test	0.057	1	78	0.812	0.05	Homogenous

The results of the homogeneity test were considered homogenous if sig. was higher than 0.05. From the data in Table 7, sig. in the pre-test (0.573) was higher than 0.05 while the value of sig. in the post-test (0.812) was higher than 0.05. Thus, both of the data in the pre-test and post-test were homogenous. Because all of the data were normal and homogenous, the next step was to do a parametric test. The test was done using an independent t-test in Table 8.

TABLE 8
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR THE TWO GROUPS (POST-TEST)

	t-test for equality of means						
	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference	Standard error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
						Lower	Upper
Post-test	2.471	78	0.016	3.325	1.345	0.646	6.004

The result of the t-test was considered as a significant difference if the value of sig. was lower than the significant level of 0.05. Table 8 presents the result of the independent t-test of post-test data. According to the data in the table, the value of sig (0.016) was less than 0.05. Therefore, the conclusion was there was a significant difference between EFL students who taught using the Wattpad application and those who taught using paper in writing.

C. Students' Perception of Using Wattpad in Enhancing Writing Skill

Related to the positive perception of the presence of ICT as learning media, this section explained further the Wattpad utilization by the participants. From the survey, the participants reported their aim in using Wattpad. Several participants revealed their need to use Wattpad for their assignments. Indeed, the teachers assumed the effectiveness of using Wattpad integrated into a teaching strategy. In addition, the survey results also showed that most participants habituated to Wattpad as mobile reading media. Wattpad allowed readers to find any category of stories and set no limitation on regional or international borders. Stories written on Wattpad by the authors varied in more than ten genres and were provided in many languages following the account's user. Still, primarily English was used as the alternative language to reach a wider range of readers. In line with the reading opportunity, students participating in the study also argued for using Wattpad as writing media. Some participants revealed that they have attempted to write and publish stories in this application considering the ease of the features and liberation in writing. Overall, students expressed their familiarity with using Wattpad for reading and writing various stories as Wattpad provides media for authors and readers to find a free space for their hobby. The following figures were a comparison of writing using paper and Wattpad.

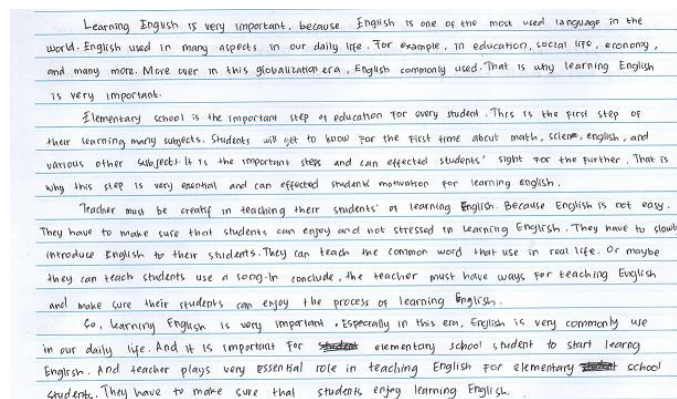


Figure 2. An Example of a Student's Paper-Based Writing

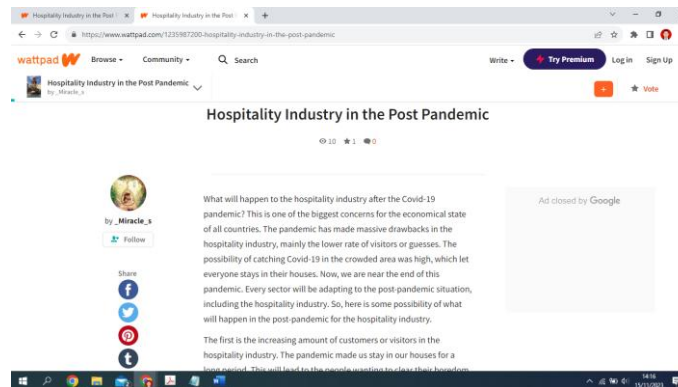


Figure 3. An Example of a Student's Wattpad-Based Writing

The next item revealed from the study focuses on using Wattpad as a learning media. Most participants in the study agreed on the notion of Wattpad as a learning media for some reason. Wattpad was accessible for students since there were no special requirements to be a user of the application. The accessibility of Wattpad included country or regional borders. In Indonesia, Wattpad was a legal application with no special features designed for a certain region, unlike some other ICT social media of Instagram. Equal opportunity, media, and features were offered to every user. Another accessibility of Wattpad was that the application took a small storage download. It meant students could install the application on their smartphones. It was beneficial since a smartphone was a portable gadget that allowed students to use the application anytime and anywhere.

Regarding the features of Wattpad, some participants performed an excellent understanding of the features of Wattpad, such as the comment section, offline reading, and writing section. By clicking on the feature of writing, Wattpad provided a blank space for the authors to write a draft. It was also mentioned that the authors could insert various pictures and music links online to support the story's nuance building. Wattpad also allowed readers and authors to set up their mobile reading page in dark and light mode with adjustable fonts. It could be said that Wattpad offered sufficient features to address the comfortability of the users in using the application. Besides, Wattpad also embedded a feature of a comment section which was very helpful for students in learning writing. The comment section was free for the readers to express their honest reviews and opinions. Moreover, a critical feature for students with limited mobile data and limited access to Wi-Fi was addressed by Wattpad. Users could download their favourite stories while

connected to the internet. These downloaded stories would be loaded into the library section in the user's account. However, there were a maximum number of offline stories in a library section.

The next item in the survey asked the students' perception of using Wattpad as a medium for learning and improving writing skills. Participants were also asked for their reasons related to their answers. Almost all participants agreed on using Wattpad to enhance their writing skills. The survey mentioned that Wattpad was perceived as a useful medium for writing and checking the understanding of English. Wattpad facilitated authors from many different countries. Thus, it became an opportunity for EFL learners to learn English and write from native speakers. The prior reason for enhancing writing skills was closely related to the learners' grammar practice, vocabulary knowledge, and writing competence. A complex process of word choice in sentence construction to deliver meaning occurred when attempting to write any piece of writing. A set of grammatical rules as a convention should be strictly applied. Moreover, by using Wattpad as a learning media, students also developed their knowledge of different genre stories and writing styles. During a period, learning writing through Wattpad affected their writing competence supported by the development of knowledge of various topics.

There were many benefits mentioned in the use of Wattpad in learning writing. According to the participants, Wattpad was a beneficial media for improving writing skills since Wattpad provided a comment section where students could receive feedback on their writing. Writing involves putting words, constructing sentences, and integrating ideas among paragraphs to form a coherent text. However, students as learners were certain of errors and mistakes. Thus, feedback was important as a way of upgrading writing skills. Concerning writing skill development, Wattpad following students' statements on the survey also affected grammatical knowledge, vocabulary improvement, and writing style. It was probably related to Wattpad's wide range of authors, which allowed EFL learners to find native speakers of English and look thoroughly at their writing since language learning had culture as one of its variables. The participants also stated that a trivial but critical aspect of writing was comprehending punctuation as one of the benefits of habituating writing activity through Wattpad.

One of the benefits of Wattpad has been touched on in the previous paragraph regarding the accessibility of the application. For this particular reason, the accessibility of Wattpad allowed the students to begin and continue their writing in other places rather than being stuck in the room with their computers. Students' depiction of writing as a boring room activity could be solved with the liberation to write in their favourite, interesting, and refreshing spaces. Such conditions could help in the idea-generating and creative thinking processes in writing. In line with the prior reason, Wattpad provided various stories from many authors and genres. By reading these stories, students' knowledge and experience in reading contributed to their writing skill development. In addition, Wattpad as writing media was argued as a fun way of learning rather than pressuring one, where authors were liberated to express their thoughts, ideas, or experiences supported by features of images and music. The comment section in Wattpad also gave the authors reviews, critiques, or suggestions on their writing. The comment section was also assumed to give motivation and inspiration to authors. Wattpad allowed a creative thinking process in its written meaningful stories to express the authors' emotions.

Another benefit of writing on Wattpad besides academic purposes was commercial purposes. Authors could charge the readers to read their stories by paying a certain amount to get a full written story. In a better situation, high-ranked stories or top stories written on Wattpad were attracting the publication company's interest. This publishing house allowed authors to publish their work in books. Realizing the benefits of Wattpad in earning, students were encouraged to write either as a hobby or pursue their desire to become a book author.

V. DISCUSSION

The objectives of this study were to examine students' awareness of ICT tools, applications, and utilization and how students perceive Wattpad in enhancing writing skills. Moreover, researchers also examined the effect of using Wattpad on EFL students' writing skills. The discussion of this study was as follows.

First, the result of the study showed that students performed a good to excellent knowledge of ICT in a range of tools to the utilization of those tools in their learning process. They were already familiar with using ICT tools such as laptops, computers, or LCD projectors. According to the students, with the help of ICT tools in the classroom, students received an equal chance of learning opportunities. In addition, ICT applications such as the Internet, Search Engines, Websites, social networking sites, and social media were emerging fast in contributing to social life. This was in line with a study that highlights the usefulness of ICT tools and ICT applications for educational purposes, enhancing learners' knowledge and improving learning stimuli and experience (Tochukwu & Hocann, 2017; Wong & Yunus, 2023). Thus, applying ICT in teacher professional development could partially solve the teacher professional development problems. Therefore, it could be said that technologies enhanced the classroom and learning process.

The second result of this study was that there was a significant difference between students who taught using Wattpad media, especially in their writing skills. The result indicated that the students who taught using Wattpad had better writing skills compared with those taught using paper-based writing. This result has been confirmed by some works that state the use of the Wattpad application could enhance students' writing skills (Furotun et al., 2021; Suhaeni, 2022). In addition, by using the Wattpad application, students were more creative in writing their short stories (Ganapathy et al., 2022; Indriani et al., 2022). Moreover, by implementing this application, the students' motivation was

improved. This is in line with the study done by Rukun (2019). Therefore, the use of the Wattpad application was recommended to be implemented by the students.

Third, in line with the student's awareness of ICT tools, applications, and utilization, participants argued for using Wattpad as writing media. They have attempted to write and publish stories in this application considering the ease of the features and liberation in writing. Overall, students expressed their familiarity with using Wattpad for reading and writing various stories. Wattpad provided media for authors and readers to find a free space for their hobby. This is in line with the study highlighting Wattpad's significant role in the creative writing process (Ayub et al., 2020). Most participants in the study agreed on the notion of Wattpad as a learning media for some reason. Wattpad was accessible for students since there were no special requirements to be a user of the application. The application took a small size of storage download. Wattpad had features of a writing section and a comment section. The authors could also insert various pictures and links of music in online mode to support the nuance building of the story. The use of Wattpad unconsciously improved students' writing, vocabulary mastery, speaking, and listening skills (Permatasari et al., 2020). This application facilitated authors from many different countries. Thus, it became an opportunity for EFL learners to learn English and write from native speakers. Therefore, realizing how beneficial Wattpad was in earning, students were encouraged to write either as a hobby or pursue their desire to become a book author.

VI. CONCLUSION

The advancement of technology is welcomed in education, especially in the EFL context, as tools to enhance, examine, and ease the learning process. The presence of ICT in the educational field is undeniable in the current situation. Learners should be able to make use of ICT effectively. This study revealed a high rate of student's awareness of the role of ICT in the language learning process. ICT allows a more effective, efficient, and meaningful learning process. ICT tools and applications played a great role in the language learning process. Internet, social media, and ICT application were affecting their learning strategy by providing a media for learning writing and serving more opportunities to access learning resources. ICT provided a wider and unlimited amount of knowledge which was important to students. ICT shifted the conventional learning style to a modern one, offering alternatives and solutions to the challenges in the language to increase the writing skills of students.

The use of Wattpad had a significant difference in students' writing skills. By implementing Wattpad, the students' motivation improved. In addition, this application could also be used to improve students' creativity. Moreover, it can also be implied from the discussion that students were already familiar with Wattpad as a writing medium for authors. One of the reasons was the accessibility of the application; most features were held free. Wattpad as an ICT application in this study was investigated regarding its use in developing the writing skills of EFL learners. Students expressed their perception of the issue positively and agreed on the hypothesis that Wattpad could assist in developing writing skills. Wattpad allowed students to write anything they wished to and express anything they wanted to despite the stories' ranks, likes, or downloads. Wattpad was argued to be useful in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills. It also argued that Wattpad could improve the students' grammatical competence and vocabulary knowledge. In addition, Wattpad gave freedom of any genre and stories written by the students, leading critical and creative thinking in generating ideas for the writing. However, there were always weaknesses and strengths performed by the application. Therefore, this study suggested a further investigation into the use of Wattpad in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted from participants of 80 students who participated in writing class. On the other hand, in this study, there was only one state university in Indonesia. By assessing the effect of using the Wattpad application on EFL students' writing skills, this study revealed the use of Wattpad has a significant difference in students' writing skills. However, there are always weaknesses and strengths performed by the application. Therefore, this study suggested a further investigation into the use of Wattpad in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills in other areas or countries.

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Correlation of ESP Learners' Cognitive, Metacognitive Strategies and Academic Achievement

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Abstract—There have been many studies dealing with the interconnections between the utilization of language learning strategies and the overall academic achievement of EFL learners. Our research aims to investigate whether there is some correlation between the implementation of cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and academic achievement in an ESP context. The study sample incorporated 170 undergraduates studying in business administration programs at the university where we are teaching. We used the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning Strategies (SILL) put together by R. Oxford to examine the implementation of CSs and MCSs by the learners. We generated the results with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. We compared the data received with the students' GPAs by using the Pearson correlation coefficient. The findings revealed that students make use of both CSs and MCSs fairly highly. MCSs are used more than CSs. There is a remarkably useful correlation between GPA and most of the CSs and MCSs examined. The findings and recommendations of this research will contribute to the ongoing literature and they will help in updating ESP syllabi and teaching techniques of vocational and practical programs that require ESP.

Index Terms—cognitive strategies, meta-cognitive strategies, correlation, achievement, ESP

I. INTRODUCTION

It has long been suggested that the application of strategies of language learning (LLSs) is beneficial for language learners in general for fostering academic achievements and promoting language skills. Oxford (1990) described LLSs as actions performed by language learners to make their learning convenient, fast-paced, effective, and adaptable. Recent studies in the area such as that of Tai and Zhao (2022) in Hong Kong; Zou and Supinda (2022) in China; and Taheri et al. (2019) in Iran have consistently found the relevance of LLSs among other variables to better academic achievement and more engaging learning experiences. However, the effect of specific LLSs on specific types of learners is rarely investigated.

Further, low achievement levels among ESP students in Saudi Arabia are frequently referred to as a problem that requires an urgent response, especially with the new policies that aim at fostering education to prepare global citizens. These policies require more ESP programs and a robust promotion of ESP syllabi. Already many professional programs are being offered by different institutions throughout the Kingdom. English language is a basic requirement to do these courses. Accordingly, this proposed research primarily aims at establishing whether academic achievement has any correlation or not with the implementation of Cognitive Strategies (CSs), and Metacognitive Strategies (MCSs).

The perceived lack of research in the area of finding out the correlation between different language strategies to ESP learners' achievement adds up to the value of this current research. This specific criterion has been left untouched in KSA also. As the field of ESP is expanded in Saudi Arabia following the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 and the launch of many vocational and practical programs that require ESP, the study's findings are believed to be of special significance in updating ESP syllabi and teaching techniques. We adapted the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning Strategies (SILL) (Oxford, 1999) to examine how EFL learners use CSs and MCSs by addressing the research questions that follow:

1. To what extent do ESP learners use CSs and MCSs?
2. Is there a statistically significant correlation between ESP learners' academic achievements and their level of use of CSs and MCSs?

For the second research question, a null hypothesis was formulated as:

H₀: There is no statistically significant difference between ESP learners' academic achievement and their level of use of CSs and MCSs.

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer the research questions and test the null hypothesis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language learning and teaching have come a long way forward from the days when languages were learned and taught to enrich the intellect and wisdom. Since then languages have been seen through different perspectives and these perceptions have had a considerable influence on the ways languages have been taught and learned. Studies in this field have established that no two language learners are the same; therefore, there is no teaching method available which can meet the requirements and behaviors specific to individual students in a group. Similarly, Abdul-Ghafour and Alrefaee (2019), contend that there is no absolute teaching method which can guarantee complete success in mastering a language. This heterogeneity of the students and the unavailability of a perfect teaching method have provided a strong impetus to the implementation of language learning strategies by language learners and for the researchers to find out the intricacies involved. Moreover, the focus on student-centered teaching also calls for more research into this area.

A. *Language Learning Strategies (LLSs)*

All learners have some personal predilections, thought processes and behaviors specific to them. They undertake the journey to learn a language in their own unique ways. They take actions, perform activities, do tasks, undergo some mental gymnastics, and follow some processes in order to be successful in learning the language. These attempts by the learners can be described as language learning strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), while defining language learning strategies, say that these are the things we think and utilize in order to understand, memorize and recollect the new language. Oxford (1990) defines these strategies as the efforts put in by the students while learning a language in order to achieve better results. The utilization of these strategies helps in learning, remembering, recreating and expressing in the new language. Cognitive strategies fall under the category of direct strategies and metacognitive strategies come under the indirect category as sub-categorized by Oxford (1990).

B. *Cognitive Strategies*

Students use cognitive strategies to choose, retain, memorize and recollect new information. Cognitive strategies range from repetition, reading aloud, highlighting, taking notes, summarizing, paraphrasing, asking and answering questions, to elaborating and organizing new information. Oxford (1990) puts cognitive strategies under the direct category as these are directly related to the subject or course content the student is studying. In other words, they are subject or content-specific.

C. *Metacognitive Strategies*

Language learners utilize metacognitive strategies in order to supervise and control the process of learning a foreign or second language. MCSs are put into the indirect category by R. Oxford. It can be said that they are not subject/course specific but they are all-encompassing strategies. Planning strategies (skimming a text), evaluation strategies (self-testing), and monitoring strategies (self-questioning) are parts of metacognitive strategies that can be applied to overall learning.

D. *Academic Achievement*

Academic achievement is the level of success or accomplishment someone has gained in his academic course or program. It can be used as a measurement of the person's knowledge or skill in the subject or area. Steinmayr et al. (2015), while defining academic achievement say that it constitutes performance results which reflect the boundaries of a student's accomplishment of particular targets that were the center of the tasks in an academic course. Narad and Abdullah (2016) defined academic achievement as the learning gained which can be examined by a teacher by awarding marks or by the realization of academic aims decided by learners and teachers that are achieved in a definite duration. They also stated that these objectives are assessed through examinations. Cumulative GPA is considered an authentic measure of students' achievement (Amzil, 2022). It is also the concrete manifestation of the student's achievement. Therefore, we have taken up the students' GPA to measure their academic achievement and correlated it with their choice of strategy use.

E. *ESP (English for Specific Purposes)*

ESP has been defined differently by various researchers, but overall, it can be understood as the teaching of English to students having definite aims and objectives: these objectives may be related to the profession they are working in, or the specific study program they are studying in. The emphasis on 'Specificity' has led to the formation of different branches of ESP, each catering to the needs of learners from different fields. English for Business Purposes has become a broad field in ESP. The students we have taken up to gather the data required for this study are studying in a college of business administration. Besides general English, these students also study authentic material in the form of textbooks which are modified for teaching and learning purposes. The textbooks contain different types of business correspondences and paragraphs taken from business reports and magazines. These students can be described as students of ESP rather than EFL. This crucial aspect of the teaching and learning of English in Saudi Arabia has been left untouched. All studies from Saudi Arabia in this area have considered English as a Foreign Language. Our research seeks to study the implementation of CSs and MCSs by ESP students and the extent of correlation with their academic achievement because no other researcher has done the same. Many researchers (Macaro, 2001; Abdul-Ghafour &

Alrefaee, 2019; Akpur, 2021) inside and outside the Kingdom have found useful and remarkable associations in the implementation of different kinds of strategies and overall academic performance. Mostly they have found that more use of LLSs leads to better academic achievement. On the contrary, some studies found a negative (Vettori et al., 2020) or no association (Tariq et al., 2016) between the use of learning strategies and academic achievement.

F. Previous Studies

All types of learning involve the conscious or unconscious use of strategies. Researchers have categorized them and have delved deeper into the learners’ psyche by means of different types of research instruments. They have uncovered different facets of this proposed area by working on different variables. We can see in many researches how this concept influences the process of language teaching and learning. Overall academic achievement can be predicted by knowing the variety and types of strategies used by learners as many researchers have contended in their works. There are probably some fundamental links between the implementation of learning strategies and the GPA of the learners (Almoslamani, 2021; Radwan, 2022). It's interesting to note that highly successful learners are found to be utilizing language learning strategies rather more often when compared to less successful learners (Alrashidi, 2022). Interestingly, there are instances of studies suggesting that the implementation of strategies may not directly affect language learning output, but it is positively linked to their socio-cultural competence (Abumelha, 2023).

These and other such studies (Dahmash, 2023) have focused on the influence different types of language learning strategies can have on the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Most studies found a useful association between strategy implementation and academic achievement and called for further research into the area by including other variables and factors. This study aligns with the correlation between cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies use and academic achievement in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context. Al Zahrani and Chaudhary (2022) contend that EFL students find it difficult to learn the vocabulary in an ESP course because it is more varied. Such concerns add value to this study. Keeping in view the renewed demand for developing human capital in Saudi Arabia, for the preparation of trained graduates in specific fields so as to compete with their international counterparts, there is a growing need to pinpoint and ascertain specific capabilities and demands. This research adds to the ongoing exploration in this area and fills the gap by including ESP.

III. METHODS

A. Research Design

We selected the descriptive technique to reach the results as we aimed to describe the state of affairs of using CSs and MCSs by the participants and find a baseline understanding of the phenomenon that aims at formulating hypotheses for further research.

B. Participants

The study specifically targeted college students, both male and female, who were enrolled in business administration programs at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. We conducted this research across three different campuses of the university. These students had prior exposure to general English language courses during their education in public schools. Additionally, they also study authentic material in the form of textbooks which are modified for teaching and learning purposes. The textbooks contain different types of business correspondences and paragraphs taken from business reports and magazines. These students can be described as students of ESP rather than EFL.

It is worth mentioning that two of the colleges involved in the study conduct their instruction in English. However, there is no specific data available regarding the exact English proficiency levels of the participants. Based on the general proficiency levels observed among students at their respective universities, it is typically expected that their proficiency levels range from A2 to B2 as per the CEFR levels. Overall, 170 students participated in the study who are distributed as shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Gender	Count	Per cent
Female	88	71.8%
Male	82	48.2%
Total	170	100 %

We told everybody, who took part in filling the questionnaire, the purposes of our research in advance. Their consent to take part in the study was obtained, and they were made aware that their decision to take part in the study was completely at their own discretion. It was explicitly communicated to them that the study was not connected to the assessment of any course within their programs.

C. Data Collection

For collecting data we administered the Likert-Scale questionnaire derived from Oxford's (1990) SILL. SILL has been used widely to investigate how learners employed LLSs. The items related to CSs and MCSs were extracted and translated into Arabic. The translated version was refereed by three university professors who specialized in Arabic

language, applied linguistics and translation. The referees were asked to recheck the clarity, naturalness and compatibility of the Arabic translation with the original one. Minor modifications were applied to the version. Some items were merged to fit the participants' learning settings. Ultimately, 11 cognitive strategies and 9 metacognitive strategies were selected to form the questionnaire. The researchers instructed the respondents to choose their response for every question by selecting one of five options which are (1) Never or almost never true of me, (2) Usually not true of me, (3) Somewhat true of me, (4) Usually true of me, or (5) Always or almost always true of me. Then an electronic form was launched using the Google Forms tool. The respondents were requested to answer the questions during regular class times after being instructed on how to respond to them.

D. Data Analysis

To generate the study findings, both descriptive and inferential statistics methods were used as follows.

1. Descriptive statistics: The means and standard deviations of students' chosen answers to the questions were computed in order to generate results to answer RQ1 of the research showing levels of using CSs and MCSs. Further, the distribution of the data and the usage among males and females is displayed.

2. Inferential statistics:

We used the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) in order to evaluate what type of linear relationships exists or how the implementation of LLSs is related to the academic achievements of the research sample. This was achieved by calculating the correlation coefficient (r and p) to indicate the type of correlation and the p -value of the correlation coefficient to determine its significance level considering that the adopted alpha value is (< 0.05). The researchers employed SPSS software to perform the data analysis.

Regarding the rubrics for evaluating the use of strategies by the research sample and according to the choices provided in the Likert-scale survey, the following rubric for evaluating the means of using the learning strategies was adopted:

TABLE 2
EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR MEANS OF USING THE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Value	Interpretation
1 – 1.80	Never or almost never true of me
1.81 – 2.60	Usually not true of me
2.61 – 3.40	Somewhat true of me
3.41 – 4.20	Usually true of me
4.21 – 5.00	Always or almost always true of me

IV. RESULTS

This research explores the employment of CSs and MCSs among ESP students. It also aims to find a correlation between these strategies and academic achievements assuming that there is no correlation between the two variables. Two research questions were posed to investigate the research data which were:

RQ₁. What is the level of using CSs and MCSs among ESP learners at PSAU?

RQ₂. Is there a significant correlation between using cognitive and metacognitive strategies and academic achievement?

We give below in Table 3 the means and standard deviations of using the CSs.

TABLE 3
MEANS AND SDS OF USING COGNITIVE STRATEGIES BY THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

No.	Strategy	Mean	SD
COG1	I say or write new English words several times.	3.45	1.2
COG2	I try to talk like native English speakers.	3.37	1.3
COG3	I practice the sounds of English.	3.37	1.3
Cog4	I start conversations in English.	3.41	1.2
Cog5	I watch English-language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.	3.58	1.4
Cog6	I read for pleasure in English.	3.15	1.3
Cog7	I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.	3.46	1.4
Cog8	I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.	4.10	1.0
Cog9	I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.	3.70	1.3
Cog10	I try not to translate word-for-word.	3.35	1.3
Cog11	I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.	3.38	1.3

The findings indicated that the research sample engages with cognitive strategies fairly highly. According to the analysis rubrics presented in *Table 2*, the average responses ranged from 3.15 to 4.10, corresponding to the categories of "Somewhat true of me" to "Usually true of me." Among the cognitive strategies assessed, COG8, which involves comparing vocabulary in Arabic and English, was the most commonly used by the respondents. On the other hand, reading for pleasure was reported as the least frequently employed strategy.

It is noted that the data points are more spread out or varied from the mean. This fact is implied by the relatively high standard deviation values (all above 1.0) which suggests a higher degree of dispersion or variability in the responses of the participants. This fact can be justified by the differences between the research sample members as the sample

includes students from various colleges and proficiency levels. Table 4 below presents the levels at which metacognitive strategies are implemented by the research sample.

TABLE 4
MEANS AND SDS OF USING METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES BY THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

No.	Strategy	Mean	SD
Met1	I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.	3.58	1.1
Met2	I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.	3.65	.96
Met3	I pay attention when someone is speaking English.	4.10	.73
Met4	I try to find out how to be a better learner of English.	4.13	.77
Met5	I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.	3.25	1.1
Met6	I look for people I can talk to in English.	3.65	.82
Met7	I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.	3.52	1.2
Met8	I have clear goals for improving my English skills.	3.75	.99
Met9	I think about my progress in learning English.	4.00	.72

The use of MCSs is revealed to be higher than the use of CSs by the research sample. Almost all the averages are above 3.41, which corresponds to the third option (usually true of me). This high use is especially observed in using Met3, Met4, and Met9 strategies which are related to paying attention to speaking, finding ways to improve learning, and thinking about the achieved improvement, respectively.

Further, the SD values are tighter which revealed more agreement between the respondents on the answers they provided. Also, the lowest SD values correspond to the strategies with higher means adding more agreement to the response.

Correlation between strategy use and academic achievement

In the last stage of analysis, the correlation between academic achievement and strategy use was computed using Pearson correlation. Table 5 shows the results of this analysis.

TABLE 5
CORRELATION BETWEEN COGNITIVE STRATEGIES USE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

	GPA	COG1	COG2	COG3	COG4	COG5	COG6	COG7	COG8	COG9	COG10	COG11
Pearson Correlation	1	.282**	.219**	.201**	.166*	.104	.005	.227**	-.024	.230**	.198**	.171*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.004	.009	.030	.176	.952	.003	.759	.003	.010	.026
N	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis which was performed to check the association of GPA with the cognitive strategies use, (COG1 to COG11) are displayed in Table 5. The significance level (alpha) utilized in this study was established at 0.05 to ascertain statistical significance.

The findings reveal several statistically significant correlations between GPA and specific cognitive factors. GPA and COG1 ($r = 0.282, p < 0.01$), can be seen as correlating significantly, suggesting an association between elevated use of COG1 with higher GPAs. Similarly, statistically significant positive correlations were observed between GPA and COG2 ($r = 0.219, p < 0.01$), COG3 ($r = 0.201, p < 0.01$), COG4 ($r = .166, p < 0.05$), COG7 ($r = .227, p < 0.05$), COG9 ($r = 0.230, p < 0.01$), COG10 ($r = 0.198, p < 0.01$), and COG11 ($r = 0.171, p < 0.05$).

However, it is worth noting that no statistically significant correlations were found between GPA and COG5 ($r = 0.104, p > 0.05$), COG6 ($r = .005, p > 0.05$) or COG8 ($r = -0.024, p > 0.05$). These non-significant associations suggest that variations in COG5, COG6 and COG8 may not strongly contribute to variations in GPA in this particular sample.

It is observed, however, that the level of use of CSs by the students does not correlate with their academic achievement. For example, while COG8 received the highest mean of use of cognitive strategies, it is nevertheless proved that it is not correlated significantly with academic achievement, rather the negative value implies that students who employed this strategy more (which is concerned with learning English vocabulary by comparing words from English to words in Arabic) are less achieving learners.

The correlation between metacognitive strategies and academic achievement was analysed and the following results were generated.

TABLE 6
CORRELATION BETWEEN COGNITIVE STRATEGIES USE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

	GPA	Met1	Met2	Met3	Met4	Met5	Met6	Met7	Met8	Met9
Pearson Correlation	1	.291**	.650**	-.024	.284**	.058	.232**	.005	.330**	.228*
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.759	.000	.454	.000	.952	.000	.000
N	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170	170

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The findings show significant positive correlations between GPA and Met1 ($r = 0.291, p < 0.01$), and between GPA and Met2 ($r = 0.650, p < 0.01$). These strong positive associations suggest that higher levels of Met1 and Met2 are related to higher GPAs. Additionally, statistically significant positive correlations were observed between GPA and

Met4 ($r = 0.284$, $p < 0.01$), Met5 ($r = 0.058$, $p < 0.05$), Met6 ($r = 0.232$, $p < 0.01$), Met7 ($r = 0.005$, $p < 0.01$), Met8 ($r = 0.330$, $p < 0.01$), and Met9 ($r = 0.228$, $p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that these metacognitive strategies also play a role in predicting academic performance.

However, a significant linear relationship between Met3 and GPA was not observed, as the correlation results between GPA and Met3 was ($r = -0.024$, $p > 0.05$) in this sample. As far as the aspect of the level of use of CSs and MCSs is concerned, the correlation between MCSs and academic achievement is found more than the correlation between CSs and academic achievement. This suggests that metacognitive strategies are more related to better academic achievement.

The above results provide valuable insights into the levels of use of CSs and MCSs and their associations with academic achievement. The following discussion section will further explore these relationships and their implications.

V. DISCUSSION

This research explored the learning techniques implemented by ESP learners. Oxford's (1990) SILL was employed to gather research data. The results show that the participants use CSs and MCSs from moderate to high levels and that high use of CSs and MCSs is highly associated with high GPAs.

Regarding cognitive strategies, it was found that the participants employed most of them highly frequently. Primarily, the most frequently utilised strategies are associated with vocabulary acquisition. These strategies include employing native language vocabulary to comprehend English vocabulary, utilizing morphological operations to aid in understanding new words, and reinforcing learning by writing or repeating words multiple times. Other highly used cognitive strategies employed include initiating conversations in English, watching English media, and skimming reading passages before reading carefully. On the other hand, strategies which are used to a lesser extent are related to summarising information, adopting advanced translation techniques, practising English pronunciations and extensive English reading.

These results imply that the research sample of ESP students utilises specific mental processes and techniques to enhance their language learning experience, including approaches such as organizing information, making connections between concepts, using mnemonic devices, practising retrieval of information, and employing analytical thinking to enhance their understanding and retention of the English language. These results coincide with the theories enunciated by prominent researchers in the relevant field. For example, EFL students employ different learning strategies to understand, acquire, or recall new information (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) and improve their progress in L2 skills (Oxford, 1990). The findings of the study expand our understanding by showing that this characteristic is not limited to EFL students. Instead, ESP students also utilize similar techniques to enhance their learning. Additionally, the findings support the hypothesis of the study that ESP students employ cognitive strategies to aid their learning and enhance their language skills.

Regarding metacognitive strategies, the study discovered that the respondents utilize a variety of strategies beyond just cognitive ones. Except for one strategy, the majority of responses fell under the category of "usually true of me," indicating a strong awareness of their learning processes and active involvement in monitoring and managing their own learning. This suggests that they possess knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to effectively plan, evaluate, and adapt their learning strategies. In summary, this demonstrates a heightened level of self-awareness and control over their learning outcomes.

Similar to cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies were widely employed by EFL learners to foster learning and development (Oxford, 1990). Furthermore, a few studies have also found that learners of some ESP disciplines also employed such strategies e.g. Daguay-James and Bulusan (2020); Alzahrani and Chaudhary (2022). The present study findings support these later findings suggesting that metacognitive strategy use is not limited to EFL Learners.

In most cases, the implementation of strategies is remarkably correlated with the GPAs of the students. For CSs, eight out of eleven strategies showed a significant correlation, with only COG5 (watching English media), COG6 (reading for pleasure), and COG8 (using mother tongue vocabulary to learn new English words) showing an insignificant correlation. These specific strategies may require further investigation to understand their impact on language learning, as they are commonly used by all students. Future researchers should expand the criteria of this research and try to validate the findings reached. Attempts should be made to determine their generalizability.

In terms of metacognitive strategies, the correlation between their use and academic achievement was found to be stronger when compared to the correlation between cognitive strategies and academic achievement. Significant correlation values (r) were observed for eight out of nine of the strategies investigated. A rather unexpected finding was that Met3, which pertains to conscious and attentive listening to English conversation, did not show a remarkable association with the overall grade average of the students. It is important to note that this lack of association is unexpected and may require further research to validate the results. Additional investigation is needed to fathom deeper and find out whether this particular strategy is related to the overall performance of the students or whether there are other factors involved.

Many previous studies yielded similar results on the correlation between using CSs, MCSs and academic achievement, for example: Rezalou and Altayi (2022); Abdul-Ghafour and Alrefae (2019). However, few other studies (Tariq et al., 2016; Vettori et al., 2020; Abdul Halim et al., 2021) have found that learning strategies, or at least some of

them, are not directly aligned with high academic achievement. Considering this, the present results coincide with the previous literature in that while most of the CSs and MCSs are positively related to learners' GPAs, few strategies are worth consideration or reinvestigation.

The study revealed that there is no direct association between the extent of use of CSs and MCs and their relationship to academic achievement. Despite some strategies being reported as highly utilized by the participants, they were found to have an insignificant impact on academic achievement. This suggests that these strategies, although popular among students, may not be as beneficial for improving student achievement. As a result, there is a need for more coaching and guidance on strategies and their implementation in ESP settings. This will help students adopt the most effective strategies that have been proven to enhance EFL learning.

The results of the present study can have implications for ESP students, teachers, and curriculum designers. ESP students are asked to employ CSs and MCSs on a wider range to improve their learning and gain a better understanding of ESP lessons. Their efforts in this strand can be supported by strategy-oriented teaching methods focusing on strategy instruction. Positive results of strategy instruction have been found by Biwer et al. (2022) and Omare and Ochieng (2022) in their respective studies. Moreover, syllabi that are designed according to these strategies can make these teaching methods more structured and hence beneficial.

The findings of the current study may have limited generalizability due to a few potential limitations. Firstly, all the participants of the study come from a single cultural background and they are studying a specific discipline, namely business administration. These facts have a constraining effect on the conclusions reached. We cannot apply them to different cultures and other academic fields. The fact that the learners' first language is Arabic may limit the generalizability to languages that have closer similarities to English, where different strategies may be employed for learning grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, there may be discipline-specific aspects that necessitate the adoption of specific strategies tailored to the courses taught, as the courses taught to the participants of this research center more on communication in a business setting. Other subfields within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) might require different strategies, leading to potentially different results.

To address these potential limitations, future research should consider using a more diverse and multicultural research sample that encompasses various disciplines within English for Specific Purposes (ESP). This would help to obtain more generalizable results that can be applied to different contexts. Additionally, further investigation is necessary to validate the findings regarding the relationship between types of strategy preferred by ESP students and their actual academic achievement, as measured by GPAs. This will help determine whether the popularity of specific strategies is attributed to their impact on achievement or other influencing factors. Conducting such research will help in understanding the effectiveness of different LLSs in enhancing academic performance.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to explore the use of CSs and MCSs by Arab ESP undergraduates and its correlation with academic achievement. It has revealed several findings the most important of which are that students make use of both CSs and MCSs fairly highly. MCSs are used more than CSs. There is a significant positive correlation between GPA and most of the CSs and MCSs examined except a few having no significant correlation. Furthermore, the study revealed that there is no direct association between the extent of use of CSs and MCSs and their relation with academic achievement. Some strategies were reported as highly utilized by the students, but they were not found to be affecting the performance of the students in a remarkable manner. For example, a cognitive strategy which involves comparing vocabulary with L1 was the most favored. Nevertheless, it is not correlated significantly with academic achievement. Students who employed this strategy were found to be low achievers. This particular phenomenon needs further investigation to ascertain the utility of this and such other strategies in the given context and to plan intervention strategies so as to make the students choose the right kind of strategies in an ESP setting. Strategy training should be included in the curriculum to garner maximum outcomes from the exerted efforts by teachers as well as students.

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Translator's Visibility in Mediating Confrontational Responses of "Challenge" Strategy at China's Diplomatic Press Conferences

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Abstract—The study aims to unveil how translators deal with confrontational responses through their visibility in translating the diplomatic discourse of China's diplomatic press conferences. Distinct from past theoretical frameworks, this study is grounded in the impoliteness strategies model (Bousfield, 2008) and the concept of translator's visibility. The corpus focuses on the English-translated responses using the "challenge" strategy, delivered by the spokesperson Hua Chunying throughout 2020. Findings show that the translator's visibility is mainly presented at the syntactical and lexical levels, and the discursive level is hardly found. The translation strategy of modulation is used most in syntax and reduction most in lexicon. Additionally, the translator's visibility by using translation strategies can mediate the degree of confrontation. In maintaining the confrontational tone, the main strategies involve modulation in syntax and reduction in lexicon. Linguistic compression and reduction are employed more commonly in weakening the confrontational implication in lexicon, and reduction in syntax. Linguistic amplification is observed more frequently in the lexicon and modulation is more often used in syntax in strengthening the confrontation. This research sheds light on the dynamic interplay between impoliteness strategies and the translator's visibility, contributing to a deeper understanding of the translator's engagement in institutional discourse.

Index Terms—translator's visibility, confrontational responses, "challenge" strategy, diplomatic discourse translation

I. INTRODUCTION

The translator's visibility has been consistently discussed in translation studies, garnering a share of scholarly attention and generating a number of empirical studies. The concept of visibility in this study differs from the one proposed by Angelelli (2004), suggesting translators step out of obscurity and become noticeable to the audience through their own contributions in the real-world interaction with the speakers and as effective co-constructors of communication (Li et al., 2023). In addition, it is different from the term coined by Lawrence Venuti (1995). Venuti calls "resistance" in contesting the Anglo-American cultures in the practice of translation to keep the original foreign features, with the aim of rendering the translator visible (Venuti, 1995, p. 24). Since Venuti put forward this concept, the tension between the professional requirement of being faithful and the translator's subjectivity has been displayed. This study takes the stance that invisibility and visibility are not a dichotomy in the translation; the translator can exert subjectivity to shift the visibility flexibly. The translator's visibility persists throughout the translation process, in which the translator generates the translated piece and becomes noticeable to the target audience. Therefore, the translator's state is not in the two poles between invisibility and visibility but between the strength and weakness of visibility (Zhu, 2017).

More scholars joined the discussion about the translator's visibility. Hatim and Mason (1990) hold that a translator's visibility is more feasible when "translating between languages that are, comparatively speaking, culturally remote from each other" (p. 123). While Lane-Mercier (1997) argued that invisibility and visibility are not easily distinguishable. Both are demonstrations of the translator's presence and subjectivity. If distinguished in a dichotomy, the translator's invisible insertion into the target culture will be proved as an illusion of subjectivity, and the visible heterogeneity will

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be radical domestication (Robinson, 2019). Zhu (2017) stated that invisibility is the ethical requirement for the translator, while visibility is the translator's actual state due to the translation complexity.

In the past years, many studies have demonstrated the translator's visibility in the translation process. A number of these empirical studies focused on the visibility in real translation cases, highlighted in the field of literary translation (e.g., Cleary, 2014; Xu, 2019), and institutional discourse, such as visibility in news discourse translation by Hong (2019) and political discourse translation by Xu and Xiao (2022). However, most of the studies centered on the translator's visibility by emphasizing the otherness while retaining the cultural or linguistic differences in the context of literary works and consecutive interpreting, with little attention paid to the translator's visibility in mediating the discursive confrontation in diplomatic discourse translation.

The challenge strategy was included as a theoretical concept in the impoliteness strategies model by Culpeper (1996), Lachenicht (1980), and Bousfield (2008), respectively, in their works. In this study, the notion is taken from the perspective of Bousfield (2008). According to him, the definition of challenge is to "ask h a challenging question, question h's position, stance, beliefs, assumed power, rights, obligations, ethics, etc." (Bousfield, 2008, p. 132) He claimed there are two fundamental ways of challenges: rhetorical challenges and response-seeking challenges. They are "always issued in the form of a question" (Bousfield, 2008, p. 132). The rhetorical challenges do not necessarily ask for a direct response; instead, they stimulate the interlocutors' given answer, thus increasing the chances of face damage to the involved third-party recipients.

The challenge strategy is one of the common impoliteness strategies found in the confrontational responses of China's diplomatic spokespersons, taking the form of a question. The spokespersons engage in confrontational responses by asserting that a particular standpoint is not permitted or is beyond dispute, targeting both their immediate opponents and the broader international audience and showing uncompromising speech styles. Nevertheless, their primary goal is to persuade the international public (Wu, 2019). Under such circumstances, the effective transmission of the diplomatic stance cannot come into play without the translator's mediation.

As cross-cultural communication becomes increasingly prevalent in today's globalized world, understanding how translators navigate and manage confrontational discourse is of paramount importance (e.g., Robins, 2005). Past research acknowledged that translators act not merely as conduits of language but as cultural mediators who must navigate the delicate balance between faithfulness to the source text and adaptation to the target culture. The profession requires them to be invisible to convey the message without changing the meaning while assuring the confrontational stance will not lead to more disputes and conflicts through their visibility. The translator's visibility is crucial in determining the success of challenge strategy implementation. As a result, the translation of the challenge strategy of the confrontational responses may be mediated because of the translator's visibility. In other words, the strength of the challenge may be increased, weakened, or maintained. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the translator's visibility, which remains under-explored regarding the confrontational response using the "challenge" strategy at the regular press conferences hosted by the Chinese diplomatic spokesperson. Hence, two research questions are posed to be addressed:

- 1) How is the translator's visibility revealed to deal with the confrontational responses with the challenge strategy?
- 2) Through mediating the "challenge" strategy, how does the translator's visibility serve to strengthen, maintain, or weaken the spokesperson's discursive confrontation at regular press conferences?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. *Corpus: China's Diplomatic Spokesperson's Confrontational Responses at Regular Press Conferences*

China's diplomatic regular press conference serves as a crucial tool for the Chinese government to communicate its official stance on various domestic and international issues, allowing the government to disseminate information and updates on its policies, positions, and actions to both domestic and international audiences. In an era of rapid information dissemination, it's a platform for the Chinese government to address and counteract any misinformation or misconceptions that may arise in the media. The conference is held daily from Monday to Friday, and changes will be made according to the diplomatic arrangements. The year 2020 is special for China and the world when the whole of humankind was haunted by the spreading pandemic, regional disputes, and escalated international relations between China and the U.S., which has put China in a dilemma. Questions from the media are politically sensitive and challenging. To safeguard China's national image and interests, the spokespersons' responses displayed uncompromising disagreement and criticism.

B. *Data Collection*

The source material of this study is selected from Chinese diplomatic spokesperson Hua Chunying's responses to the media throughout the year 2020. Her remarks are accessed from the official website of China's MFA and another website, "reciyi.com," which recorded all the bilingual remarks since 2014. Hua Chunying is one of China's influential diplomatic spokespersons and is now the director of the spokespersons. In 2020, she had 35 regular press conferences, including online ones, where she made responses to the questions and statements given by the media attending the conferences. Her responses corpus amounted to around 214,000 Chinese characters and corresponding English-translated around 130,000 characters.

The confrontational responses using the “challenge” strategy are identified according to Bousfield’s (2008) impoliteness strategies model. The inclusion criteria of the challenge strategy should meet the following requirements: the questions posed by the media are contradictory to China’s official stance and policy or stand against China’s positive national image or interests; the spokesperson responded to the media with the challenge strategy to show her disagreements or condemnation directed at the related parties including the third-party recipients involved in the Q&A; the challenge strategy usually takes the form of a question ended with a question mark replying to the media’s questions.

C. Data Analysis

The analysis follows the steps of identification, categorization, and interpretation. In answering the first question, the strategy of challenge in these confrontational responses was selected. Having identified the challenge strategy items in the selected diplomatic discourse of Hua Chunying, the corresponding translation strategies at the lexical, syntactical, and discursive levels, this allows the overall discussion of revealing the translator’s visibility, which is categorized into different types. In answering the second question it is interpreted in a qualitative analysis of how the translator’s visibility contributes to mediating the translation of the challenge strategy. If the translation is found to over-articulate the confrontational responses in the English TT, then it can be identified as an example of strengthening the translation of the challenge strategy. In the same vein, contrarily, the lack of the translator’s alignment with the spokesperson’s diplomatic discourse will be classified as the translator’s visibility in weakening or maintaining the challenge strategy.

III. FINDINGS

A. Translator’s Visibility at Lexical, Syntactical, and Discursive Levels Mediating the Challenge Strategy

(a). Overall Translator’s Visibility Between ST. and TT

To investigate how the translator’s visibility is rendered by the translators, the items of the challenge strategy were selected in the same corpus, including Chinese and English, using the filter function of the Excel. The challenge strategy here should meet the inclusion criterion mentioned in the methodology section. The translator’s visibility is demonstrated at the lexical, syntactical, and discursive levels. Sometimes one challenge strategy may contain more than one level. For such relatively rare conditions, even though they present in the same sentence or question, they are still counted separately for the simple reason that lexicon, syntax, and discourse may reveal different translation strategies contributing to the degree of confrontation.

According to Bousfield (2008), the challenge strategy takes the form of a question, so the use of the strategy is stable, and the selection of it focuses on the sentences with a question mark in the original text. Additionally, the confrontational responses are not just targeted at answering the questions of the journalists but also rebuking or criticizing the involved parties in the mentioned events, so the challenge strategy is in nature conveying different stances and attitudes from those in the questions and should bear the contradictory attitude against the questions. However, it was also found that in the same sentence, there is more than one impoliteness strategy. Thus, the instances selected from the sentences mainly use the challenge strategy.

Furthermore, the confrontational nature of the challenge strategy implies that the translator must employ different translation strategies to handle the potential conflict that may occur in the scene. Thus, in the English corpus, the translation strategies are identified and counted, which presents the mediation and show the translator’s visibility. However, the literal translation strategy is not included because it is equivalent to the original text in the form and meaning without adjustment and does not show the translator’s mediation.

In 2020, Hua Chunying made 472 responses to the media, of which the confrontational responses were identified and amounted to 245 items, more than half of her responses. Eighty-five instances of challenge strategy are identified in the Chinese source text. In the corresponding English translation, if the form and information are adapted, then the translator’s adaptation degree indicates the visibility in different aspects, namely lexicon, syntax, and discourse. The syntactical level ranks first, with 46 instances constituting 62.2% of the 74 instances. The lexical level takes up 32.4%, and the visibility in the discursive level is seldom found; only 4 cases are identified (See Figure 1). At the level of syntax, the translation strategy of modulation is most frequently used. At the lexicon level, reduction is the top option for the translator. As for discourse, linguistic amplification, modulation, and amplification are found, but the quantity is too small, so the discourse level will not be the focus of the analysis.

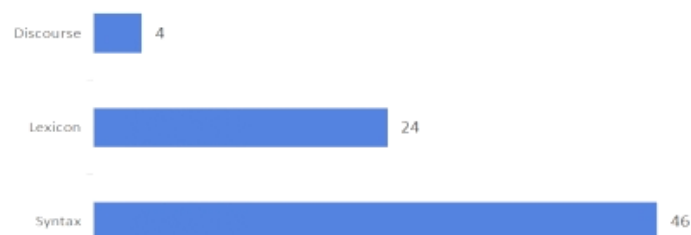


Figure 1. Translator’s Visibility at Three Levels

More specifically, of the 85 instances, the translator adopted different translation strategies, such as modulation, reduction, linguistic amplification, transposition, linguistic compression, generalization, particularization, and literal translation (See Figure 2). As mentioned above, the literal translation strategy is not included in the discussion, so seven translation strategies were identified, amounting to 74 examples. The top three translation strategies are modulation (23 items, 31%), reduction (18 items, 24%), and linguistic amplification (12 items, 16%), taking up 71% of all the translation strategies in the English target text.

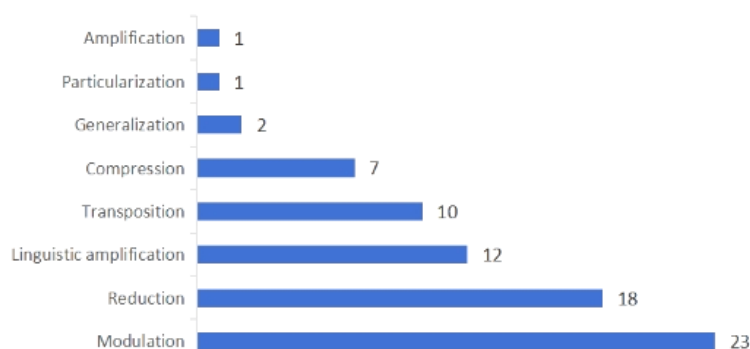


Figure 2. Overall Translation Strategies Demonstrating the Translator's Visibility

(b). Translation Strategies Demonstrating the Translator's Visibility in Syntax

The translator's frequent use of modulation is revealed syntactically (See Figure 3). Molina and Albir's (2002) perspective of modulation is "to change the point of view, focus or cognitive category in relation to the ST; it can be lexical or structural" (p. 510). It means using a phrase that is different in the source and target languages to convey the same idea. Example 1 illustrates the change of the point of view from the British government to the Hong Kong residents in syntax, showing that the translator is visible in this confrontational challenge strategy.

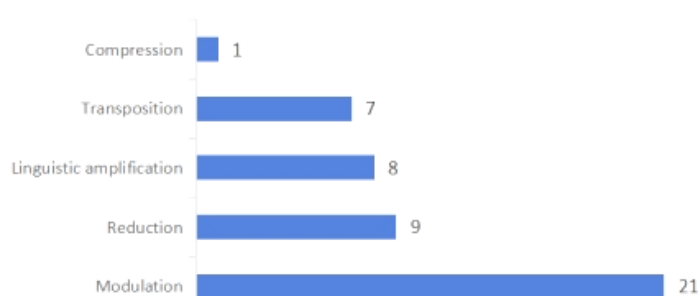


Figure 3. Translation Strategies Demonstrating the Translator's Visibility in Syntax

Example 1 (9 June, 2020)

ST: 至于你提到英方关切香港居民的自由问题，我昨天在这里已经介绍了中方立场。英方不妨回顾一下，在英国对香港 156 年殖民统治期间，他们给过香港民众什么自由、什么民主？28 位港督当中哪一个是由香港民众选举产生的？那个时候英国给予香港民众上街抗议示威的自由吗？英国对香港殖民统治期间，英国《叛逆法》是适用于香港的。香港是中国的一个特别行政区，中国全国人大就香港维护国家安全立法有任何问题吗？在这一问题上不应有任何双重标准，英方应该认清时势，谨言慎行。

Literal translation: Regarding your mention of the British concerns about the freedom of Hong Kong residents, I introduced the Chinese position on this matter here yesterday. The British side might review, during the 156 years of colonial rule in Hong Kong, what freedoms and democracy they gave to the Hong Kong people? Among the 28 governors, which one was elected by the people of Hong Kong? Did Britain give the freedom for Hong Kong residents to take to the streets in protest during that time? The British "Treason Act" applied to Hong Kong during the colonial rule. Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China. Is there any issue with the National People's Congress of China enacting legislation to safeguard national security in Hong Kong? There should be no double standards on this issue, and the British side should recognize the situation and proceed with caution.

TT: Regarding the British side's concerns on Hong Kong residents' freedom, I made a statement in yesterday's press conference. I hope the U.K. can review the history and answer the following questions. During the 156 years under British colonial rule, did Hong Kong residents ever enjoy any democracy or freedom? Was any of the former 28 Hong Kong governors elected by the Hong Kong residents? Did the Hong Kong residents then enjoy the freedom to take to the street and demonstrate? The U.K. even applied the Treason Act to Hong Kong during its colonial rule. Since Hong Kong is China's special administrative region, isn't it legitimate for the NPC to pass the legislation for

safeguarding national security in Hong Kong? No double standards should be applied to this matter. The British side should grasp the situation and exercise prudence in its words and deeds.

In this example extracted from the press conference on 9 June 2020, the overall confrontation was fluently delivered. However, there are also signs showing the translator's visibility by modulation. In syntax, there are modulations in sentence structure and word order. China was questioned because it has enacted the national security law in Hong Kong, which is considered as a destruction of the democracy in Hong Kong. As marked in bold, there are four sentences of modulation in the TT of this instance. “英方不妨回顾一下” (The British side might review) was translated into “I hope the U.K. can review the history and answer the following questions,” an SVO structure was changed into an object clause. What's more, “他们给过” means literally “they have given.” “他们” is here referring to the British. The subject is British, but in the TT, the subject was translated into “The Hong Kong residents” and the object into “enjoy.” The focus was shifted. The third bold sentence is in the same manner, re-confirming that Hong Kong is now not under the reign of the British but the Chinese government and the Communist Party. In the last sentence, “有任何问题吗？” (Is there any issue) was modulated into “Isn't it legitimate.” A yes-or-no question using a “is there” structure was changed into a negative question in “isn't it,” emphasizing the certainty of the answer to the question. This modulation also demonstrated the translator's visibility in aligning with the institutional ideology.

(c). *Translation Strategies Demonstrating Translator's Visibility in the Lexicon*

Modulation is rarely found in the lexicon, but the translator's visibility is also found with other strategies, particularly reduction (See Figure 4). Reduction is the most frequently used translation strategy in the aspect of lexicon. It's different from linguistic compression, which is also found in the lexicon, but the quantity is less. Reduction implies the removal or suppression of some information items in the source text that are thought to be unnecessary or redundant (Molina & Albir, 2002). Example 2 displays the reduction of information in the TT.

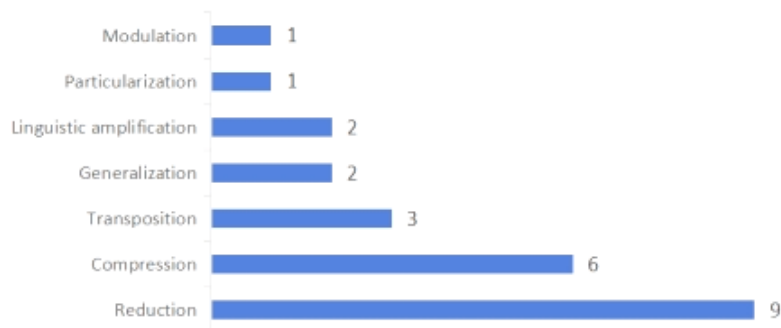


Figure 4. Translation Strategies Demonstrating Translator's Visibility in the Lexicon

Example 2 (4 Dec, 2020)

ST: 我很想请他们解释一下，什么是虚假？谁来定义虚假信息？什么是人权？澳一些军人在阿富汗犯下的罪行是不是真的？让澳方如此暴怒的这张电脑插画反映的情况是不是真的？难道**不讲是非、颠倒黑白**就是他们宣扬的价值吗？难道认为别人生命不如自己的面子重要就是他们引以为豪的价值吗？难道给别人**乱扣帽子掩盖自己罪行、洗白自己**就是他们的共同价值吗？从这个意义上讲，这幅画就犹如一面镜子，照出了个别国家个别人的虚伪和双重标准。

Literal translation: I would like to ask them to explain: What is falsehood? Who defines misinformation? What is human rights? Are the crimes committed by some Australian military personnel in Afghanistan true? Is the depiction in the computer-generated illustration that has so angered Australia accurate? Is it their value system to **not tell right and wrong and reverse white and black**? Is it their pride in valuing their own face more than the lives of others? Is it their shared value **to hide crimes by falsely accusing others and whitewashing their own wrongdoings**? In this sense, this illustration serves as a mirror, revealing the hypocrisy and double standards of certain countries and individuals.

TT: I wonder if they can explain what disinformation is, who should be the one to define disinformation, and what they mean by human rights? Aren't the crimes by some Australian soldiers in Afghanistan true? Doesn't the C.G. comic that made Australia fly into a rage reflect what really happened? Is **fact distortion** the value they uphold? Is it their proud value that other people's lives don't matter so long as they can save their own face? Is it their shared value to **pin the blame to others just to whitewash themselves**? In this sense, the caricature is a mirror showing the hypocrisy and double standards of a few people in these few countries.

This example is a confrontational extracted from the press conference on 4 Dec 2020. The questions are, on the surface, responding to the media but, in nature, criticizing and condemning the Australian side and its soldiers, and the confrontation of the spokesperson was displayed. In this instance, “不讲是非” literally means “not telling right and wrong,” focusing on the ignorance of moral standards, and “颠倒黑白” means “reversing white and black,” with more emphasis on the ignorance of the facts. They are typical four-character structured expressions. In the TT, “fact distortion” conveys the meaning of the latter expression, so the former was reduced. “乱扣帽子掩盖罪行” literally

means the Australian side “casually put a hat on others to cover crimes.” This implies that Australia launched baseless accusations against China. In the TT, it was translated into “pin the blame on others” and “掩盖罪行” was reduced. Compared to the ST, some information was omitted, and the translator is visible in the reduction of the phrases.

A translator’s visibility in discourse is rarely found. The target text employs one amplification, one modulation, and two linguistic amplifications. Since the small size of the instances, it is found that the translator made no difference in the discourse. Therefore, the analysis of it here is omitted.

B. Translator’s Visibility in Maintaining, Weakening, and Strengthening the Confrontation in the Challenge Strategy

In the challenge strategy, spokesperson Hua Chunying responded to the questions and statements from the media that were contradictory to the official Chinese stances, attitudes, and policies. The challenge strategy responses generally provide contrary answers, deny the information, and criticize the involved parties, which present confrontational traits. Although the spokesperson makes confrontational responses and the translator needs to commit to professional requirements to deliver information, the translator must mediate the confrontation.

(a). Translator’s Visibility in Maintaining the Confrontation

Through the visibility of the translator, at the three levels of lexicon, syntax, and discourse, it is found that the translation strategies used by the translator may maintain, weaken, or strengthen the confrontation of the challenge strategy. Statistically, 31 items showcased the weakening, 27 showcased the maintaining, and 16 strengthening. The translator maintained the confrontation by using modulation (11 items) more frequently than other strategies like transposition (4 items) in syntax and reduction (5 items) mostly in the lexicon. No items of maintenance were found in the discourse. Example 3 shows how the confrontation is maintained through the translator’s visibility by using the translation strategy of modulation.

Example 3 (30 Nov, 2020)

ST: 这个问题已经不是哪个国家的内政问题了，应该遭到全世界所有有良知的人的强烈谴责。你难道没有这种感受吗？你难道觉得澳大利亚这些军人的罪行不应该受到谴责吗？你难道不觉得莫里森总理及澳政府在这一问题上没有是非观念应该遭到质疑吗？你觉得中方谴责澳大利亚有些军人在阿富汗犯下残暴罪行有任何问题吗？这个问题跟人权有关，但它跟内政有任何关系吗？

Literal translation: This issue is no longer a domestic matter of any specific country; it should face strong condemnation from all conscientious people worldwide. Don’t you feel so? Do you really think the misconduct of these Australian soldiers should not be condemned? Don’t you believe that Prime Minister Morrison and the Australian government’s lack of a clear moral stance on this issue should be questioned? Do you think there is any problem with China condemning certain Australian soldiers for committing brutal acts in Afghanistan? This issue is related to human rights, but does it have any connection to domestic affairs?

TT: It is no longer a matter of the internal affairs of any country, and it should be strongly condemned by all people with conscience around the whole world. Do you think otherwise? Don’t you think the crimes of these Australian soldiers should be condemned? Don’t you think the lack of basic sense of right and wrong on this issue on the part of Prime Minister Morrison and the Australian government should be questioned? What is wrong with China strongly condemning such brutal crimes committed by some Australian soldiers in Afghanistan? This is about human rights, but what’s it to do with internal affairs?

The spokesperson, Hua Chunying, used consecutive questions to respond to the journalists, making the responses with confrontational implications that the crimes committed in Afghanistan by the Australian soldiers should be condemned. The Chinese government made the condemnation, but the Australian government thought Beijing was interfering the internal affairs of the Australian side. The usages of “你难道没有,” “你难道觉得不应该,” “你难道不觉得,” “你觉得” are basically telling the media that “you should have,” “you should think like this as me,” “you should feel as I feel.” The spokesperson superficially asked but implied that the answers should be absolutely aligned with the official stance. So the modulation from “Don’t you feel so” into “Do you think otherwise,” from “Do you really think” into “Don’t you think,” and from “Do you think” into “What is wrong” were keeping the same form of questions but have changed the point of view from negative to positive, or vice versa. The strong tone of confrontation and doubt was maintained in the TT using the modulation in syntax.

Example 4 (2 Dec, 2020)

ST: 一方面凭空捏造事实，大肆攻击抹黑别人，另一方面又不允许别人对自己干过的坏事错事发表评论，这符合澳大利亚的价值观吗？如果自己明明干了坏事坏事，却拒不接受别人批评，甚至倒打一耙，无理取闹，你如何能让人相信你是真心知错而且会真正改错呢？

Literal translation: Does this align with Australia’s values? On the one hand, fabricating facts out of thin air and launching malicious attacks to smear others, while on the other hand, not allowing others to comment on the wrongdoings and bad deeds one has committed. If one has clearly done something wrong or bad, yet refuses to accept criticism, even going so far as to deflect blame unreasonably, how can one convince others that they genuinely acknowledge their mistakes and are committed to making genuine corrections?

TT: Is it in line with Australia’s values that they on the one hand fabricate facts to launch smearing attacks against others while, on the other hand, not allowing others to comment on their erroneous and bad deeds? If you have

obviously done something wrong and bad, but refuse to accept any criticism and even try to shift the blame to others, how can you ever convince people that you know you've done wrong and that you will correct the mistakes?

In this example, the spokesperson, Hua Chunying, questioned the journalists and the Australian side for their criticism of China. Lexically, “凭空,” “大肆,” “无理取闹” and “真心” were reduced by using specific and concise language, emphasizing the negative aspects and preserving the confrontational nature of the original text. The reduction strategy aimed to streamline the expression of certain concepts while maintaining the overall tone of conflict. The Chinese language is more abstract and generalizing. Adverbs are used to modify the verbs to strengthen the tone and attitude. For instance, “大肆” is an adverb to modify “攻击抹黑,” showing the smear is wide and malicious. Through this reduction, the translator's visibility ensures that the intensity and criticism of the source text are retained in the English version.

(b). Translator's Visibility in Weakening the Confrontation

The translator is visible by using the translation strategy. However, the degree of confrontation in translating the challenge strategy can be weakened. It is found more in lexicon and syntax. In the lexicon, linguistic compression and reduction are employed more frequently to mitigate the confrontation implication. The profound political stance of the diplomatic discourse given by the spokesperson and the challenging question from the media determine that the potential conflict may happen. Therefore, the translator is visible to mediate the conflict to avoid more confrontation. Example 5 illustrates how the translator's visibility weakened the confrontation through linguistic compression in the lexicon.

Example 5 (10 Dec, 2020)

ST: 美国在全球环境基金的巨额欠款以及欠荒漠化公约、气候变化公约的应缴会费什么时候能够还? 美国常年将大量垃圾出口到发展中国家, 美方是不是应该对此有个交代和说法?

Literal translation: When will the United States be able to repay its large amount of due fees Global Environment Fund, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the UNFCCC? The United States consistently exports a large amount of waste to developing countries. Shouldn't the U.S. provide an explanation and justification for this practice?

TT: When will it pay the huge amounts of contributions it owes to the Global Environment Fund, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the UNFCCC? What does it say about its export of large amounts of garbage to developing countries every year?

In the original text, the spokesperson criticized the substantial debts and outstanding contributions owed by the United States to the Global Environment Fund, the Convention to Combat Desertification, and the UNFCCC, as well as its export of a large amount of waste to developing countries. The original text also raises the question of whether the United States should be held accountable and provide an explanation for its export of waste to developing countries. In the translated text, the last question has been simplified to “What does it say about its export of large amounts of garbage to developing countries every year?” This approach reduces the complexity of expression, highlighting the key issues. The lexicon of “交代和说法” is condensed to “say about,” simplifying the expression and diminishing direct skepticism. Despite addressing questions concerning the United States, the translator, through language simplification and a relatively objective expression, avoids direct accusations and lessens confrontational elements. This weakens the conflictive tone, allowing readers to assess the issues independently. Another example of weakening is used here by the translator with a reduction in syntax.

Example 6 (7 May, 2020)

ST: 蓬佩奥国务卿为什么要在科学家和专家还没有定论的情况下, 就匆匆忙忙下结论, 咬死“病毒源自武汉实验室”。他的证据在哪里? 请拿出来! 如果拿不出来, 是不是还在炮制过程中?

Literal translation: Why did Secretary of State Pompeo hastily draw conclusions and allegedly claimed the virus came from the Wuhan lab when scientists haven't agreed yet? Where's his proof? Show it! If there isn't any, is he still making it up?

TT: When scientists are busy doing their job, Pompeo has been trying so hard to spread the words that the virus came from a lab in Wuhan. Where is the evidence? Please show us. Perhaps he is still busy fabricating it?

The original sentence “匆匆忙忙下结论, 咬死‘病毒源自武汉实验室’” was reduced to “Pompeo has been trying so hard to spread the words that the virus came from a lab in Wuhan.” This reduction minimized the use of adjectives and adverbs in syntax, simplifying the expression and emphasizing Pompeo's efforts to propagate a specific narrative. The accusation that Pompeo might still be busy fabricating evidence was simplified to “Perhaps he is still busy fabricating it?” This reduction retained the essence of the accusation while reducing the confrontational tone found in the original. The structure of the statements was altered from declarative in the original to interrogative in the translation, as seen in “Where is the evidence? Please show us.” This change makes the queries more direct and inquiry-oriented. The use of simplified expressions and turning some statements into questions helped soften the confrontational tone. This approach makes the questioning appear more objective and encourages readers to think independently.

(c). Translator's Visibility in Strengthening the Confrontation

The translator's visibility can also help to strengthen the confrontation. It's found that linguistic amplification is used

more frequently in lexicon and modulation in syntax. Example 7 shows that the syntactic modulation not only challenges the claims made by the U.S. but also amplifies the confrontational tone, showcasing the translator's visibility and engagement with the discourse.

Example 7 (13 July, 2020)

ST:过去 40 年间, 新疆维吾尔自治区维吾尔族人口从 555 万已经增加到了 1168 万, 是 40 年前的两倍还多, 美方见过这样的种族灭绝吗? 新疆每 530 个穆斯林就拥有一座清真寺, 清真寺总数十多倍于美国, 他们见过这样的宗教压迫吗?

Literal translation: In the past 40 years, the Uighur population in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region has increased from 5.55 million to 11.68 million, more than twice the number four decades ago. Has the U.S. seen such a case of genocide? In Xinjiang, there is one mosque for every 530 Muslims, with the total number of mosques being many times more than in the United States. Have they witnessed such religious oppression?

TT: In the past 40 years, the Uighur population in Xinjiang has increased from 5.55 million to 11.68 million, more than doubling in the past four decades. Is this “genocide” claimed by the U.S.? There is one mosque for every 530 Muslims in Xinjiang, and the total number of mosques in China is more than ten times that in the United States. Is this “religious oppression” claimed by the U.S.?

In the original text, the substantial increase in the Uighur population in Xinjiang over the past 40 years is presented as a fact. However, in the translation, “美方见过这样的种族灭绝吗” (has the U.S. seen such a case of genocide?) is a question using an active voice, modulated into a rhetorical question “Is this ‘genocide’ claimed by the U.S.?” with a passive voice. The use of a passive voice challenges the assertion made by the U.S., increasing the confrontational tone. Similarly, the statement about the number of mosques in Xinjiang is modulated from an active voice into a passive voice, emphasizing the so-called facts are claimed by the U.S. but can be fake. By casting doubt on the claims of “genocide” and “religious oppression,” the translator strengthens the confrontation with the U.S., asserting an opposing viewpoint and adding a confrontational layer to the discourse. Besides the modulation in syntax, which can strengthen the confrontation, the translator also employed the strategy of “linguistic amplification” at the lexical level in the discourse, demonstrating visibility and ultimately strengthening the confrontation.

Example 8 (8 May, 2020)

ST: 如果仅仅因为他援引了一个“也许”, 你们就揪着不放, 那么对于美国总统、副总统、国务卿、国务院发言人以及一些美国议员不断地指责病毒来自武汉、源自武汉实验室, 你们去质问过他们吗?

Literal translation: If just because he cited a ‘perhaps,’ you keep holding on, then have you questioned the U.S. President, Vice President, Secretary of State, State Department spokesperson, and some U.S. lawmakers who continuously accused the virus of originating from Wuhan, from a Wuhan lab?

TT: If you keep picking on him just for citing this word “might”, then how about the U.S. President, Vice President, Secretary of State, the State Department spokesperson and some lawmakers, who falsely accused that the virus came from lab in Wuhan, saying the virus was man-made or leaked? Have you ever questioned them?

This confrontational response targets not only answering the journalists' questions but condemning the U.S. In the translation, the term “源自” (originated from) is amplified to “saying the virus was man-made or leaked.” The addition of “man-made or leaked” introduces a stronger accusation, portraying the U.S. officials as making false and serious allegations. By amplifying the terms, the translator showcases visibility by actively shaping the discourse with stronger language. This choice implies a more assertive stance against the accused U.S. officials. It transforms a general accusation into a more serious one, suggesting that the U.S. officials are making grave and potentially false claims about the virus's origin. This linguistic amplification contributes to a heightened sense of conflict in the discourse.

IV. DISCUSSION

In the responses given by the spokesperson Hua Chunying, 245 confrontational responses were identified from the total of 472 responses to the media. 85 confrontational responses were taken in the form of challenge strategy according to the classification of impoliteness strategies by Bousfield (2008). In terms of the translation strategies, modulation, reduction, linguistic amplification, transposition, linguistic compression, generalization, particularization, amplification, and literal translation were identified. Considering the literal translation did not change the form and meaning of the responses, 11 literal translation cases were excluded from the analysis. Thus, 74 confrontational responses using other translation strategies were included.

The translator's visibility is demonstrated at three levels: lexicon, syntax, and discourse. Forty-six instances, constituting 62.2% at the syntactical level, rank in the first place. The lexical level takes up 32.4%. Nevertheless, only four instances were found at the discursive level. At the level of syntax, modulation is the most frequently used translation strategy. At the lexicon level, reduction is the top option for the translator. As for discourse, linguistic amplification, modulation, and amplification are found, but the quantity is too small, so the discourse level will not be the focus of the analysis.

Accordingly, through the translator's visibility by using the translation strategies at different levels, the confrontation is influenced by the visibility. The translator's visibility may weaken, maintain, and strengthen the spokespersons' discursive confrontation. 31 items showcased the weakening, 27 showcased the maintaining, and 16 strengthening.

Modulation in syntax and reduction in lexicon help maintain the confrontation. Linguistic compression and reduction are employed more frequently in weakening the confrontational implications in lexicon, and reduction in syntax. Linguistic amplification is found to be more frequent in the lexicon and modulation is more often used in syntax in strengthening the confrontation. It is suggested that the translation strategy of reduction can facilitate maintaining or weakening the confrontation. The deletion of some parts of the source text plays an important role in keeping alignment with the spokesperson's stance and helps decrease the confrontation to avoid more conflicts among parties. Additionally, modulation and linguistic amplification can increase the confrontation. The reason may be attributed to the mediation of the discursive focus and the expansion of sentences, which may contribute to a more prominent official attitude and disagreement with the involved parties. Even though institutional ideologies may impact the translator's visibility, the use of translation strategies to influence the degree of confrontation in the translation challenge strategy can be proof of the translator's existence throughout the process.

The above analysis of real examples taken from the spokesperson Hua Chunying's confrontational responses helps increase the understanding of the translator's role. Research has presented that the translator is an active participant and contributor to the formation of institutional discourse (Li et al., 2023). In transferring the language and delivering the information, translators are also regarded as the mediators, the gatekeepers, the brokers, and so forth (e.g., Kang, 2014; Sch äffner, 2020). Instead, traditionally, institutional translators are required to be invisible due to the prevailing institutional authority and strict professional requirements. In addition, the translation of institutional discourse, like the diplomatic discourse at regular press conferences, should align with institutional ideology. Therefore, the translation may be influenced by the authority and the ideology, leading to a mediated translation of the discourse and the translator's active involvement in the discourse.

In the context of Chinese spokesperson Hua Chunying's confrontational responses to the media, the present study aims to expand the existing knowledge body of the translator's mediating role between the speakers and the audience. In diplomatic texts, the institutional translators shoulder multiple roles. Firstly, the translator is responsible for conveying the original message to the intended recipients. Given the particularity of the diplomatic discourse, the translator should not only provide an accurate translation but also consider the specific communicative context. Therefore, the translator is also regarded as a diplomat in translating diplomatic discourse. This means that the translator should also be aware of the need to align with institutional ideologies and principles (Koskinen, 2011). Faced with confrontational responses, the translator, on the one hand, adopts different translation strategies to deliver the message; on the other hand, they keep alignment with the institutional stances. The employment of translation strategies and consistency of ideologies result in the inevitable mediation, making the translator visible in the process. Moreover, when the confrontation is too aggressive and challenging, which may give rise to real diplomatic conflict between the political parties, the translator takes on the role of a visible mediator to reduce the degree of confrontation and ease the nervous atmosphere.

V. CONCLUSION

This article has examined the translator's visibility in translating confrontational responses using the challenge strategy under the frame of Bousfield's (2008) impoliteness strategies model. Different translation strategies were identified from the angles of lexicon, syntax, and discourse, as framed by Molina and Albir (2002). This study presents the importance of taking the spokesperson's confrontational responses at regular press conferences as an interpretive space to understand the translator's mediating role in translating institutional discourse. The examination of the confrontational responses in translation studies offers a novel perspective in discussing the translator's status and presents evidence that the translator is visible in mediating the confrontation.

It must be acknowledged that this study is also limited in some aspects. First comes the single corpus data. This study covers only the year 2020 and focuses on one representative spokesperson's responses at the regular conferences. Therefore, the examples provided are limited. Secondly, it may be challenging to generalize all the findings to other studies related to the translator's visibility because the translation strategies used by the translator are dynamically changing. Moreover, aside from the professional requirement and the institutional ideologies, some more factors can be taken into consideration, such as the translator's ideology, social contexts, political landscape, cultural differences, and the target audience's reception.

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Preventing Mental Disorders: The Significance of Recognizing Nice Girl Syndrome Symptoms in Gaskell's *Ruth*

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Abstract—This study explained Nice Girl syndrome in Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth* to prevent mental disorders. A mental disorder is a clinically significant disruption in cognition, emotion regulation, or behaviour. There are several mental disorders, including Nice Girl syndrome. Beverly Engel's Nice Girl syndrome was the study's grand theory. The Nice Girl Syndrome theory was used to analyze Elizabeth Gaskell's *Ruth's* female characters' thoughts and behaviour. This study revealed seven of ten signs of Nice Girl syndrome, such as "other people's feelings and needs are more important than her own", "she believes that she will be treated nice and fair as long as she is nice and fair", "other people thought about herself is more important than her self-esteem, health, and safety", "she will be accepted and loved if she is good and perfect", "she believes that she does not have the right to stand up for herself or act on her behalf", "she believed that anger is a destructive emotion and should not be expressed directly to those with whom she was angry", and "she believes that it is better to avoid conflict at all costs".

Index Terms—mental disorder, Nice Girl Syndrome, *Ruth*

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, mental health is a significant issue engaging in society. The prevalence of severe mental disorders in the Indonesian population is 1.7% (Hartini et al., 2018). In 2017, 970 million people worldwide had a mental disorder, which increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Sara, 2022). The American Psychiatric Association (2013) defines mental disorders in terms of cultural, social, and familial norms and values. Mental disorder is a wide range of conditions that affect mood, thinking, and behaviour (Sara, 2022). Mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behaviour that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Furthermore, mental disorders are usually associated with significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other essential activities. There are several mental disorders, such as Nice Girl syndrome.

Nice Girl syndrome is a condition where women continuously 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. This syndrome is uncommon and rarely discussed in a society where people live together.

Literature captures and writes people's lives in specific eras and areas. Literature creates its world through the author's imagination (Arafah et al., 2021), not only in fiction but also by illustrating the existing reality of a particular era (Arifin et al., 2022). Literature is also the art of expressing meaning using beautiful language (Arafah, 2018). Literary works are often used as mirrors, reflecting the realities of a specific era (Arafah et al., 2021). Literary works provide an author's thoughts, manners, behaviour, and attitudes, give readers insights into their specific styles, and enable 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). Presenting unusual or absurd personalities, some authors try to portray characters in different ways to raise the various feelings of the readers (Fadillah et al., 2022). Therefore, literary work has a societal purpose to portray life in a context of socio-cultural reality (Arafah et al., 2023). Literature also functions as a form of communication, as a gateway to explore and introduce culture, social dynamics, and the intricacies of human existence (Mutmainnah et al., 2022).

In linguistic communication, senders and recipients communicate directly or indirectly through various mediums, such as social media (Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). In communicating, some signs are categorized as meaning relations, indicating that the words have additional meanings to be interpreted within their context (Hasjim et al., 2020). Those signs need to be interpreted using an implicit method to achieve an understanding (Kuswanti et al., 2023). As well as computational linguistics and emoji, signs and symbols are subject to interpretation that conveys different meanings or specific messages (Iksora et al., 2022). In literary work, the author and reader serve as the sender and recipient, whereas literary work functions as a communication medium in which thoughts and emotions are expressed utilizing language with cultural backgrounds (Takwa et al., 2022). At this point, language is expected to deliver messages from an author to the readers (Asri et al., 2023). Language, shaped profoundly by cultural influences, is integral in navigating the complexities of social interactions and daily life (Arafah 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 (Yulianti et al., 2022).

Literary work considers language the most crucial element in serving aesthetic aspects (Manugeran et al., 2023). In order to put ideas aesthetically, literature mainly uses figurative language to convey the author's ideas (Baa et al., 2023). Authors of literary work utilize beautiful language and distinctive writing styles to convey unique issues (Hasyim et al., 2020). To emphasize the uniqueness of their narratives, the authors combine various characteristics and signs that enhance the story's speciality (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019b). Moreover, local languages may familiarise people with a specific area's cultural heritage, encompassing its traditions and rituals that symbolize meaningful values (Arafah et al., 2020). As a part of the local wealth of Indonesian society, rituals are related to traditions and customs, which are full of values that the society has maintained (Takwa et al., 2024). Culture can strengthen personal identity and express specific values through signs and symbols (Hasyim et al., 2023). Literary works serve as manifestations of each author's vision and record of cultural events in the past (Yudith et al., 2023). Therefore, preserving local language is an attempt to keep local wisdom and cultural heritage essential for a society (Halil et al., 2024; Takwa et al., 2024).

Literary work is produced in various forms, including written works and performances (Asriyanti et al., 2022). It differentiates into several types, such as short stories, poems, novels, plays, and songs, presenting valuable insights (Arafah, 2018). Novels stand out for their complexity, as they depict characters' lives in specific forms, times, and places, presenting conflicts and their resolution. The complex reality of human life can be seen within the storyline of a literary work (Afiah et al., 2022). Regardless of their form, literary works contain meaningful lessons and information about human existence (Purwaningsih et al., 2020). In the era of information and technology, literary works have developed and strengthened their quality in illustrating the diversity of human thought (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019a). Readers gain insights from a novel about various aspects of the characters' lives within the depicted world, including their feelings, thoughts, beliefs, traditions, and customs (Arafah, 2018).

Available in various languages, novels become a worldwide phenomenon. Numerous popular novels exist in English as an international language. People who understand and communicate in English can surely get more opportunities (Kaharuddin et al., 2023). Reading an English novel can be an attempt to test the readers' skills to comprehend a text (Mardiana et al., 2023). Regarding enhancing skills in using English as a second language, Indonesian readers, especially EFL students, may easily use and access literary resources offline and online (Anggrawan et al., 2019; Purwaningsih et al., 2020). Any societal changes will affect the whole system (Takwa et al., 2022). Globally, people can connect through digital media and instantly access information (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). This rapid access to information brings out various issues (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). Due to the young generation's changing internet use, it will be easy for them to learn through digital media (Arafah et al., 2023). Digital media and the young generation can even utilize electronic devices through artificial intelligence (AI) in the learning process (Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Furthermore, technological advancement is advantageous and has disadvantages for educators and students (Suhadi et al., 2022). Encountering innovation in the technology era, educators have tried providing various online materials simultaneously with digital literacy that enhance students' skills in learning language (Arafah et al., 2023; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). In response to the situation, teachers must use a learning model with a technological-based framework

(Usman et al., 2024). Regardless of the challenge, students, especially beginners with high motivation for learning, may overcome learning difficulties and achieve their goals (Arafah et al., 2020). Being optimistic and confident with a basic and social skill will make it easier for students to face and solve problems (Arafah et al., 2024; Misnah et al., 2024). Another aspect of second language acquisition is that students may improve their cultural knowledge of the language they are learning (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023), which allows students to build and strengthen their characters more firmly (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022). Therefore, at this point, literary work can teach the readers character education values based on the cultural knowledge in the story (Arafah et al., 2024). This kind of cross-cultural learning improves cross-cultural interactions to identify more cultural norms and values (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). This is captured by eco-literacy, where humans closely treat the environment (Abbas et al., 2024). Cultural knowledge related to constantly evolving phenomena captured by authors of literary work represents their dissatisfaction or disagreement with the environment (Siwi et al., 2022; Sunyoto et al., 2022). Elizabeth Gaskell is one of the female authors specializing in critiques of women's issues and their experiences.

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865), born on September 29, 1810, in Lindsey Row, was a highly admired female Victorian author. Gaskell made a noteworthy contribution to the literary world through several outstanding works, namely *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 works 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. Being recognized as vulnerable, women have faced discrimination ever since (Yudith et al., 2024). This incident forced women to be treated unequally by men (Arafah et al., 2024). 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).

Ruth (1853) 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. Ruth and other female characters in this novel show some symptoms of Nice Girl syndrome through their dialogues and thoughts. This study aims to educate its readers to be aware of these symptoms and stop them from developing and having this syndrome.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Beverly Engel first brought attention to Nice Girl Syndrome in 2008 through her "*Nice Girl Syndrome*" book. Engel, a psychotherapist, often observed clients describe painful, shocking, and bizarre experiences. Moreover, Engel (2008, p. 5) focused on the beliefs and attitudes that lead 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). Engel (2008, p. 17) stated that there are seven types of Nice Girls (women who have Nice Girl syndrome), namely the doormat, the pretender, the innocent, the victim, the martyr, the prude, and the enlightened one. These Nice Girls often have certain beliefs and attitudes in common, which Engel called "The Ten False Beliefs", which are the symptoms of this syndrome (Gaskell, 2008, p. 33) listed below:

1. Other people's feelings and needs are far more critical than my own.
2. If I am friendly (and fair) to other people, they will be friendly (and fair) to me.
3. What other people think about me is more important than my self-esteem, health, or safety.
4. If I am perfect, I will be accepted and loved.
5. If I act naive and innocent, people will take care of me, and I will not have to grow up.
6. I do not have the right to stand up for myself or act on my behalf.
7. Anger is a destructive emotion and should not be expressed directly to those with whom you are angry.
8. It is better to avoid conflict at all costs.
9. There is good in everyone, and if you give someone enough chances, he or she will eventually show it to you.
10. Women need men to protect them and support them financially.

Nice Girl syndrome is not formed by itself. Four primary origins of Nice Girls' behaviour formed gradually (Engel, 2008, p. 27). These four significant origins include biological predisposition, societal, familial, and experiential beliefs. It can trigger a woman to develop a mental disorder, Nice Girl syndrome. It is crucial to recognize and be aware of these symptoms mentioned above, considering the consequences may affect both mentally and physically. Mental disorders affect cognition, emotion, and behavioural control and substantially interfere with children's ability to learn and adults' ability to function in their families, at work, and in the broader society (Jamison et al., 2006). Mental disorders begin early in life and often run a chronic recurrent course.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study applies the procedure and principle of the qualitative method. Data were collected by closely reading and

deeply understanding *Ruth* while taking notes of certain words and lines. They were analyzed using a Nice Girl syndrome theory to identify dialogues and thoughts of female characters that interpret and illustrate symptoms of Nice Girl syndrome. This study is essential to raise awareness regarding mental disorders, especially Nice Girl syndrome, to prevent women from developing this syndrome by recognizing the symptoms early.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Gaskell's *Ruth* illustrates seven out of ten symptoms of Nice Girl syndrome. Each symptom is displayed by female characters, namely Ruth Hilton, Jenny Wood, Miss Duncombe, Mrs Bellingham, Miss Faith Benson, Sally, Mrs Bradshaw, and Jemima Bradshaw.

Extract 1

After the first day, she never left the room; she forced herself to eat because his service needed her strength. She did not indulge in tears because the weeping she longed for would make her less able to attend to him. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 1 (162))

The first symptom is, "Other people's feelings and needs are far more important than my self-esteem." Mr. Bellingham, the man Ruth fell in love with, had a brain fever, and no one else but Ruth was around him. Ruth took full responsibility for Mr. Bellingham. She did not think or be aware of what she needed at the moment, like eating or sleeping, but she served and cared for him all the time.

Extract 2

"That's all very fine, and I dare say very true," a slightly surprised Miss Benson remarked. However, as they say, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," and I would much rather have received a sincere "thank you" right now for everything I had been preparing to do for her than the enormous consequences you assure me will occur in the "sweep of eternity." Thurstan, try not to be depressed, or I'll leave the room. When I am a bit too quick or eager, you gaze at me with a calm dejection that I cannot take. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 1 (262))

The second symptom is "If I am nice (and fair) to other people, they will be nice (and fair) to me". In the data above, Faith Benson was trying to help the helpless Ruth by taking Ruth into her home and planning everything so she could live adequately. She expected Ruth to say "Thank you" for her effort, but Ruth never said the word. She has been nice to her, and she expected her to be pleasant toward her.

Extract 3

Her behaviour was so docile as to be spiritless; she fulfilled her father's wishes with a neurotic rush and quickness, acting quickly if she believed Mr Farquhar would intervene in any way. It was obvious that she wanted to owe him nothing. After chatting with her father, she left the room when he entered. However, when Mr Bradshaw initially expressed his desire for her to stay, she stayed put—silent, uninterested, and unaware of all that was happening—at least, it appeared that way. She would diligently labour at her sawing as if it were her source of income; her eyes were heavy and puffy from sobbing, and she would lift them before answering any questions. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 2 (162))

The third symptom is "What other people think about me is more important than my self-esteem, health, or even my safety". In the data above, Jemima Bradshaw repressed herself because she had to do what her father desired to make Mr Farquhar think nice of her. Her whole cheerful personality changed to make Mr. Farquhar amused of her.

The fourth symptom is "If I am good and perfect, I will be accepted and loved." In *Ruth*, Jemima Bradshaw tries to be the woman that Mr Farquhar desires by changing her character to make him fall in love with her. As Gaskell depicted, "*For an instant, she planned to become and to be all he could wish her; to change her very nature for him*" (Gaskell, 1853, p. 2 (146)).

Extract 4

Ruth, who had a soft spot on her face and was attracted to small children, went up to pet the little one and smiled. As she was about to kiss him, Harry, whose face had been reddening since the play started, raised his sturdy little right arm and gave Ruth a powerful blow to the face. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 1 (145))

Ruth turned away, humbly and meekly, with a bent head and slow, uncertain steps. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 1 (146))

The following symptom is "I don't have the right to stand up for myself or act on my behalf". In the data above, Ruth was slapped by a kid named Harry simply because Ruth was playing with his younger sister and about to kiss the baby. After being slapped, Ruth just walked away with a bent head. She could stand for herself, but she let the kid do that abusive movement toward her.

Extract 5

With indignation of difference, she dared not show her father, she flashed at him. She had some diviner instinct telling her that, despite their experience, they knew something good and acceptable in her first expressions. However, the opposition turned her irritable and angry, and the arguments he would always start (when he was with her when her father was away) usually resulted in some vehemence of expression on her part that upset Mr Farquhar, who failed to notice how she vented her resentment in self-abjection and tears when she was by herself in her chamber. (Gaskell, 1853, p. 2 (144))

The following symptom is "Anger is a destructive emotion and should not be expressed, especially directly to those with whom you are angry". In the data above, she was angry when Jemima Bradshaw argued with Mr. Farquhar.

However, she repressed her anger, did not show it to him, and returned to her room.

Extract 6

"I am very sorry, sir," said Ruth, her eyes filling with tears; and then she remembered that it was very dull for him to be alone with her, heavy-hearted as she had been all day". (Gaskell, 1853, p. 1 (152))

The last symptom in the novel is "It is better to avoid conflict at all costs". In the data above, Ruth was sad because of the kid's big slap. The kid slapped Ruth because of the rumour that she had been living with an unmarried man. However, Ruth does not have the heart to tell Mr Bellingham about what happened because it may hurt Mr Bellingham's feelings or insult him. She was sullen and sank in her thoughts, but Mr. Bellingham saw it. He scolded Ruth for displaying that sullenness before him and expected her to smile all day. Ruth tried to be friendly, asking for forgiveness to avoid conflict with Mr. Bellingham.

The other three symptoms are not shown in the novel. Those symptoms are "If I act naive and innocent, people will take care of me, and I will not have to grow up", "There is good in everyone, and if you give someone enough chances, he or she will eventually show it to you", and "Women need men to protect them and support them financially". The female characters in this novel are primarily financially independent and work hard for their lives. They try to be friendly, kind, and loveable by suppressing their emotions.

V. CONCLUSION

Nice Girl syndrome is a widespread phenomenon that often goes unrecognized, as societal pressures compel women to conform to specific values and norms. By recognizing and being aware of its symptoms through the example illustrated by Gaskell in *Ruth*, women may avoid developing a mental disorder since it may affect their emotions and physical ability to function in society. Literary work can be used to raise awareness about mental disorders or syndromes. This study emphasizes the idea that literary work is not simply an entertainment product but also can be a game changer that raises awareness of its reader about the specific psychological phenomenon, Nice Girl syndrome, for instance.

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Learning: Case Study at SMK Negeri 2 Kolaka (2022), Process and Meaning of the Media Philosophy of Brother Traditional (DANAKANG) Media in the Bajo Tribe's Sister (KAKA') Ritual in Kolaka District (2022), The Essence of the Value Courage of the Buginese-Makassarese Man in the Novel *Pulau* by Aspar Paturusi: A Genetic Structural Review (2022), Implementation of Children's Character Values in Songs for Putting Children to Sleep in the Tolaki Community (2022), Catalysis of Quality Assurance for 2020 Iasp-Based Graduates in Educational Units in Central Buton (2023), Local Wisdom of the Butonese Community in Poetry at the Butuni Palace by Syaifuddin Gani: Literary Ecological Study (2023), Paramedic Verbal Violence against Post-COVID 19 Patients at the Tanete Public Health Center Bulukumba District, Bulukumba Regency: Pragmatic Structure (2023), and Designing Mobile Games Application for Digitalization of English Teaching and Learning Materials for Elementary School (2023).

The Effect of Language Anxiety and Proficiency on Saudi EFL Learners' Attitudes Towards Teacher Code-Switching

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Abstract—This study investigates the attitudes of Saudi EFL learners towards teacher code-switching in the classroom and explores the effect of foreign language anxiety and language proficiency on these attitudes. This mixed-methods study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative part involved the use of a self-reported questionnaire to elicit learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching and foreign-language anxiety. Additionally, qualitative data were collected through an open-ended question to explore learners' perspectives on the role of teacher code-switching in the classroom. The sample comprised 146 Saudi EFL students. The findings indicated that the Saudi EFL learners generally held a positive attitude towards teacher code-switching, perceiving it as a beneficial instructional, communicative tool for language learning. Furthermore, the study revealed that foreign language anxiety had a significant effect on learners' attitudes towards code-switching, with high-anxiety learners exhibiting more positive attitudes than low-anxiety learners in three dimensions: subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. Language proficiency, however, had no significant influence on learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching. These findings have important pedagogical implications that could help language teachers implement code-switching as an effective instructional tool to reduce learners' anxiety and enhance the language learning experience.

Index Terms—code-switching, anxiety, proficiency, attitudes, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Research into classroom code-switching has emerged as a prominent area of study in the field of second-language research. This body of research focuses on the phenomenon of teachers and students switching between languages within the classroom setting (Nguyen et al., 2016). Classroom code-switching research has been conducted in various linguistic environments, including English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) classrooms. These studies have explored code-switching from the perspectives of both teachers and students and examined its effect on language development, academic achievement, cultural identity, and classroom communication. Teacher code-switching has gained significant attention as an effective instructional tool in language classrooms. It has been described as an inevitable and natural response behavior in a bilingual context (Cook, 2001; Cook, 2008; Widdowson, 2003). Widdowson (2003) pointed out that learners' use of their first language is inevitable and should be turned into a pedagogic advantage rather than viewed as an impediment to be removed or avoided. However, learners' attitudes towards this practice play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of teacher code-switching. Positive attitudes towards teacher code-switching can facilitate learning a second language, while negative attitudes may hinder students' acceptance and use of this instructional tool. Understanding learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching is therefore essential to implementing this practice effectively in the classroom.

Despite the frequent research into teacher code-switching, few studies have examined Saudi EFL learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching in the classroom and the effect of individual characteristics, such as language anxiety and proficiency, on shaping these attitudes. The current study aims to contribute to the literature on classroom code-switching by exploring learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching, with a focus on the effects of the individual characteristics of foreign language anxiety and language proficiency on their attitudes.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1- What are the attitudes of Saudi EFL learners towards teacher code-switching in the classroom?
- 2- Is there a statistically significant difference in the attitudes towards teacher code-switching among Saudi EFL learners with varying levels of language anxiety?
- 3- Is there a statistically significant difference in the attitudes towards teacher code-switching among Saudi EFL learners with different proficiency levels?

Overall, this research endeavors to provide valuable insights that can inform language educators, teachers, and researchers in designing effective instructional practices and strategies for diverse learners in the EFL context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Code-Switching

Code-switching has been defined in numerous ways by different researchers, depending on the focus of their studies. It is often described as the “insertion of a word or phrase from a language other than that being spoken into a single sentence, or the switching back and forth between two languages or dialects” (Fromkin & Rodman, 1998, p. 522). Cook (2000) further emphasized that code-switching occurs when both speakers are proficient in the same two languages and switch between them during communication. A more recent definition characterized code-switching as the alternating use of two languages within a single discourse, sentence, or constituent (Bhatti et al., 2018).

B. Classroom Code-Switching

Classroom code-switching has been extensively examined in the contexts of ESL and EFL classrooms. The investigation of code-switching in classroom discourse is motivated by the fact that language classrooms are viewed as social situations where participants share knowledge of communicative constraints and options, aligning them as members of one speech community (Gumperz & Hymes, 1986). Research into classroom code-switching has identified two teaching approaches: monolingual teaching, which advocates teaching a language without reference to another language, and bilingual teaching, which suggests using a language that students already know (Hall & Cook, 2012). It is widely recognized that achieving a balance between these two approaches is crucial. Incorporating a student’s first language into language instruction can have benefits, such as enhancing understanding, engagement, and learning outcomes (Hall & Cook, 2012).

Classroom code-switching serves various functions, including instructional, communicative, social, and affective functions. Teacher code-switching can be used as an instructional tool to support students’ comprehension and learning by providing explanations, clarifying concepts, and giving examples (Cook, 2001; Tang, 2002; Ferguson, 2003). Additionally, teacher code-switching facilitates communication and interactions in the classroom (Larbah & Oliver, 2015; Cook, 2001; Tang, 2002; Shin & Milroy, 2000). Furthermore, classroom code-switching serves social and affective functions by enabling teachers and students to express themselves, show solidarity, and establish social relationships and by reducing anxiety, influencing emotional experiences, and enhancing motivation (Larbah & Oliver, 2015; Ferguson, 2003; Mattsson & Burenhult-Mattsson, 1999; Bailey, 2011). Ferguson (2003) reported three common functions of classroom code-switching: facilitating access to the subject, managing classroom discourse, and fostering interpersonal relations. Code-switching for subject access aims to help learners to understand the subject matter of their lessons. Code-switching for classroom management is used to motivate, discipline, and praise students and signal changes in interaction patterns. Code-switching for interpersonal relations humanizes the classroom environment and negotiates different identities.

C. Language Anxiety and Code-Switching

Language anxiety has been recognized as a significant factor that can affect students’ acquisition of a second or foreign language (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Language anxiety is “the subjective feelings of apprehension and fear associated with language learning and use” (Richards & Schmidt, 2013, p. 313). Clément (1980) conceptualized foreign language anxiety as encompassing learners’ emotions, self-esteem, and self-confidence.

Code-switching has been suggested as a technique to mitigate language anxiety, as it creates a more relaxed and less stressful learning environment for students (Bailey, 2011). This is particularly evident when teachers communicate in the student’s first language (Bailey, 2011). However, research into the role of teacher code-switching in reducing anxiety has yielded conflicting findings. Some studies have indicated that the use of the first language does not reduce student anxiety, while others have suggested the opposite (Levine, 2003; Rolin-Ianziti & Varshney, 2008). Levine (2003) argued that incorporating the target language into instruction can be advantageous for language learning, despite the presence of anxiety.

The relationship between learners’ anxiety and their attitudes towards code-switching has received limited attention in the literature. Rezaee and Fathi (2021) conducted a study into the effect of learners’ anxiety levels on their perception of code-switching. They found a positive relationship between anxiety and learners’ perceptions, suggesting that learners with high anxiety levels hold more positive attitudes towards code-switching than low-anxiety learners do. This indicates that code-switching serves as a coping mechanism for anxious learners.

D. Language Proficiency and Code-Switching

The perception of code-switching as a sign of language proficiency or deficiency has been a subject of debate among scholars. Some studies have suggested that code-switching is used to compensate for a deficiency in language, particularly when speakers cannot express themselves effectively, reflecting the speaker’s limited language proficiency (Cheng & Butler, 1989; Muthusamy et al., 2020). Other scholars, however, have argued that code-switching requires language competence in both languages and is not indicative of a deficiency (Becker, 1997). Viduya (2018) further supported this argument by finding that code-switching is not symptomatic of low proficiency levels in the target language.

Research exploring the relationship between learners’ attitudes towards code-switching and language proficiency is limited. Rezaee and Fathi (2016) investigated the effect of language proficiency on learners’ perception of code-switching. They found that low-proficiency learners had more positive attitudes towards code-switching than high-proficiency learners did. Similarly, Hamouda and Aljumah (2020) examined the perceptions of Saudi EFL university students towards code-switching across various proficiency levels and found a correlation between the level of language proficiency and the use of code-switching in EFL classes. They found that students with medium and low proficiency levels held positive attitudes towards the use of code-switching, whereas students with high proficiency levels exhibited negative attitudes. However, Aldalbaly (2022) found no statistically significant relationship between students’ proficiency levels and their attitudes towards code-switching. These findings suggest that the relationship between language proficiency and attitudes towards teacher code-switching is complex and not easily generalized.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The study included a sample of 146 Saudi learners majoring in the English language. The participants were selected using purposive sampling. Their language proficiency levels were determined based on their scores on the Standardized Test of English Proficiency (STEP). They were grouped into three proficiency levels: upper intermediate (scores 83–100), intermediate (scores 67–82), and low intermediate (scores 50–66). Additionally, the participants were classified into two levels of anxiety: low anxiety and high anxiety. This classification was based on their scores on the anxiety test, which had a total score range of 8 to 40. The median score of the test was calculated to be 24, and participants with scores of 24 and above were classified as the high-anxiety group, while those with scores below 24 were classified as the low-anxiety group. Table 1 summarizes the grouping of the participants based on proficiency levels and anxiety levels.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS GROUPING

Groups		N	(%)
Proficiency	Upper intermediate	41	(28.1)
	Intermediate	81	(55.5)
	Low intermediate	24	(16.4)
	Total	146	
Anxiety	High anxiety	79	(54.1)
	Low anxiety	67	(47.9)
	Total	146	

B. Instruments

Data were collected through a self-reported questionnaire designed to assess learners’ attitudes towards teacher code-switching in the classroom and learners’ foreign language anxiety. The questionnaire consisted of two sections, each targeting a specific construct. The first section focused on learners’ attitudes towards teacher code-switching and comprised 20 items categorized into four subscales: teacher persona, subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. The attitude questionnaire was adapted from a previous study conducted by Yao (2011). It employed a 5-point Likert scale to measure participants’ level of agreement. It is important to note that three items (2, 3, 4) were negatively worded. In addition, an open-ended question was included to elicit in-depth responses regarding the perceived advantages of teacher code-switching.

The second section aimed to assess learners’ foreign language anxiety and was based on a scale developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). Only eight items were selected for this study, following previous studies’ recommendations and validation of the short scale (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Participants’ level of agreement was measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Items 1 and 5 were negatively worded. The data from this section were used to measure the level of anxiety experienced by learners when using a foreign language.

C. Data Reliability and Validity

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected, the instruments used for assessing attitudes towards teacher code-switching and foreign language classroom anxiety were adapted from established scales used in previous research. The questionnaire items assessing learners’ attitudes towards teacher code-switching were adapted from Yao (2011), who reported a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.85 for the overall scale. The subscales within this section showed satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha values ranging from 0.75 to 0.82. The questionnaire items for assessing foreign language anxiety were adapted from the scale developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986),

which has been widely used and has shown good reliability and validity. Previous research using this scale has reported Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.80 to 0.90, indicating high internal consistency. In the current study, the reliability analysis of the attitudes and anxiety scales yielded good Cronbach's alpha values (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
INSTRUMENT RELIABILITY

Instrument	<i>N</i>	Cronbach's alpha
<i>Attitude scale</i>	20	0.943
<i>Anxiety scale</i>	8	0.889

Additionally, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample of 10 participants to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the questionnaire items. Based on the feedback received, minor revisions were made to improve the clarity of the items.

D. Data Analysis

To analyze data quantitatively, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used. Initially, a normality test was conducted to assess the distribution of data obtained from the questionnaire. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov test indicated that participants' responses were normally distributed in both scales. Therefore, an independent sample *t*-test was used to determine any significant difference between the two anxiety groups. Moreover, an independent samples one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was carried out to determine any significant differences between the three language proficiency groups in their attitudes towards teacher code-switching. Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the existence of a correlation between the variables in question. Descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations, and percentages, were employed to provide an overview of learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching.

To analyze the qualitative data obtained from the open-ended question, Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach was used. This approach involved a systematic process that involved becoming familiar with the data, coding, developing themes, reviewing themes, refining themes, labeling the identified themes, and reporting the findings. By using this approach, it is possible to identify and analyze the main themes that emerged from participants' responses to the open-ended question.

IV. RESULTS

A. Learners' Attitudes Towards Teacher Code-Switching

The first question aims to assess learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching in classrooms. A descriptive analysis was conducted, calculating means and standard deviations to provide an overview of the data. The results, presented in Table 3, show the means and standard deviations for each of the four attitude constructs (teacher persona, subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations) and the overall attitudes towards teacher code-switching.

The findings revealed that learners hold a positive overall attitude towards teacher code-switching, as indicated by a mean score of 3.69 ($SD = 0.716$). Moreover, when analyzing the four attitude constructs, it was observed that learners consistently exhibited positive attitudes (see Table 3). For instance, the mean scores for teacher persona, subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations were 3.56, 3.85, 3.59, and 3.78, respectively. The relatively high mean scores and low standard deviations indicated a consistent preference among the participants, suggesting a generally favorable attitude towards teacher code-switching.

TABLE 3
LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHER CODE-SWITCHING

Attitude constructs	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Teacher persona	146	3.56	0.826
Subject access	146	3.85	0.809
Classroom management	146	3.59	0.834
interpersonal relations	146	3.78	0.794
Overall attitude	146	3.69	0.716

Additionally, qualitative analysis of the open-ended question on the advantages of teacher code-switching provided further insights into students' attitudes (see Table 4). The analysis revealed that most of the students (66.02%) associated teacher code-switching with enhancing the learning experience. Other advantages mentioned by students included increased attention (12.82%), reduced anxiety (10.25%), increased interaction and communication (7.05%), fun and enjoyment (2.56%), and increased motivation (1.28%). These findings suggest that students perceive teacher code-switching as a beneficial instructional, psychological, and communicative tool in various aspects of their learning.

TABLE 4
LEARNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE ADVANTAGES OF TEACHER CODE-SWITCHING

Theme	N	(%)
Enhancing learning experience	103	(66.02)
Increasing attention	20	(12.82)
Reducing anxiety	16	(10.25)
Increasing interaction and communication	11	(7.05)
Creating Fun and enjoyment	4	(2.56)
Increasing motivation	2	(1.28)
Total	156	(100)

B. Effect of Learners' Language Anxiety on Attitudes Towards Teacher Code-Switching

The second research question investigated the effect of learners' language anxiety on their attitudes towards teacher code-switching. It was hypothesized that learners' language anxiety would have a significant effect on their attitudes towards teacher code-switching. To test this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare the attitude constructs between the two groups: the low-anxiety and high-anxiety groups.

The *t*-test results revealed that learners' anxiety had no statistically significant effect on their attitudes towards the teacher's persona, as indicated by a *t*-value of -1.934 ($p = 0.055$). This suggests that there was no significant difference in attitudes towards the teacher's attributes between the low-anxiety group (mean = 3.41, *SD* = 0.905) and the high-anxiety group (mean = 3.68, *SD* = 0.738).

In contrast, the *t*-test results showed significant differences between the two anxiety groups in regard to the other three attitude constructs: subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations (see Table 5). The *t*-values of these constructs were -3.592, -4.287, and -3.844, respectively (all $p < 0.001$), indicating significant differences. The low-anxiety group exhibited more negative attitudes towards subject access (mean = 3.59, *SD* = 0.912), classroom management (mean = 3.28, *SD* = 0.865), and interpersonal relations (mean = 3.52, *SD* = 0.853) than the high-anxiety group (mean = 4.07, *SD* = 0.638; mean = 3.84, *SD* = 0.716; mean = 3.52, *SD* = 0.853, respectively).

In summary, while learners' anxiety did not have a significant effect on attitudes towards the teacher's persona, it did have a significant effect on attitudes towards subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. These results highlight the role of anxiety in shaping learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching. They also suggest that learners' anxiety levels may influence their attitudes towards teacher code-switching.

TABLE 5
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Attitude constructs	High anxiety			Low anxiety			<i>t</i> -test	
	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i> -value	Sig
Teacher persona	79	3.68	0.738	67	3.41	0.905	-1.934	.055
Subject access	79	4.07	0.638	67	3.59	0.912	-3.592	<.001
Classroom Management	79	3.84	0.716	67	3.28	0.865	-4.287	<.001
Interpersonal Relation	79	4.01	0.669	67	3.52	0.853	-3.844	<.001
Overall attitude	79	3.90	0.571	67	3.45	0.794	-3.834	<.001

C. Learners' Attitudes Towards Teacher Code-Switching and Language Proficiency

The third research question examined the effect of language proficiency on learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching. The hypothesis posited that language proficiency would have a significant effect on attitudes towards code-switching. To test this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted to compare learners' attitudes towards code-switching across different proficiency levels.

Contrary to the hypothesis, the results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no statistically significant difference among the attitudes towards teacher code-switching across the three proficiency groups (see Table 6). This is evidenced by the level of statistical significance, which is greater than 0.05. For the attitude construct of teacher persona, the *F*-value was 1.661 ($p = 0.194$), indicating no statistically significant differences among proficiency groups' attitudes towards teacher persona. Regarding the attitude construct of subject access, the *F*-value was 0.453 ($p = 0.636$), indicating no statistically significant differences among the proficiency groups' attitudes towards subject access. For the attitude construct of classroom management, the *F*-value was 0.928 ($p = 0.398$), indicating no statistically significant differences among the proficiency groups' attitudes towards classroom management. Regarding the attitude construct of interpersonal relations, the *F*-value was 0.826 ($p = 0.440$), suggesting no statistically significant differences among the three proficiency groups. For the overall attitude, the *F*-value was 0.907, indicating no statistically significant differences among the proficiency groups' overall attitudes towards teacher code-switching. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, which states that there are no statistically significant differences between students' attitudes towards teacher code-switching due to their proficiency level.

TABLE 6
ONE-WAY ANOVA TEST

Attitude constructs	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Teacher persona	Between groups	2.250	2	1.125	1.661	0.194
	Within groups	96.840	143	0.677		
	Total	99.090	145			
Subject access	Between groups	0.598	2	0.299	0.453	0.636
	Within groups	94.403	143	0.660		
	Total	95.002	145			
Class management	Between groups	1.294	2	0.647	0.928	0.398
	Within groups	99.693	143	0.697		
	Total	100.987	145			
Interpersonal relations	Between groups	1.046	2	0.523	0.826	0.440
	Within groups	90.492	143	0.633		
	Total	91.538	145			
Overall attitude	Between groups	0.931	2	0.466	0.907	0.406
	Within groups	73.446	143	0.514		
	Total	74.377	145			

In summary, the findings of the one-way ANOVA test revealed no statistically significant differences in learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching based on their language proficiency level. This suggests that language proficiency does not play a significant role in shaping learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigates EFL learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching in the classroom and examines the influence of foreign language anxiety and language proficiency on these attitudes. The findings revealed that Saudi EFL learners generally hold a positive attitude towards teacher code-switching in terms of teacher persona, subject access, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. Moreover, the analysis of students' attitudes towards the advantages of teacher code-switching indicated that most students perceived it as an instructional tool to enhance the learning experience. This finding supports Larbah and Oliver's (2015) study. Furthermore, the study found that learners' anxiety significantly influenced their attitudes towards teacher code-switching, particularly in the dimensions of subject access, classroom management, and teacher interpersonal relations. This finding supports the work of Rezaee and Fathi (2021), highlighting the effect of anxiety on learners' perception of teacher code-switching. It is important, however, to note that no significant difference was observed between the low- and high-anxiety groups in terms of their attitudes towards teacher persona. This suggests that anxiety may not play a significant role in shaping learners' perceptions of the attributes of teachers who use code-switching. Furthermore, the study found that language proficiency has no significant effect on learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching. This finding contrasts with the previous studies conducted by Hamouda and Aljumah (2020) and Rezaee and Fathi (2016), which reported significant differences in attitudes based on language proficiency.

The pedagogical implications of this study are significant for EFL teachers and learners as well as language educators and researchers. Firstly, teachers should be attentive to learners' perspectives on code-switching, especially regarding subject access, classroom management, and teacher interpersonal relations. By understanding learners' attitudes and preferences, teachers can adapt their use of code-switching to meet individual needs. Additionally, teachers should be aware of the potential effect of language anxiety on learners' attitudes towards code-switching. Anxiety can have a significant influence on how learners perceive and evaluate the use of code-switching in the classroom. To address this, teachers can implement strategies to create a supportive learning environment that helps reduce anxiety levels. Furthermore, the findings of the study suggest that language proficiency does not significantly affect learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching. This implies that teachers should not rely solely on learners' language proficiency when deciding whether to use code-switching as an instructional tool. Instead, they should consider individual needs and preferences, taking into account the potential benefits of code-switching for enhancing the learning experience.

This study has certain limitations, however, that should be addressed in future research. Firstly, the data collection relied on self-reported measures, such as questionnaires and open-ended responses, which are subject to potential biases. Future research could consider employing additional methods, such as interviews or classroom observations, to triangulate the findings. Moreover, the study focused primarily on language anxiety and language proficiency as factors influencing attitudes towards code-switching. Future research could consider a broader range of variables to provide a more comprehensive analysis.

Understanding learners' attitudes towards teacher code-switching, along with the influence of individual differences, will contribute valuable insights to the field of second-language learning and inform instructional practices in EFL classrooms.

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The Role of Digital-Game Based Language Learning in EFL Vocabulary Learning and Retention: A Case Study at a Higher Educational Institute in Oman

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Abstract—This study investigates the role of Digital-Game Based Language Learning (DGBLL) in helping students learn and retain English vocabulary items in a foreign language context. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected from 80 students enrolled in four different levels of the General Foundation Program at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences, Ibra, Oman. The students were exposed to practice learning the meaning of ten vocabulary items per level using Kahoot and Wordwall games. Three tests were administered: a pre-test in week 1, a post-test after practicing the vocabulary items using the previously mentioned digital games in week 4, and a retention test in week 6. In addition, students' perceptions regarding the efficacy of DGBLL in the vocabulary learning process were measured via a questionnaire following the post-test. The findings indicated the students' positive attitudes in terms of utilizing DGBLL as a learning approach to mastering vocabulary regardless of gender or class level. Additionally, the findings demonstrated the effectiveness of DGBLL in vocabulary learning and retention. Hence, the study recommends using digital games to promote vocabulary learning and retention, resulting in a more engaging foreign language educational environment.

Index Terms—MALL, DGBLL, vocabulary learning, vocabulary retention

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary is given considerable importance in the field of language research, as it is considered crucial for attaining language proficiency. It is also unarguably fundamental for the development of all four language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. In fact, vocabulary helps learners to be more fluent, leads to better academic achievement, and boosts thinking and communication skills because words are considered tools to analyse, infer, and evaluate ideas. In the same vein, Alzahrani (2016) claims that to learn the target language effectively, learners need to develop a vocabulary that facilitates the learning process and enables them to be better readers and listeners. Furthermore, they cannot express themselves in writing and speaking skills without having some appropriate vocabulary knowledge. This is because a limited vocabulary repertoire may lead to unsuccessful communication.

Several researchers and educators use educational technology to facilitate foreign language vocabulary acquisition. Some confirmed that the use of digital games in the educational field has positively impacted students' learning (Guarini et al., 2022; Peconio et al., 2022). Game-Based Language Learning (GBLL) is one of the approaches used for this purpose. In this strategy, games are used to immerse students in vocabulary learning. Guarini and Peconio claimed that games are invaluable as they allow learners to practice language skills. Many studies have investigated digital games' benefits in vocabulary acquisition. For instance, the study conducted by Roslin and Hosseinpour (2021) provided empirical evidence of the potential effectiveness of some digital games used as interventions during online vocabulary instruction to enhance motivation for learning and retention. Similarly, Kazu and Kuvvetli (2023) mentioned in their research that "QUIZZIZ" as a digital game improved students' motivation to learn vocabulary.

Despite the myriad studies on DGBLL and vocabulary learning, poor vocabulary levels are still a pressing problem. More studies, therefore, need to be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of DGBLL in improving learners' vocabulary. Hence, the researchers find it necessary to conduct the current study which incorporates digital vocabulary games to enhance the learning and retention of vocabulary in an EFL context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is evident that resorting to memorization in teaching vocabulary is not advisable (Decarrico, 2001). Such traditional teaching methods may hinder the potential for involving the student in the learning process as the teacher is

seen as the 'controller of the class' (AlNatour & Hijazi, 2018). For this reason, technology integration in the classroom is crucial to creating a vibrant and productive learning environment. Teachers can use digital technologies to create engaging lessons and accommodate different learning styles. A variety of multimedia materials are available through educational applications, internet resources, and interactive software, which turns vocabulary lessons into engaging experiences. However, resorting to any means of technology to teach vocabulary should rely on a solid foundational theory. One of those theories is the Constructivist Learning Theory, which was originally proposed by Vygotsky (1978). The theory suggests that a good learning environment should guarantee a level of interaction between the learners and their peers as well as their instructor. For Vygotsky (1987), the instructor is seen as a facilitator and a source of knowledge who is responsible for providing tools for the learners to help them build their knowledge. Moreover, Burner (1966) contends that the Constructivist Learning Theory necessitates that knowledge is actively constructed by the learners through retrieving their background and current knowledge in a suitable learning environment.

According to Stockwell (2012), Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) is any form of language learning facilitated by the use of technology. TELL allows learners to control their learning pace, focus on their individual needs, and receive immediate feedback (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). Stockwell (2012) suggests that TELL is an umbrella term under which three other categories of technology-assisted teaching fall; namely, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), and Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL). The current study experiments with integrating MALL and DGBLL into one approach to teaching vocabulary.

The integration of games into the classroom environment is crucial as it turns education into an interactive and captivating experience. In addition to grabbing students' attention, games also create a joyful and upbeat environment that encourages a love for learning. Games provide meaningful contexts for learning modern English vocabulary and help learners gradually improve their skills in vocabulary building (Cameron, 2001; Huyen & Nga, 2003). Hooshyar et al. (2016), believe that DGBLL can be effective in improving various language skills such as vocabulary, grammar, and reading. Ho et al. (2021) perceive game-based learning as a set of exercises having a game at their core. One of those games was used by Zahro et al. (2013) to examine their effects on students' vocabulary achievement via crossword puzzles. They found that guessing games had a significant positive impact on students' vocabulary acquisition. Mahmoud and Tanni (2014) found that students' attitudes towards learning English were positively influenced by the use of games.

In 2003, Prensky coined the term 'Digital Game-Based Learning' (DGBL) while referring to the necessity of accommodating digital citizens in the classroom and meeting their needs. For him, digital citizens are learners who were born in the 21st century and are well-versed in using technology. Hence, devising a teaching strategy that integrates games into the teaching/learning process is invaluable. Digital-Game Based Language Learning has shown potential in developing learners' vocabulary acquisition (Alfuhaid, 2023). Most research outcomes have yielded positive effects of DGBL in language learning. In 2020, for instance, Moncada et al. made an effort to gauge the effect of digital games on learners' academic achievement; more precisely, how Kahoot affected students' acquisition of English through response games. In their quasi-experimental study, they used a pre-test and a post-test. Statistically, a significant difference was found between the group of students who used Kahoot and those who did not. Other researchers reached similar conclusions (Hung, 2011; Fotouhi-Ghazvini et al., 2009; Yip & Kwan, 2006; Zheng, 2008).

The recent developments in mobile technologies have entirely changed the teaching and learning process (Pavlik, 2015). George (2014) believes that MALL has reached new heights because of the development of mobile technologies. Mobile phones can open up new horizons with their unique features of accessibility, personalization, and probability (Saran & Seferoglu, 2010). Ally and Woodburn (2011) used mobile phones to teach grammar and vocabulary to L2 French students at the elementary level and found this method of learning useful as the students expressed interest in having more practice using their mobile phones. Another study carried out by Bouzaiane and Dayananda (2023) revealed that WhatsApp as a mobile phone application was proven to be effective in teaching Omani University students 15 phrasal verbs. Shahbaz and Ishtiaa Khan (2017), in turn, studied the efficiency of mobile applications in teaching 40 phrases compared to conventional activities. In their quasi-experimental research, they devised a pre-test and a post-test. The results showed that the participants in the experimental group performed significantly better in the post-test; thus, they found the mobile application to be effective.

Numerous studies attempted to examine the impact of mobile devices on vocabulary learning (Abbasi & Hashemi, 2013; Agca & Ozdemir, 2013; Amer, 2010; Basoglu & Akdemir, 2010; Chen 2013); however, some have found no statistically significant difference between using mobile applications in language learning and the traditional method of instruction. (Alemi et al., 2012; Fisher et al., 2009; Stockwell, 2010; Tosun, 2015), while others have found a moderate mean effect of mobile phones on education (Alrashedi & Capretz, 2015; Sung et al., 2016; Wong & Looi, 2011). Mahdi (2017) conducted a meta-analysis on research that compared the performance of learners who learned vocabulary using mobile devices to those learning using the traditional method of instruction. He found that the effect varied according to age and type and aspect of the vocabulary used in the teaching/learning process. In other words, using mobile phones resulted in higher achievement in productive and receptive vocabulary learning. However, adults seemed to benefit more than young learners. Dagdeler et al. (2020) studied the effectiveness of mobile applications in vocabulary knowledge improvement for 73 students at two universities in Turkey and found a significant difference between the

experimental group and the control group in terms of receptive vocabulary knowledge, while they found no difference in retention tests. They concluded that mobile applications were good only receptively for short-term memory.

For language learners to fully master the target language effectively, their vocabulary repertoire must be developed (Alzahrani, 2015). They are expected to be proficient at dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary items throughout their language acquisition journey (Huyen & Nga, 2003). However, “learning new words is a cumulative process, with words enriched and established as they are met again” (Nation, 2000, p. 6). Thus, teaching only a small set of vocabulary at a time is essential for efficient language learning and retention. By concentrating on a small list of terms, students can explore the subtleties of each word in greater detail, leading to a deeper comprehension of how they are used and understood in context. Groot (2000) believes that teaching a huge amount of vocabulary is not feasible as there will be less time available for students to master other skills. Nation (2005) adds that English teachers can teach a limited amount of vocabulary each session. For this reason, the present study confined the scope of vocabulary to a limited set of items to be used while conducting the research.

Learners’ attitudes and perceptions towards the use of digital games and mobile phones in the classroom have been heavily examined. In their study, White and Mills (2011) found that learners generally have positive attitudes toward using smartphones for language learning. Camilleri and Camilleri (2017) conducted a study to scrutinize the significance of using educational technologies on learning and students’ perceptions of the use of digital games in class by following a qualitative method of semi-structured interviews. They found that engagement in blended learning improved the students’ critical thinking and interpersonal skills as they worked in teams, and the students acknowledged that, in many respects, ubiquitous technology has improved their educational experience. Similarly, Anaraki (2008) found that the majority of participants in the study have a positive attitude towards mobile learning. Alzahrani (2015) attempted to find out the extent to which mobile phones can be used to aid students’ development of their vocabulary. Publications related to MALL were reviewed and the findings revealed that mobile technology assisted learners in developing their vocabulary. Furthermore, the participants held positive attitudes towards using mobile technologies in learning new vocabulary. Alhabahba et al. (2014) examined Saudi students’ behavioral factors that affect utilizing mobile phones in vocabulary learning and found that the students had positive attitudes toward vocabulary learning using mobile phones. Likewise, Amry (2014) conducted a study to measure the impact of mobile phones on Saudi students’ attitudes and concluded that there was a significant success in students’ performance because of mobile phones. In the same vein, Moncada et al. (2020) found that the learners in their study had positive attitudes toward using Kahoot as a means of improving their academic performance. Jamaatthuddin and Or-Kan (2021) examined students’ perceptions of the effectiveness of using game-based learning to learn English for students in higher education through the use of questionnaires and interviews and found that most students believed that game-based learning methods are effective in learning English. Studies examine how gender differences in perceptions occur while using games and technology to learn vocabulary. Yang (2012) conducted research in Taiwan and found no significant differences between male and female participants’ attitudes on MALL. The outcomes of the interviews showed that males are more used to using mobiles as a learning tool while the females viewed mobile phones as an entertainment facility. Viberg and Gronlund (2013) conducted a study on Chinese and Swedish students and found that females were more positive about using mobile phones in learning. Cai et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis of 50 studies and found that males showed a more positive attitude toward using technology than females, especially in aspects of belief and self-efficacy. Nonetheless, he contends that it is still unclear whether differences in adoption and use of technology exist between the two genders. Such conflicting research outcomes regarding the role of gender in students’ perceptions of using technology, mobile phones, and games in the classroom make it necessary to include this variable in the current study and further examine its role in the Omani context.

In short, the literature necessitates the significance of conducting further research related to using digital games in the classroom especially as such research is scarce in the Omani higher education context. Researching the effect of such technology-driven educational methods may foster a more engaging learning environment for Omani students.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current research employed a quantitative approach to investigate the following research hypotheses:

1. Students have positive attitudes towards DGBLL as a learning approach.
2. Students' perceptions of using DGBLL in vocabulary learning significantly correlate with class level.
3. Students' perceptions of using DGBLL in vocabulary learning significantly correlate with gender.
4. The DGBLL approach is effective in learning vocabulary.
5. The DGBLL approach has an effective role in vocabulary retention.

A. Sampling

The sample considered in this study was a subset of a large population of Omani EFL university students enrolled in levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 at the University of Technology and Applied Science –Ibra (UTAS-IBRA). The participants were 80 students aged 18 to 20. The sample number was decided according to the convenience of the researchers, and it was also chosen because of its practicality of being easy to handle.

B. Ethical Issues

The ethical Approval Form was filled out before the collection of data, as required by the Research and Consultancy Committee in the Foundation Program at UTAS-IBRA. Then, the approval for the research proposal and permission to conduct the research study were obtained from the committee. Subsequently, participants signed a consent form after being informed that participation was voluntary and being briefed about the study objective. They were also informed that the data collected during the study would remain confidential and participants would be anonymized.

C. Data Collection

The participants conducted a pre-test comprising multiple choice questions on 10 given vocabulary words selected from the target vocabulary of each level on week 1. The number of words is fixed to be only 10 for each level because according to Nation (2000) teaching only a small set of vocabulary at a time is essential for efficient language learning and retention. Following this, each group practiced learning the vocabulary words using Wordwall and Kahoot digital games over 2 weeks. These games have various playing options, enabling the students to learn the words in different ways while playing. In the fourth week, a post-test was administered to assess how well the participants had learned the given vocabulary through the digital games. Next, a structured questionnaire consisting of 10 items on the students' perceptions of the usefulness of DGBLL in learning vocabulary was administered. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Finally, after two weeks, a post-interval test was conducted to measure the effectiveness of the digital games in vocabulary retention.

D. Reliability and Validity of the Tools

A constant comparison was resorted to ensure the higher reliability of the questionnaire. They regularly reviewed and updated the questionnaire items. In addition, a colleague reviewed the questions and examined whether they reflected the topic to be assessed, that is, participants' perceptions regarding the usefulness of DGBLL in EFL vocabulary learning. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha is also used to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, and it is found to be .7, which showed that the questionnaire was highly reliable.

As for validity, the questionnaire items were translated into Arabic by a native Arab speaker to make sure that students understood all the items and responded accurately, contributing to the validity of the findings.

As for the tests, an experienced native English lecturer reviewed the content, validity, and level of difficulty of the questions. Based on his suggestions and comments, the questions were revised. Overall, the reviews of the tools and suggestions for the tools' improvements reinforced the reliability of the data collection tools and the validity of the findings as well.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Students' responses to the given questionnaire were entered into an SPSS database for descriptive analysis. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted for two fixed factors using varimax rotation to analyse the questionnaire items, resulting in two components. Correlation was also used to investigate the effect of class level and gender on students' perceptions of using DGBLL to learn vocabulary. As for analysing the effectiveness of DGBLL in vocabulary learning and retention, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was implemented.

V. RESULTS

A. Participants' Demographics

As illustrated in Table 1, 80 students participated in this research. Detailed information about the distribution of the study's participants by gender and class level is provided below.

TABLE 1
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SURVEY'S PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER AND CLASS LEVEL GENDER

		Male	Female	
Level	Level 1	3	9	12
	Level 2	12	11	23
	Level 3	14	9	23
	Level 4	11	11	22
Total	40	40	80	

B. Validity of the Questionnaire

First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests (Table 2) were carried out to explore the rightness of the data for Principle Component Analysis (PCA). The validity measure of the students' Perceptions of the Usefulness of Digital Games in Language Learning (SPUDGBLL) questionnaire was found to be 0.000, which is lower than 0.05 degree of probability. It, therefore, shows that the validity could be measured.

TABLE 2
KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.762
Approx. Chi-Square		246.849
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	45
	Sig.	.000

The loading of the questionnaire items was done using PCA and Pearson's correlation was also employed to determine the extent of association amongst the extracted items. This resulted in two components as shown in Table 3 below: items 1 to 7 (AUDGBLL) loaded onto factor 1, and items 8 to 10 (DUDGBLL) being loaded on factor 2.

TABLE 3
FACTOR LOADS OF SPUDGBLL COMPONENTS

	Advantages of using DGBLL	Disadvantages of using DGBLL
Q1	.671	-.082
Q2	.827	-.097
Q3	.721	-.177
Q4	.713	.011
Q5	.771	-.079
Q6	.541	.052
Q7	.679	-.010
Q8	.228	.707
Q9	.145	.866
Q10	.009	.769

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

C. Reliability of AUDGBLL and DUDGB

As indicated in Table 4, the component AUDGBLL with 7 items has a reliability index of .827 which is considered highly significant according to Cohen's table of effect sizes. This is a strong internal consistency between the items of this component making it a suitable factor for data collection and analysis. Similarly, the component DUGBLL is highly reliable, for the reliability index indicates .7.

TABLE 4
RELIABILITY OF AUDGBLL AND DUDGBLL

	Cronbach's Alpha
Items 1 to 7 (AUDGBLL)	.827
Items 8 to 10 (DUDGBLL)	.7

D. Students Perceptions of Using DGBLL in Vocabulary Learning

As indicated in Table 5 and according to the mean interpretation, students strongly agreed that using DGBLL for vocabulary learning is highly beneficial, for the mean values of the items range from 4.10 to 4.49. The findings corroborate that of Kazu and Kuvvetli (2023) in terms of students' positive attitudes toward the usefulness of DGBLL in vocabulary learning. Similarly, Jamaatthuddin and Or-Kan (2021) found that most students believe that game-based learning methods are effective in learning English and different conventional learning styles.

Participants also perceived DGBLL as a tool that can enhance and accelerate the process of vocabulary learning. They considered digital games as enjoyable, motivating, and interactive aids to learn vocabulary and; therefore, can be used to learn other language components or skills. Accordingly, digital games may not only foster a competitive spirit among students but also develop relationships and foster collaboration within the classrooms when playing in groups. They also view DGBLL as a convenient means to enhance autonomous learning. This overlaps with the finding of Cárdenas et al. (2020) which indicated that student perceptions of and attitudes towards the use of Kahoot as a digital game were found to be highly positive, contributing to better academic performance. In the same vein, the results of this study confirm the findings of Hung et al. (2018), in that both suggested the overall feasibility of using digital games for promoting language learning in various aspects.

However, the mean scores of items 8, 9, and 10, constituting the factor of DUDGBLL range between 2.83 to 2.96, and according to the mean score interpretation, it seems that students are neutral towards the notion indicating that the use of DGBLL could be time-consuming in the classroom or cause students to lose focus throughout the lesson. They did not express whether DGBLL could embarrass students in class when not achieving a good score while playing the games in the classroom or not.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SPUDGBLL

	N	Mean
Q1	80	4.44
Q2	80	4.33
Q3	80	4.49
Q4	80	4.21
Q5	80	4.29
Q6	80	4.10
Q7	80	4.20
Q8	80	2.96
Q9	80	2.91
Q10	80	2.83
Valid N (listwise)	80	

E. Students' Perceptions of Using DGBLL in Vocabulary Learning and Class Level

The correlation between students' perceptions of using DGBLL in vocabulary learning and class level can be seen in Table 6 below:

TABLE 6
CORRELATION BETWEEN SPUDGBLL AND CLASS LEVEL

Class Level	SPUDGBLL	
	Pearson Chi-Square	61.970
Sig. (2-tailed)	.213	
N	80	

The second hypothesis regarding question 1 presumes that students' perceptions of using DGBLL significantly correlate with class level. However, the correlation test (Table 6) lends no empirical support to this hypothesis, for the correlation between students' perceptions of using DGBLL and level is proved to be non-significant ($\chi^2 = 61.97$, $p = .213 > .05$). Hence, the second hypothesis is rejected. In other words, the class level has no bearing on students' perceptions of using DGBLL in vocabulary learning.

F. Students Perceptions of Using DGBLL in Vocabulary Learning and Gender

The correlation between SPUDGBLL and gender is indicated in table 7 below:

TABLE 7
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN SPUDGBLL AND GENDER

Gender	SPUDGBLL	
	Pearson Chi-Square	25.594
Sig. (2-tailed)	.137	
N	80	

The third hypothesis suggests that students' perceptions of using DGBLL in vocabulary learning correlate with gender. However, Table 7 indicates that the result does not support this hypothesis. After conducting the Chi-Square test to examine the correlation between gender and SPUDGBLL, the test yields a non-significant correlation ($\chi^2 = 25.594$, $p = .137 > .05$). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that there is no difference between male and female students in their perceptions of using DGBLL to learn vocabulary. This is similar to the finding of Yang (2012) who found in his research that there were no significant differences between male and female participants' attitudes towards MALL. This contradicts the findings of Viberg and Gronlund (2013) and Cai et al. (2017). The former conducted a study in Chinese and Swedish contexts and found that females were more positive about using mobile phones in learning. However, Cai et al. (2017) who conducted a meta-analysis of 50 studies revealed that males showed a more positive attitude toward using technology than females, especially in aspects of belief and self-efficacy.

G. The Role of DGBLL in Vocabulary Learning

Since we had a small sample size per level where the number of participants was less than 50, determining the distribution of the test scores (T1, T2, and T3 scores) was important for choosing an appropriate statistical method. So a Shapiro-Wilk test was performed and showed that the distribution of the three test scores across the four levels departed significantly from normality (for T1, $W = .96$, $p = .006$, T2: $W = .97$, $P = .04$, and T3: $W = .94$, $P = .001$). Based on this outcome, a non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test was applied, and the median with the interquartile range was used to summarize the scores of T1, T2, and T3.

H. Effectiveness of DGBLL in Vocabulary Learning

As indicated in Table 8, a Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test revealed that the scores of the post-test (T2) were significantly higher after implementing DGBLL in the process of vocabulary learning ($Md = 6$, $N = 80$) compared to the scores of the pre-test (T1) ($Md = 5$, $N = 80$), $z = -3.02$, $P = .003$. This indicated that students in the different levels have significantly

benefitted from using DGBLL in learning the vocabulary items. It, therefore, highlighted the importance of DGBLL in the vocabulary learning process and confirmed hypothesis 4. This is supported by the study of Dagdeler et al. (2020) who asserted the effectiveness of mobile applications in vocabulary knowledge improvement for 73 students at two universities in Turkey.

TABLE 8
A WILCOXON SIGNED RANK TEST (T1 AND T2)

	Pre-test (T1)	Post-test (T2)	W (T2 - T1)
Median	5	6	
Z			-3.018
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			.003

I. The Impact of Using DGBLL on Vocabulary Retention

The same test was run to determine whether DGBLL promoted recalling the learned vocabulary. The result was statistically significant and it is safe to conclude that DGBLL helped students remember the vocabulary they learned, confirming hypothesis 5. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test showed that the scores of the after-interval test (T3) were statistically different from T1 scores (Md (T1)= 5, N=80, Md (T3) = 6, N =80), $z = -4.05$, $P = .000$) and were statistically not different from T2 scores (Md (T2) = 6, N= 80, Md(T3)=6, n=80, $Z = -1.81$, $p = 0.7$).

TABLE 9
A WILCOXON SIGNED RANK TEST (T1, T2, AND T3)

	Median (Md)	W (T3 - T2)	W (T3 - T1)
T1	5		
T2	6		
T3	6		
Z		-1.808b	-4.048b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.071	.000

The finding contradicts that of Dagdeler et al. (2020) who revealed that educational games are proven to be ineffective in vocabulary retention. They concluded that mobile applications were good only receptively for short-term memory. This can be further investigated by making the period between the post-test and after-interval test longer for future studies to have better insight into the effectiveness of digital games in vocabulary retention.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this research, it was concluded that most of the participants expressed positive opinions toward the usefulness of DGBLL in the vocabulary learning process. This was supported by the analysis of the efficiency of DGBLL in vocabulary learning and retention through analysing the tests' scores. It was also found that there were no correlations between students' perceptions of using DGBLL to learn vocabulary and class level or gender. This highlighted that the mentioned independent variables had no impact on students' opinions toward the use of DGBLL in learning and retaining the vocabulary items.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What can be noted as far as the future avenues of research on the use of DGBLL in language learning in Omani university settings are concerned is that research should go beyond the limit of just assessing the students' perceptions of using DGBLL or evaluating the effectiveness of DGBLL in the process of vocabulary learning towards probing into factors impacting the successful use of digital games in language learning, such as learning styles. This will give the researchers insight into the types of games to be implemented. Little research has been published about the use of DGBLL in language learning in the Omani context, which outlines the crucial need for further investigating this field. Hence, this study establishes grounds for further research in Omani university education.

The present study has two limitations. First, the current research included participants only from one branch of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (UTAS) which includes seven branches. Thus, the generalization of its findings cannot be warranted. It would therefore be of vital importance that future studies should involve a large sample of students from other branches that fall under the umbrella of UTAS. Another limitation has to do with data collection; the current study collected data using a questionnaire and three tests from the same groups. It would be better to have a control and experimental group design to investigate the effectiveness of DGBLL in vocabulary learning and retention in greater depth. It is also recommended that an interview be conducted at the end of data collection to enhance the validity and credibility of the findings.

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Japanese Compound Verbs 「～*dasu*」 「～*deru*」 「～*komu*」 : Exploring Meaning and Illustrated Pedagogy for Japanese Learners

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Abstract—Research on the use of compound verbs in learning the Japanese language becomes crucial as previous studies have not fully addressed aspects related to the necessity of categorizing compound verbs clearly and accurately with a simple understanding. Although Satou (2002) divides verbs based on morphophonology, the research remains incomplete without considering morphosemantic aspects. Therefore, doubts arise regarding the result of combining the two verbs, whether the Verbs Group 1 ‘*Godan Doushi*’ (V1), referred to as the initial verb element ‘*zenkouyouso*’, or the Verbs Group 2 ‘*Ichidan Doushi*’ (V2), referred to as the final verb element ‘*gokouyouso*’, still adhere to the status of the final verb as a *jidoushi* or *tadoushi*. Kageyama's (1993) study on the meaning and usage of compound verbs [-*dasu*] is divided into two groups, indicating a change of place ‘*ichihenka*’ and aspect ‘*aspekuto*’, observed in Japanese sentences. The concepts of compound verbs developed by Satou (2002) and Kageyama (2016) are combined eclectically in this research, aiming to obtain accurate data. The results of this analysis may not be well understood without additional support. Therefore, the analysis is presented with the illustrations of compound verbs 「～*dasu*」 「～*deru*」 「～*komu*」, which are drawn based on example sentences. This research aims to categorize the meanings of compound verbs in Japanese and illustrate them in pictures. Thus, Japanese language learners will optimally understand the use of those verbs based on both the inherent meaning of verbs and sentence structure.

Index Terms—illustration, inherent verbs, transitive-intransitive, compound verbs

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to qualify for the Specified Skilled Workers (SSW) visa/residence permit status for foreigners in Japan, Japanese language learners need to achieve a minimum proficiency level of N3 on the Japanese Language Proficiency Test. Consequently, learners preparing for this proficiency need innovative approaches, such as self-directed learning outside the classroom. The preparation process for this test is now easily accessible to the current Z generation through social media platforms, for instance, using the *Irodori* book, a product of The Japan Foundation. Furthermore, Japanese language learners must comprehend compound verbs, which we explore by providing easily understandable illustrations. The research findings also indicate that utilizing video games and films for foreign language learning has a specific appeal and plays a clear role in enhancing foreign language skills.

The morphology of the pairs of transitive-intransitive verbs in the Japanese language, known as “*jita*”, is divided into 12 groups and is considered quite challenging for foreign Japanese language learners, especially in Indonesia. Therefore, in this study, the author seeks to reinforce Satou's (2002) perspective, which categorizes the derivation of paired verbs “*jita*” into seven groups through the application of morphosemantic analysis, subsequently facilitating morphosyntactic studies.

The compound above verb forms need clarification regarding their origins, whether they originate from intransitive or transitive verbs. Satou's (2002) research will underpin the morphosemantic analysis. For instance:

a. 「食べる + 歩く (*taberu* ‘to eat’ + *aruku* ‘walk’) 「食べ歩く (*tabearuku* = Eating the typical foods of the places visited)

Another example that warrants attention involves compound verbs [-*dasu*] and [-*deru*], which carry two meanings: ‘movement to the outside’ and ‘the starting point of an action.’ These are exemplified in the words below:

b. 「抜く + 出す (*nuku* ‘to pull out’ + *dasu* ‘to begin to; to start to; to burst into; ... out’), for example: 「ぬき出す (*nukidasu*) ‘to pull out and to extract’ / ‘to draw (a weapon)’」

c. 「抜ける + 出す (*nukeru* 'to be released or to be removed' + *dasu* 'to take out'), for example: 「ぬけ出す」 (*nukedasu*) 'to sneak out'

d. 「ぬく + 出る (*nuku* 'to pull out' + *deru* 'to come out') for example: 「ぬきんでる (*nukinderu*), 'to come out prominently'

For Japanese language learners in Indonesia, the three meanings mentioned above, are challenging to understand due to compound verb examples (c) and (d) having V1 and V2 that are nearly identical, differing only in the addition of 'n'. Therefore, further research is necessary to facilitate better comprehension and gain a more thorough understanding of their optimal usage.

The suffixes present in paired verbs "jita" exhibit significant variations. This aspect has been examined by Japanese linguists such as Sakuma (1936), Hashimoto (1959), Okutsu (1969), Matsushita (1974), and Kageyama (1997). Kageyama (1997, pp. 183-203) delineates the morphological changes in paired verbs, both the transformation from *tadoushi* 'transitive' to *jidoushi* 'intransitive' and from *jidoushi* 'intransitive' to *tadoushi* 'transitive'. Besides, in the phonological domain, sound changes in the suffixes of these verbs give rise to stems, which convey the meaning inherent in the compound "jita" verbs. This study is closely related to compound "jita" verbs with suffixes such as *-aru* and *-eru*; *-ru* and *-su*; *-u* and *-asu/osu*.

There is a morphological classification of paired verbs "jita" into several groups by Hashimoto (1959), which was later simplified into four morphological groups by Iori (2000). This categorization is accompanied by a more comprehensive understanding of morphology and semantics. The morphosemantics of compound verbs in Japanese, particularly in *fukugoudoushi* or compound verbs, require careful precision in comprehension, as they are extensively used in literary works.

There is a morphological categorization of paired "jita" verbs into several groups by Hashimoto (1959), which was later simplified into four morphological groups by Iori (2000). This classification is accompanied by a more comprehensive understanding of morphology and semantics. The morphosemantics of compound verbs, known as *fukugoudoushi* or compound verbs in the Japanese language, require careful precision in comprehension, as they are extensively utilized in literary works.

According to the Transitivity Harmony Principle (THP) theory by Kageyama (1993), if both verbs, specifically the unaccusative verbs, i.e., between V1 and the verb "komu" as V2, combine to form a compound verb, then the argument structure is a theme. This principle aligns with what Jackendoff (1990) proposed, stating that unaccusative verbs typically depict a change of state/location in which the subject assumes a semantic role as a patient/theme.

The domain utilized by an expression provides its conceptual content. However, linguistic meaning is not solely determined by content, as we can interpret the same content in alternative ways, resulting in significantly different meanings. Despite being largely overlooked in traditional semantics, construal is crucial for semantic structure and grammar. It is a multifaceted phenomenon with various dimensions reflecting basic cognitive abilities. These dimensions can be categorized under five general headings: specificity, background, perspective, scope, and prominence.

Langacker (1999) argues that specificity is related to the human ability to comprehend and depict an entity at various levels of precision and detail. Such a hierarchy indicates that the process of schematization—necessary for acquiring any lexical item—can be performed at different levels.

Satou (2002) categorizes the compound verbs based on morphophonology. However, the research still needs to consider the morphosemantic aspects. Therefore, doubts arise regarding the result of combining the two verbs, whether the verbs Group 1 (V1), referred to as the initial verb element 'zenkouyouso', or the verbs Group 2 (V2), referred to as the final verb element 'gokouyouso', still adhere to the status of the final verb as a *jidoushi* or *tadoushi*.

Furthermore, Kageyama's (1993) research on the meaning and usage of compound verbs [-dasu] categorizes them into two groups: indicating a change of place 'ichihenka' and the aspect 'aspekuto'. See the scheme of compound verbs proposed by Kageyama in the diagram below.



Figure 1. Compound Verb [-dasu] Scheme According to Kageyama (1993)

The meaning conveyed in the sentences presented in this research is closely related to the structure of sentences. Thus, if the concepts developed by Satou (2002) and Kageyama (1993) in the study of compound verbs are essentially aimed at obtaining optimal results, it is essential to examine the data of compound verbs based on the inherent meaning of compound verbs themselves, known as '*goi tekina fukugoudoushi*', as well as considering the meaning in sentences, referred to as '*tougo tekina fukugoudoushi*'.

The semantic relationship between V1 and V2 is a construction by examining the essence of compound events, explaining why V1 and V2 can only become compound verbs when they have a specific semantic relationship. Chen Yiting's (2017) research result shows that compound verbs expressing complex events are cognitively motivated by "cause and effect relationships" and "simultaneous occurrences that strongly require cause and effect relationships". Furthermore, the research has analyzed the non-composite nature of compound verbs from a usage-based model perspective, and it has been found that non-composite compound verbs require high usage frequency. Also, non-composite compound verbs are used throughout V1-V2 to clarify the need for a comprehensive list in the lexicon.

In their writing, Yang Luo and Yuewu Lin (2017, p. 1) state, "*Illustrations are capable to express the meaning of unfamiliar language or a great deal of information in the reading materials, such as by vivid pictures, tables, drawings, paintings. As a result, illustrations are applied to many different fields, including English language teaching*". This idea aligns with the opinion of Aashay Lule (2022) that illustrations enhance various aspects of learning, such as comprehension, memory, problem-solving, and other critical thinking skills, contributing to the refinement of a broader range of literacy skills.

Based on previous research regarding the usefulness of illustrations in foreign language learning, we attempt to collaborate Japanese compound verbs with illustrations of example sentences. This collaboration aims to facilitate the understanding of Japanese compound verbs, which are widely used in daily life, especially those analyzed with 128 data instances in the pattern [V1+*dasu*], 51 instances in [V1+*deru*], and 163 instances in the pattern [V1+*komu*] (Kadir & Sidiq, 2019).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is descriptive. The selection of this method is based on the focus on the natural characteristics of grammar, aiming to generate actual data. The data extracted from Kageyama's (1993) research book on compound verb sentences is authentic and suitable for examination. Furthermore, this research relies solely on existing facts or natural phenomena found in the speakers' lives and is not concerned with their correctness.

Furthermore, Kageyama (2013) explains that there are compound lexical verbs and compound syntactic verbs as described below.

- a. Compound Lexical Verbs (LCV)
Post-fix verbs (V2) are directly combined with prefix verbs (V1) in their conjunctive Post-fix form. This means two lexically categorized words are directly complex.
- b. Compound Syntactic Verbs (SCV)
V2 does not attach directly to the connecting form of V1, but rather serves as a complement (in some records) with V1 as its main part (in some levels of phrase). In other words, this is syntactic because it is attached to a syntactic phrase.

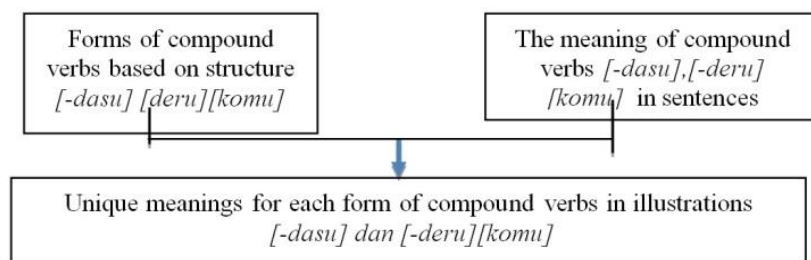


Figure 2. Scheme of the Implementation Mechanism of Compound Verb Research Analysis

Meanwhile, the result of the research is presented in the form of a narrative (textual method) that consists of 5W and 1H. In other words, the results of this research are presented in a description and elaboration of the sentence structure scheme accompanied by supporting illustrations.

In the context of compound verbs, the comprehension of a Japanese sentence is enhanced through the use of illustrations, as explained by Aashay Lule and Mrs. Aditi (2022) in their work titled "Illustration is an Effective Teaching Aid in the Process of Learning".

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

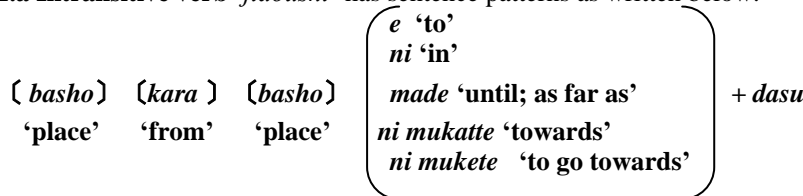
The data obtained from 179 compound verbs [-*deru*] and [-*dasu*], which have undergone translation, are categorized based on the possibility of having pairs or not and how the meaning content is on verbs group 1 (V1) referred to as **the**

initial verb element ‘zenkouyouso’, and the meaning content on verbs group 2 (V2) is referred to as **the final verb element ‘gokouyouso’**. The categorization of compound verbs [-*dasu*] and [-*deru*], both in terms of verb forms (whether transitive tadoushi or intransitive jidoushi), can be observed from the sentence structures they form. Himeno's (1977, p. 79) research reinforces the categorization of compound verbs [-*dasu*], [-*deru*], and [-*komu*].

Another reference considered in this study is the exposition by Suga and Hayatsu (2001), which describes the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, as determined by the accompanying particles. Transitive verbs are accompanied by the particle "o," while intransitive verbs are accompanied by the particle “ga”.

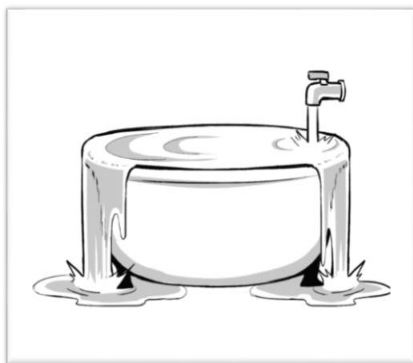
A. The Structure and Meaning of Compound Verbs [-*dasu*]

1.a Intransitive verb ‘*jidoushi*’ has sentence patterns as written below.



Compound verbs with the pattern above convey a sense of intransitive sentences that depict a change in the condition of a liquid substance 'overflowing' from one place to another, and these compound verbs are formed according to the pattern below.

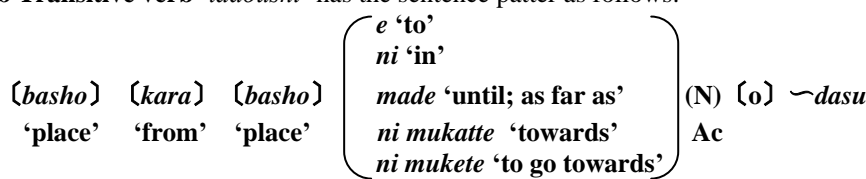
$V_i + dasu = V_i$ *afureru* ‘to overflow + *dasu* ‘to take out’=> *afure*(stem) + *dasu* ‘means a change outward (surface or outer part)’



Example:
 水がバケツからあふれ出した。
Mizu ga baketsu kara afuredashita.
 ‘water **overflowing** from the bucket.’

Figure 3. Overflowing (*Afuredasu*)

1.b Transitive verb ‘*tadoushi*’ has the sentence patter as follows.



The transitive sentence above illustrates the structure of moving an animate object from one place to another with the activity verb ‘to follow’ *ou*. This verb is formed from $V_t + dasu = V_t$ (*ou* ‘to follow’ + *dasu* ‘take out’ => *oi* (stem) *dasu*), which means ‘there is a change outward’.



Example:
 彼は野良犬を家から外へ追い出した。
Kare wa norainu o ie kara soto e oidashita.
 ‘He **drove** the stray dog out of the house.’

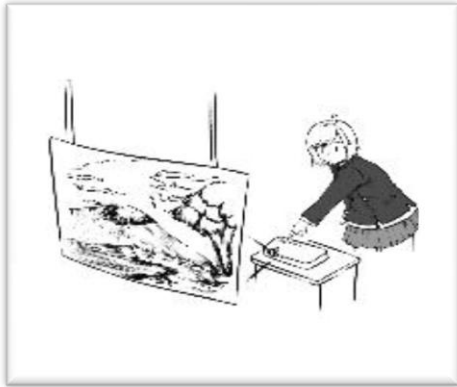
Figure 4. To Drive Out (*Oidasu*)

2. Transitive verb '*tadoushi*' has the sentence pattern as follows.

(*basho*) (e 'to'
'place' ni 'in'
made 'until; as far as') (yuujobutsu) (O) -*dasu*
'target object' Ac

Transitive sentences using the verb *utsushidasu* 'to reveal; to show; to reflect; to project' are formed from the structure of the occurrence location and the target object. This compound verb originates from a pattern like the one below.

$V_t + dasu = V_t$ (*utsutsu* 'to copy' + *dasu* 'to take out' => *utsushi* (stem) + *dasu* 'means to show something in a specific place')



Example:

彼は美しい景色をスクリーンに映し出した。
Kare wa utsukushii keshiki oukurin ni utsushidashita.
'He projected the beautiful scenery on the screen.'

Figure 5. To Project (*Utsushidasu*)

3.a Transitive '*tadoushi*' has the sentence pattern as follows.

(N) (O) [-*dasu*]
(animate/inanimate) Ac

Transitive sentences use the verb *terasu* 'to shine on' function as a transitive verb and have a form like the one below.

$V_t + dasu = V_t$ (*terasu* 'to shine on; to illuminate' + *dasu* 'to take out' => *terashidasu* 'means reality')



Example:

スポットライトが彼女を照らし出した。
Supottoraito ga kanojo o terashidashita.
'Spotlight illuminated her.'

Figure 6. To Illuminate (*Terashidasu*)

3.b Transitive verb '*tadoushi*' has the following sentence pattern.

(*hito*) (*ga*) (N) (O) (-*dasu*)
Person Nom Noun Ac

The verb *umidasu* means 'to create' in the sentence structure above. This compound verb is formed from the pattern $V_t + 出す = V_t$ (*umu* 'to produce' + *dasu* 'to bring out' => 'means creativity').



Figure 7. To Create; To Produce (*Umidasu*)

Example:

彼らは新しい製品を生み出した。

Karera wa atarashii seihin o umidashita.

‘They have **created** a new product.’

3.c The transitive verb ‘*tadoushi*’ is the same sentence pattern as 3.b above.

{*hito*} {*ga*} {*N*} {*O*} {*-dasu*}

‘Person’ Nom Noun Ac

The sentence structure in data (3.c) is not much different from the transitive sentence in data (3.b), where an animate object/person becomes the subject with the verb *sagasu* ‘to search; to look for; to seek’, making this a transitive sentence. The compound verb pattern becomes like this: *Vt + だす = Vt sagasu* ‘to search; to look for; to seek’+ *dasu* ‘to bring out’ => *sagashidasu* ‘means discovery’.



Figure 8. To Find Information (*Sagashidasu*)

Example:

インターネットを使うと、欲しい情報をすぐに見出すことができる。

Intanetto o tsukauto, hoshii jōhō o sugu ni sagashidasu koto ga dekiru.

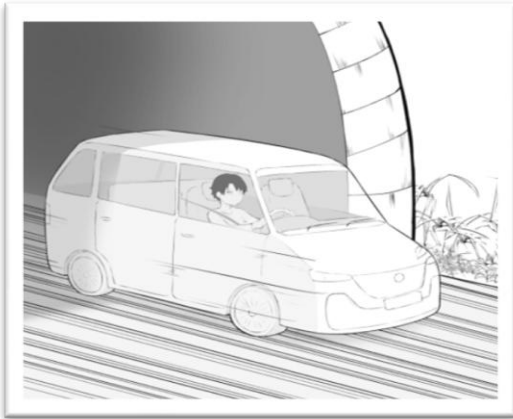
‘If using the internet, we can quickly find the desired information.’

4. The transitive-intransitive verb ‘*jidoushi-tadoushi*’ has the following sentence pattern.

{*N*} [*ga*] [*~dasu*]

The structure of this intransitive sentence conveys the state of a noun experiencing the beginning of a movement. The compound verb consists of *ugoku* ‘to move’ and *dasu* ‘to bring out’. Note the pattern below.

$V_i + \text{だす} = V_i$; $V_t + \text{だす} = Vt$ *ugoku* ‘to move’ + *dasu* ‘to bring out’ => *ugokidasu* ‘means starting to move’



Example:

車が動き出す。

Kuruma ga ugokidasu

‘The car starts to move.’

Figure 9. Starting to Move (*Ugokidasu*)

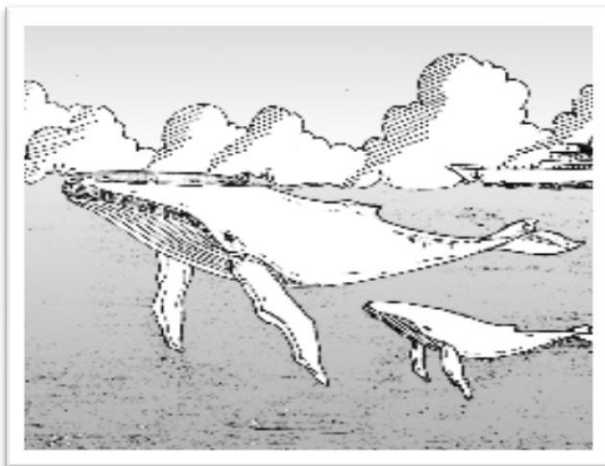
B. Structure and Meaning of Compound Verbs [-*deru*]

1. As explained below, The intransitive verb ‘*jidoushi*’ almost has the same sentence pattern as [-*dasu*].

{ <i>basho</i> }	{ <i>kara</i> }	{ <i>basho</i> }	}	+ ~ <i>deru</i>
‘Place’	‘from’	‘place’.		
$\left(\begin{array}{l} e \text{ ‘to’} \\ ni \text{ ‘in’} \\ made \text{ ‘until; as far as’} \\ ni \text{ mukatte ‘towards’} \\ ni \text{ mukete ‘to go towards’} \end{array} \right)$				

The intransitive sentence structure above uses the compound verbs *ukabu* ‘to float’ + *deru* ‘to emerge’, indicating a change from one place to another that more explicitly conveys a change of state from one position to another. This compound verb follows the pattern outlined below.

$V_i + \text{deru} = V_i$ (*ukabu* ‘to float’ + *deru* ‘to bring out’ => *ukabideru* ‘Meaning a change to the outside



Example:

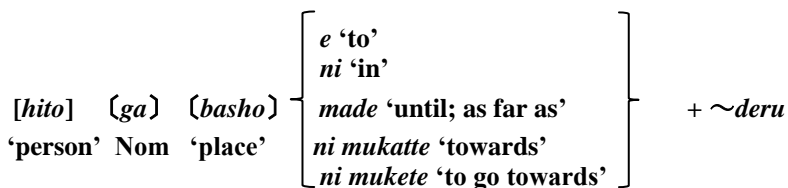
くじらが水面に浮かび出た。

Kujira ga suimen ni ukabideta.

‘A whale emerges on the water’s surface.’

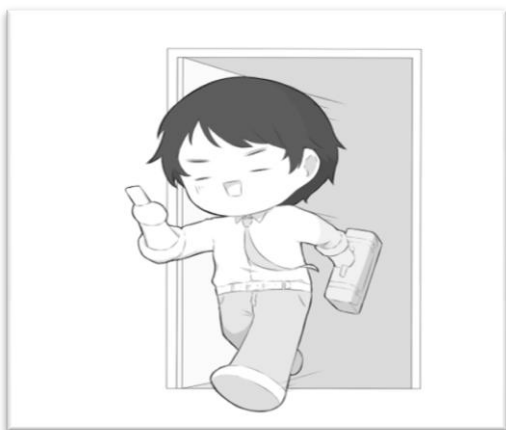
Figure 10. Emerging to the Surface (*Ukabideru*)

2. The intransitive verb *'jidoushi'* has a different sentence pattern compared to sentence pattern one above, as seen below.



The above-structured intransitive sentence uses markers such as *e* ‘to’, *Ni* ‘in’, *made* ‘until; as far as’, *ni mukatte* ‘towards’, *ni mukete* ‘to go towards’ with verbs that follow the following pattern.

$V_i + \text{-deru} = V_i$ *korogaru* ‘to roll’ + *deru* to ‘bring out’ ‘Means a change outward (surface of outer part).



Example:

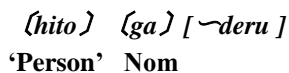
彼は慌てて家から外に転がり出た。

Kare wa awatete ie kara soto ni koro-garideta.

‘He hurriedly left the house.’

Figure 11. Rushed Out (*Korogarikomu*)

3. Transitive verb *'tadoushi'* has the following sentence pattern.



The transitive sentence structure above follows the compound verb pattern using *~deru*. For example: the verb *ukareru* ‘expresses joy’ so the pattern becomes as follows: $V_i + \text{deru} = V_t$ *ukareru* ‘to be joyful’ + *deru* ‘to come out’ ‘means’ signifies an expression of a joyful attitude.



Example:

春の陽気に誘われて、人々は花見に浮かれ出た。

Haru no yōki ni sasowa-rete, hitobito wa hanami ni ukaredeta.

‘Prompted by the cheerfulness of spring, people looked joyful as they enjoyed the beauty of cherry blossoms.’

Figure 12. To Be Joyful Enjoying the Beauty of Cherry Blossoms (*Ukarederu*)

C. Structure and Meaning of Compound Verbs [-komu]

In this study, the authors successfully collected 254 data of *fukugodoushi* [-komu], consisting of 81 syntactic compound verbs and 163 lexical compound verbs, with the remaining categorized as compound verbs that could be categorized into both types. All syntactic compound verbs with -komu cannot be paraphrased, while for lexical compound verbs, all of them can be paraphrased using verbs like *ireru* or *hairu*, which have meanings intersecting with *komu* (Himeno, 1998). Additionally, when looking at the verbs occupying V1, the data indicates that both transitive and intransitive verbs have a similar ratio. See the following example.

1. Intransitive 'jidoushi' [-komu] verbal compound pattern 1 is as follows.

V1 + komu = *agaru* 'to come up' + *komu* 'full', meaning 'entering someone else's house or property as if entering one's own home'. Generally, it appears in sentences structured as [hito/N1] [ga] [N2] [ni/e] + [-komu]



Example:

彼がに休業日にお菓子屋に上がりんだ。

Kare ga enryo ni kyugyou ni okashiyani agarikonda.

'The man **entered** the close pastry shop without hesitation.'

Figure 13. Entering the Close Shop (*Agarikomu*)

In the above data, the verb *agarikonda* is the past tense form of the verb *agarikomu*. This compound verb consists of two free morphemes, namely the intransitive verb *agaru*, which means 'to come up' and *komu*, which carries the meaning of 'to enter'. This compound verb falls under lexical compound verbs that can be paraphrased as a consecutive action, *agaru* followed by *hairu*, meaning 'to come up and then enter'.

The next example of a lexical compound verb with the pattern V1 (*utau* 'to sing' + *komu* 'full' = *utaikomu* carries the meaning, 'to repeatedly practice singing in order to sing well'. The intransitive sentence in the example below has the structure as written below.

[hito] [ga] [N] [O] [-komu]
'Person' Nom Noun Ac



Example:

合唱団は課題曲(かだいきょく)を歌(うた)い込(こ)んだ。

Gasshō-dan wa kadai kyoku o utai konda.

'The choir **continues to practice** the predetermined song.'

Figure 14. To Continue to Practice (*Utaikomu*)

The syntactic compound verb found in the example below which generally follows the pattern:

V1 + komu = *uru* 'to sell' + *komu* 'full', means 'to explain clearly for selling goods to new customers'



Figure 15. To Sell New Products (*Urikomu*)

Example:

彼は新(あたらしい)しい製品(せいひん)を取引先(とりひきさき)に安(やすい)い価格(かかく)で売り込(こ)んだ。

Kare wa atarashii seihin o torihikisaki ni yasui kakaku de urikonda.

'He sells new products to his customers at a low price.'

The following show that [*~komu*] has several meanings (polysemy), whether it is in the form of a **transitive** or **intransitive** sentence.

{*hito/N1*} {*ga*} {*N2*} {*O*} {*~komu*}

- (1) The structure of this transitive sentences uses the compound verb *uchikomu*, which comes from V1 + *komu*= *utsu* 'to hit' + *komu* 'full', means 'to insert something by hitting'. Please observe the example below.

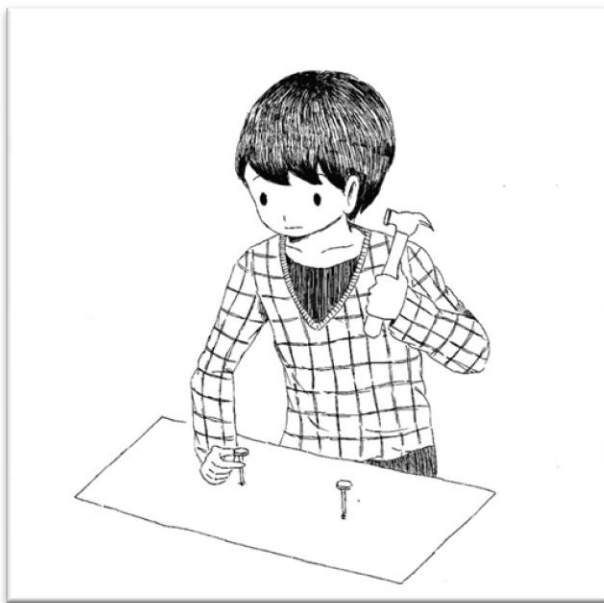


Figure 16. To Hammer (*Uchikomu*)

Example:

柱(はしら)にくぎ(くぎ)を(を) ; 打ち込(こ)んだ。
'Hashira ini kugi o uchikonda.'
 'I hammered a nail into the post.'

- (2) Furthermore, observe the sentence structure below.

{*hito/N1*} {*ga*} {*N2*} {*ni*} {*N3*} {*O*} + {*~komu*} uses three particles, namely {*ga*} , {*ni*} , and {*o*} which with each particle attached to N1 with {*ga*} as Nom marker; to N2 as the target marker with {*ni*} , and to N3 as the object marker with {*o*} , along with the compound verb *uchikomu*, which means 'to hit, causing something to enter.' Please observe the example below.

ちからづよ
 彼女は ; 力強く相手のコートにスマッシュを打ち込んだ。
'Kanojo wa chikarazuyoku aiteno ko-to ni sumasshu o uchikonda.'
 'He hit a powerful smash towards the opponent's tennis court.'

(3) The structure like this *hito/N1* {*ga*} {*N2*} {*ni*} {*~komu*}

With the compound verb *uchikomu* means ‘to pour energy into something or to be obsessed with something’. The particle {*ni*} attached to N2 carries the meaning ‘on’. This can be seen in the example below.

彼は^{りゅうがく}留学のための^{べんきょう}勉強に^こ打ち込んだ。
 ‘Kare wa ryuugaku no tame no benkyou **ni uchikonda.**
 ‘He **concentrates** on his studies for further education abroad.’

The verb *uchikomu* in data (1) tends to fall into lexical verbs, while data (2) dan (3), it can be categorized as syntactic verbs. Furthermore, we will examine compound verbs using the verb *utsumuku* ‘to look down’, which is an intransitive verb with the sentence structure like this:

{*hito*} {*ga*} [*utsumukikomu*].
 ‘Person’ Nom

The structure of this intransitive sentence tends to indicate the intention/purpose of the subject to do so, where [*utsumukikomu*] which comes from the pattern V1+ *komu*= *utsumuku* ‘to bow down’ + *komu* ‘full’. Thus, it means ‘bowing deeply’. Please observe the example sentence below.



Example:

少年はうつむき込(こ)んだ。
 Shounen wa **utsumukikonda.**
 ‘(A) little boy **bowed** his head deeply.’

Figure 17. To Bow Deeply (*Utsumukikomu*)

D. The Compilation and Presentation of Compound Verbs Meaning 「*~dasu*」 「*~deru*」 「*~komu*」

In the following table, we can observe the morphological forms of compound verbs [*-dasu*] and [*-deru*], which combine V1 and V2. It is noteworthy that while V2 in its transitive form [*-dasu*] does not always remain transitive in compound verbs, similarly, V2 in its intransitive form [*~deru*] does not necessarily become an intransitive compound verb.

With this specific structure, illustrations have been created to assist learners in understanding these compound verbs easily. There are 51 instances of the compound verb 「*~deru*」, with almost **94%** (48 instances) having an **intransitive** V1 with the pattern: (**Vi + Vi = Vi**). Meanwhile, only **6%** (3 instances) have a **transitive** V1 with the pattern: (**Vt + Vi = Vt**). For the compound verb 「*~dasu*」, which has 128 instances, intransitive V1 has 2 patterns: (**Vi + Vt = Vi**) with 14 instances (**10%**) and (**Vi + Vt = Vt**) with 27 instances (**21%**). On the other hand, transitive V1 in the compound verb 「*~dasu*」 follows the pattern: (**Vt + Vt = Vt**) with 14 instances (**69%**).

TABLE 1
THE PERCENTAGE OF COMPOUND VERBS [~*dasu*] [~*deru*] BASED ON V1+V2

Verbs V1 + V2	Compound Verbs [~ <i>Deru</i>] (51 data)	Compound Verbs [~ <i>Dasu</i>] (128 data)
Intransitive+ Intransitive	(<i>hashiru</i>) + (<i>deru</i>) <i>hashirideru</i> 'to run out' (V _i + V _i = V _i) => 94% (Intransitive)	X X X X
Intransitive + Transitive	X X X X	<i>tobu</i> 'to fly' + <i>dasu</i> 'to bring out' <i>tobidasu</i> 'to jump' (V _i + V _t = V _i) => 10% (Intransitive)
		<i>nukeru</i> 'to release' + <i>dasu</i> 'to take out' <i>nukedasu</i> 'to leave' (V _i + V _t = V _t) => 21% (Transitive)
Transitive + Transitive	X X X X	<i>hamu</i> 'to eat' + <i>dasu</i> 'to bring out' <i>hamidasu</i> 'to throw up' (V _t + V _t = V _i) => 1% (Intransitive)
		<i>nuku</i> 'to release' + <i>dasu</i> 'to bring out' <i>nukidasu</i> 'to draw (a weapon)' (V _t + V _t = V _t) => 68% (Transitive)
Transitive + Intransitive	<i>todokeru</i> 'to send' + <i>deru</i> 'to bring out' <i>todokederu</i> 'to report' (V _t + V _i = V _t) => 6% (Transitive)	X X X X

Note: X X X X: unacceptable

The verb [*komu* 'full'] is not included in paired verbs compared to the verbs [-*dasu* 'to take out'] and [-*deru* 'come out'], so the compound verbs [-*komu*] which amounts to about 254, can be grouped based on lexical meanings, which are approximately 163. Among them, there are meanings of 'movement inward' *naibu idou* with a total of 102 (62%) and meanings of 'intensity' *teido shinkou* with a total of 61 (37%).

E. Benefits of Understanding the Construction of Compound Verbs 「~*dasu*」 「~*deru*」 「~*komu*」 for Foreign Learners of the Japanese Language

Understanding the construction of compound verbs 「~*dasu*」 「~*deru*」 「~*komu*」 provides benefits by enhancing vocabulary skills through visual aids or illustrations. Learners who comprehend the meaning of 「*dasu*」 'to take out' 「*deru*」 'to come out' 「*komu*」 'full' and apply V1 before these verbs will broaden their knowledge of compound verbs through illustrations that align with the meanings and example sentences provided.

The illustrations in the book '*Verba Gabung Bahasa Jepang*' or Japanese Compound Verbs are very helpful for foreign learners in understanding the various meanings of compound verbs. We hope this book benefits Japanese language learners, especially in Indonesia.

The visual illustrations provide a powerful tool that facilitates learning, especially in studying Japanese compound verbs. Illustrations enhance various aspects of learning, such as comprehension, retention, problem-solving, and more. Additionally, illustrations include diagrams and graphics that aid in understanding a substantial amount of data through minimal and precise visual language. Hopefully, this research contributes to developing visual literacy among Japanese language learners and refining critical thinking skills, assisting in honing various abilities.

IV. CONCLUSION

The morphological forms of compound verbs [-*dasu*] and [-*deru*] result from the combination of V1 and V2, where V2, in its base form, is transitive for [-*dasu*] but does not always retain its transitivity in compound verbs. Similarly, for V2, in its intransitive form for [-*deru*], it does not always maintain its intransitivity in compound verbs. The basic meaning of the compound verb [-*dasu*] encompasses three nuances: manifestation, creating something, and the sense of beginning to do something. On the other hand, [-*deru*] carries the nuance of a spontaneous change in activity.

The analysis of the meaning of compound verbs V1+*komu*, it can be divided into two groups: (1) the meaning of compound verbs V1+*komu* (that does not lose its basic meaning) relates to **physical movement**, and (2) the meaning of compound verbs V1+*komu* (that loses its basic meaning) **expresses a state (physical/psychological)**. The meaning of physical movement involves activities like entering into a closed space (such as a room), indicating the 'how,' while the verb *komu* as V2 expresses the **process** of that movement.

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How Americans and Saudis Make Requests: A Politeness Theory Analysis

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Abstract—This study elucidates how speakers of different cultures, namely, Saudi Arabia and United States employ the speech act of requesting, drawing upon various politeness features. It conducted a qualitative analysis to offer explanations for different strategies of requests used by both groups and how they employ politeness features. The present study also conducted small statistics (frequencies and percentages) to explore the most and least common strategies that were used by participants in this study. The sample of this study included 20 Saudis and 20 Americans who were students at Southern Illinois University. The findings revealed that while Saudi participants used more direct strategies than their American counterparts, these direct strategies were characterized as positive politeness. That is, Saudi participants relied on directness feature to minimize the social distance with the addressee. However, American students were more formal than their Saudi counterparts, suggesting that they were less direct when they made requests. But this type of directness is negative as it doesn't aim at removing social borders between interlocutors. This study indicates that Saudis tend to be more informal (and hence less indirect) than Americans when they make requests. The present study demonstrates that culture is a key social factor to determine how this speech act is employed by speakers of different cultures. It can thus be argued that directness has social implications as it plays an important role in eliminating social borders and minimizing social distance between the interlocutors.

Index Terms—speech acts, requests, politeness, formality, directness

I. INTRODUCTION

Politeness is universal, as it concerns all communities across the world. However, perception and realization of such a phenomenon 'politeness' can vary dramatically between cultures and within the same culture (Huang, 2008). In anglophone societies and the West in general, for instance, politeness is associated with behavioral characteristics of a particular social community, while it is seen as a way of respecting others and self-disparagement in Chinese culture (Huang, 2008; Zhu & Bao, 2010). This study explored numerous politeness strategies of Saudis and Americans when making verbal requests. It hypothesized that the strategies variation is attributed to differences in how Saudi and American cultures defined politeness. Accordingly, politeness is a linguistic, social and cultural phenomenon. There are many aspects that can be associated with politeness that needs to be investigated. While some of these aspects are linguistic, such as linguistic expressions that mark politeness, others are social. There are numerous social factors, e.g., social distance and cultural aspects, which affect politeness. That is, nationality, traditions and region can have effects on how speakers communicate with one another. Accordingly, the speaker's choice of strategy over the other can be socially and culturally motivated.

A. Defining Politeness

Politeness is a complex topic. However, determining whether linguistic politeness is culture-specific or reflects universal norms is even more complex (Watts, 2003). Thus, it is difficult to find rules that can define polite regardless of culture. Despite difficulties defining politeness in a universal sense, some views are broadly accepted, such as the notion that people seem more polite when they talk to strangers than friends, that indirectness shows more politeness than directness, and that every community has its own views of politeness (Gupta et al., 2007).

In Arabic, the word for politeness, *adab*, has multiple layered meanings. In its early use, the word meant hospitality, generosity, and invitation (Grainger et al., 2015). For example, in *fulan adaba sadiqah* ("someone invited their friend"), *adab* means "invite." Later, *adab* evolved to be similar to the English word, referring to a person's behavior. Furthermore, it was used frequently by the Prophet Mohammed to mean morality, generosity, tolerance, and virtue (Tawalbeh & Al-Oqaily, 2012).

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Gender is a major factor influencing style of speech (Mckelvie, 1999; Mulac et al., 2001). Nevertheless, some researchers paid little attention to gender, assuming that such differences are due to accommodation to the fronted party (Tannen, 1994). This idea is illustrated when two parties of the same gender talk to each other, and one tries to accommodate the other whose speech appears more empathic and polite. This accommodation relies on the type of the person and their culture rather than gender (Shams & Afghari, 2011). Culture has thus been shown to affect speech and politeness within communities (Tannen, 1994).

B. Previous Research

According to Shams and Afghari (2011), people from different societies vary in terms of how they make requests. Consequently, different communities can be distinguished based on how they request different things (Al-Khateeb, 2009; Jalilifar, 2009; Sheer & Chen, 2003). In response to requests, refusals are extremely sensitive speech acts. As a result, negotiating refusals cross-culturally is a complicated issue, involving a balance between directness and indirectness, as well as social status and age (Sarfo, 2011). A key factor in this regard is knowledge about the meanings of refusals and how they are perceived by the addressee. This linguistic knowledge enables speakers to use languages effectively to refuse an invitation, suggestion, offer, or request. Furthermore, speakers' contextual knowledge facilitates communication with the addressee. Any previous requests and refusals with the other party can affect the addressee's acceptance of a new refusal, meaning the more the parties know each other, the less offence is likely to be taken between them (Berlo, 1960).

Nugroho and Rekha (2020) investigated the frequency and use of request strategies by 40 EFL learners through a DCT questionnaire, roleplay, and focus group discussion. The participants employed conventionally indirect strategies more frequently due to cultural factors and social distance between speakers. There were differences in terms of politeness strategies that American and Saudi participants employed when expressing disgrace. These differences can be observed in the choice of positive and negative politeness techniques, as well as the use of on-record and off-record strategies. Al Shboul (2020) also examined how male and female writers used request strategies in digital religious platforms. His study offered explanations from a socio-pragmatic perspective. The study found that the participants employed seven techniques for making requests in their online communication. Applying Chi-square test, the analysis revealed that many strategies such as *explicit performatives* and *locution derivable* have statistically significant differences between male and female participants.

In addition, Gari (2017) investigated politeness. The findings of this study highlighted the importance of understanding cultural differences in communication that can inform cross-cultural training and language teaching practices. These findings pointed to the differences in the use of politeness strategies by Americans and Saudis when making requests, which can be further explored in the context of cross-cultural communication. The differences in the use of politeness strategies in expressing disgrace between American and Saudi Arabic speakers can be observed in various studies.

Moreover, a cross-cultural comparison of indirectness and politeness in American English and Saudi Arabic requests was conducted by Tawalbe and Al-Oqaily (2012). They found that the two social variables (power and distance) contributed to the participants' use of various request strategies. The results also showed that on-record and off-record strategies were used differently between the two cultures. A comparative study of politeness strategies in Arabic and American motivational speeches by Bajiri and others found that the most frequently used type of politeness in both languages was positive politeness. However, the study observed differences in the use of on-record and off-record strategies, with American speakers (Bajiri et al., 2022).

II. METHOD

A. Research Problem and Questions

The aim of this study was to explore the ways that Americans and Saudis make requests and to determine any differences or similarities between these groups. For this purpose, this study aimed to answer the following three research questions:

1. How do Americans and Saudis make requests?
2. Which group favors more polite requests?
3. Does culture affect how requests are formulated?

The first question is concerned with the way that both groups, Saudis and Americans, employ the speech act of requesting in their daily interaction. This question examines how they make requests in terms of (im)politeness. The second question is statistically investigated by showing the frequency of frequencies and percentages to indicate which one of the two groups tended to use more politeness strategies. With regards to question three, it tries to indicate whether culture can have an impact on participants' choices of such strategies.

B. Participants

The participants of this study were 20 Americans (nine female, 11 male) and 20 Saudis (five female, 15 male) who were studying at Southern Illinois University. Most of those participants were 19-25 years old, with the youngest 19 and the oldest over 30. The length of stay in the U.S. for Saudi participants ranged from one to two years. The majority (12)

of these Saudis were pursuing an MA while eight were either pursuing an undergraduate degree or taking remedial English classes in the Center for English as a Second Language.

C. Instrument

The instrument of this study is a questionnaire with three questions about the ways that American and Saudi participants would make requests in different situations. The available choices were categorized into three groups: more polite, less polite, and impolite. A brief demographic survey was also taken as a part of the questionnaire. If major differences were found within one group, the demographic information could be used to relate their differing answers to gender, nationality, age, or length of stay in the U.S. Distractor questions were added to conceal the purpose of the study. The three questions in the questionnaire were as follows:

1. How would you typically ask for money when you are in need? Would your approach differ when making the request to a friend versus a stranger?
2. When you require clarification on information missed during a class, how would you ask someone for assistance in understanding? Do you employ the same method when interacting with friends as you would with strangers?
3. What is the most appropriate manner to request a pen when you need one? How would you ask a friend versus a stranger?

These items of the questionnaire aimed to trigger responses to these hypothetical scenarios. These responses to a large extent can reflect people’s everyday language. To put it differently, they can reveal how people make requests in their public interactions.

III. RESULTS

A. Requests for Money

As illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, participants tended to select a “more polite” or “less polite” way to request money from friends, with a small minority selecting an impolite method. Participants were twice as likely to select a “more polite” request with strangers. Americans in this case only selected the “more polite” option, while Saudis also selected a “less polite” option. As both tables show, 5% of Saudi participants left the question unanswered.

TABLE 1
ASKING A FRIEND FOR MONEY

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	45%	45%	10%
Saudis	40%	45%	10%

TABLE 2
ASKING A STRANGER FOR MONEY

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	100%	0%	0%
Saudis	85%	10%	0%

B. Requests for Information

Regarding requests for missing information in class, the “less polite” option was the most common among both groups with friends (see Table 3). Americans selected the “more polite” method over twice as often as Saudis, who were more likely to use the impolite method with friends. Regarding strangers (see Table 4), the two groups agreed for the most part, with Saudis selecting the “more polite” method slightly more often than Americans and the “less polite” method slightly less often.

TABLE 3
ASKING A FRIEND FOR INFORMATION

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	40%	55%	5%
Saudis	15%	55%	30%

TABLE 4
ASKING A *STRANGER* FOR INFORMATION

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	75%	25%	0%
Saudis	80%	20%	0%

C. Requests for a Pen

When asking a friend for a pen (see Table 5), Americans tended to choose the “less polite” option most of the time but also selected the “more polite” option. In contrast, Saudis selected the “impolite” method half the time, none of the Americans chose this option, and selected the “less polite” option in most other cases instead. When asking strangers (see Table 6), both groups tended to select the “more polite” option, with Saudis twice as likely as Americans to choose the “less polite” option and American leaving this question unanswered 5% of the time.

TABLE 5
ASKING A FRIEND FOR A PEN

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	25%	75%	0%
Saudis	10%	40%	50%

TABLE 6
ASKING A *STRANGER* FOR A PEN

Participants	Strategy		
	More Polite	Less Polite	Impolite
Americans	80%	15%	0%
Saudis	70%	30%	0%

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Analysis of Saudi Answers

(a). Asking for Money

The following example was the most indirect request used by participants in this study:

أحتاج لمبلغ مالي بشكل ضروري ممكن لو تكرمتم أستعير منكم مبلغ وأرده لك قريب جدا

This example involves the verb “need,” which emphasizes the speaker’s need for money. It is followed by the adverb /bʃakil dʔaruri/ “incredibly need”, which adds emphasis to the request. In this utterance, a politeness marker was employed by the speaker /law takarramt/ “if you may”. In this request, the speaker indicates when they will pay the addressee back.

The politeness maker /teg dar taʃtʔini/ is used in this expression:

أحتاج مبلغ مالي تقدر تعطيني وأرده لك قريب؟

However, it is less polite than the previous example. Here the utterance starts with /aħtadz/, a verb widely used when people ask for money. As a result, it was frequently used by Saudi participants in this study. This example also indicates when a speaker will pay back the addressee.

This example does not show any politeness marker:

عطني فلوس!

The speaker performed this request using the imperative form of the verb /ʃatʔni/. This example shows less politeness than the verb /aħtadz/ since the verb /ʃatʔni/ does not explain the speakers’ need for money. That is, this utterance does not indicate any reason for the request, while providing reasons can mitigate the face-threatening severity of the request.

(b). Asking for Information

In this example, the speaker gives a reason /ma ħadʔart eddars elmadʔi/ for the request made in the subsequent expression:

ما حضرت الدرس الماضي. ممكن لو تكرمتم تعطيني النقاط/المعلومات اللي أخذتوها وأكون لك شاكر

This serves as a justification to reduce the severity of the request. It also serves as a politeness marker. This example thus shows a high level of politeness. Another expression which marks politeness /wa akun lik fakır/ indicates the speaker's gratitude in case the addressee agrees to the request.

This example starts with a question /momken tašt'ini enniGat'elli ayađtuha eddars elmad'i/:

ممکن تعطیني النقاط/المعلومات الي أخذتوها الدرس الماضي لأنني ما حضرت؟

This formula serves as a politeness marker and provides a reason for the request.

In this example, the request is in the imperative form, making it a direct request:

عطني المعلومات/النقاط الي درستوا الدرس الماضي لأنني ما حضرت

The speaker provides a reason for the request. This example is among the most direct strategies used in this study. This could be justified by the informal relationship between the speaker and addressee as classmates.

(c). Asking for a Pen

Here the speaker initiates the request by providing a reason for the request /niseit g lmi eljum/ using a question formula /momken law takarramt t'irni g alam/:

نسبت قلمي اليوم. ممكن لو تكرمت تعيرني قلم؟

In this example, the speaker asks a question /momken t'it'ini g alam/:

ممکن تعطیني قلم؟ نسبت قلمي

He then provides a justification for his request via a statement /niseit g lmi/, which serves as a politeness marker.

This request is made in an imperative form /šat'ni/:

عطني قلم

It shows a high degree of indirectness and little politeness, possibly due to an informal relationship with the addressee. People generally avoid using this formula in formal settings.

B. Analysis of American Answers

(a). Asking for Money

"My financial situation is getting worse. I had many commitments this month and I am short of money, so could you please lend me some money".

Here the speaker makes a request. However, this request was not directly made. That is, this example begins with stating a reason for this request. It serves as a justification, and thus reduces the severity of face threatening of the request. The request is then formulated using a yes/no question formula. This expression indexes formality between the interlocutors. People usually resort to this strategy when they prefer to keep social distance with the addressee.

Nevertheless, the second example is a direct request, where the speaker asks for money "please I need some money". He used a politeness marker "please" as one way to show respect and consideration. The participant used a statement formula to perform the speech act of requesting. However, although it is formulated using this statement, the illocutionary force of this expression is a request.

(b). Asking for Information

"I didn't attend the class yesterday, could you please tell me what the main points you discussed were?".

Here the speaker initiates his request with a justification for this request, which comes in the second utterance in the form of question. The illocutionary force of this question is to make that request. He made an indirect request. In this example, indirectness points to social borders between the interlocutors. The speaker here shows respect and consideration for the recipient.

The other example extracted from the data is the following:

"Please tell me what you had last class".

Here the speaker performs the speech act of requesting directly. However, he uses a hedge "please" for the purpose of reducing the severity of face-threatening of request. This hedging word "please" was used widely in the American data. The other expression which is used by American participants is:

"What are topics you discussed?".

This request was formulated indirectly. It is considered an implicit speech act of requesting. The participant used wh-question to ask the addressee to provide him with all information needed regarding his missing class. The illocutionary force of this question then is requesting. This strategy was commonly used by American as one effective way to make requests.

(c). Asking for a Pen

"Give me your pen."

In this expression, the speaker uses a direct strategy to perform the request. Despite its directness, it indicates politeness since it minimizes social distance between speakers. In another expression ("Oh, I forgot my pen. Could you please give me your pen?"), the speaker uses a question formula. The illocutionary force of this expression is to make a request. However, the speaker uses a less direct strategy than in the previous example. The example starts with an excuse for the request followed by the actual request. Such strategies were widely used by American speakers in this

study. Participants tend to justify their request by stating a reason, as a sort of justification, behind a request for the sake of gaining compliance on the part of the addressee.

C. General Discussion

As the case with any speech acts, the speech act of requesting is usually investigated along with politeness. To put it another way, speakers usually employ various linguistic strategies that has social meanings. These strategies are used to show politeness and consideration for the addressee. However, different cultures may evaluate politeness differently. That is, many scholars (e.g., Brown & Levinson, 1987) argue that what can be polite in one culture may not be so in another culture. For example, when asking a stranger, Americans and Saudis tended to use the “more polite” option, even when they wanted to ask for a pen, a low imposition request. The “impolite” option was never chosen by any participants when asking a stranger for a pen. However, with a friend, the situation differed. In general, Americans leaned towards the “more polite” or at least the “less polite” methods, while Saudis also used the “impolite” method. Only four Americans chose an impolite method when asking for information and two when asking for money. On the other hand, 17 Saudis used it in different situations when asking a friend: two when asking for money, six for information, and nine for a pen.

When Saudis used “impolite” methods of making requests, they likely had several goals. One was establishing solidarity between interlocutors, eliminating barriers, and being closer. This intimacy and solidarity could be considered a feature marking Saudi speakers. Consequently, it can be argued that these expressions used by Saudi participants were to convey positive aspects of politeness as they aimed to minimize social distance.

Furthermore, according to our experience living within Saudi culture, when Saudi speakers seek solidarity, they normally do not use impolite methods alone, normally adding additional expressions whose aim is to reduce the severity of face-threatening force of requests, as one way to show respect and consideration for the addressee. This can help the requester to make the addressee comply with the request. For instance, they might pray for the hearer or thank them before or after uttering the requests, such as by saying, “May Allah bless you” or “May Allah keep you in good health.” If one of these remarks is not mentioned with the request, the request could be then considered less impolite. This can reveal that while directness is associated with lower level of politeness, it does not necessarily convey impoliteness, but it carries social meaning such as minimizing social distance or revealing willingness to make friendship. Thus, directness is a social practice used by speakers to convey particular meaning and social motives. It is an integral part of people’s social communication in various social domains such as friendship, work and the like.

V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated politeness aspects of requesting made by speakers of both Saudi Arabia and the United States. In this regard, it can be argued that politeness and impoliteness indexed social meaning in both cultures. That is, based on the data collected for this study, politeness features aimed at keeping social borders. However, directness features aimed to make relationship between interlocutors less formal, and thus minimized social distance between interlocutors. This study was limited by its small sample size (N=40), but it gave some indications about the differences and similarities between Americans and Saudis when formulating requests in different situations. In addition, the location was also limited, meaning that the results may not be generalized. That is, other differences may exist if other cultures are investigated. Future research, however, could build on this study with a larger and more diverse sample. It could also employ a larger variety of questionnaire items, collect data using other methods, or focus on questionnaire items not brought up in this study. For example, does the place where a request is made affect politeness strategies and reactions to them? If the speech act occurs in the presence of a third party, does that have an impact on how it is delivered or perceived?

This study could be helpful for those interested in testing whether different cultural communities vary in their perspectives on requests and politeness in general. The results suggested that people could benefit from considering cultural differences when requesting something of someone from another culture.

This study can also help students of other languages learning the Arabic language better understand that directness can carry many positive purposes, and can be an important factor for minimizing the social distance between the interlocutors. In the Arabic culture, people frequently use various directness strategies in their everyday interactions for social purposes (e.g., to minimize the social distance). As a consequence, this can minimize miscommunication attributed to cultural differences.

APPENDIX. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How would you typically ask for money when you are in need? Would your approach differ when making the request to a friend versus a stranger?
2. When you require clarification on information missed during a class, how would you ask someone for assistance in understanding? Do you employ the same method when interacting with friends as you would with strangers?
3. What is the most appropriate manner to request a pen when you need one? How would you ask a friend versus a stranger?

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Metrical Formation and Rhyme in Taysīr Subūl's *Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah* Collection: A Stylistic Study

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Abstract—This study focuses on the principal stylistic characteristics of metrical formation and rhyme in the poetry collection of Taysīr Subūl *Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah* 'Desert Sorrows'. It explores the impact of traditional Arabic metrical forms on articulating the poet's real-life and psychological experiences. The research also delves into the importance of rhyme in fostering a unified emotional flow, maintaining the continuity of events, and culminating the poet's conceptual thoughts. The study concludes that Subūl's selection of classical Arabic meters (Buhur) and their metrical variations significantly contribute to the freedom and fluidity of his expression, enriching the rhythmic and semantic depth of his poetry. The varied application of softened rhyme schemes emerges as a prominent stylistic feature, encouraging readers to ponder over the implications and meanings of his poetic lines.

Index Terms—Taysīr Subūl, metrical formation, rhyme, Arabic poetry, stylistic features

I. INTRODUCTION

The poet Taysīr Subūl, a distinguished poet of the sixties, presents in his collection "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" (Desert Sorrows) in 1967, utilizing the free verse style to freely express his cultural and intellectual structure within the prosodic unit framework that does not adhere to traditional poetic music ('Alīyān, 2010, p. 32). Observing Taysīr Subūl's poetry reveals his role in seeking existence and expressing the pains and concerns of the nation. His poetry is distinguished by political awareness, reflecting on the events of the Naksa (Setback) of June 1967 and its painful consequences on the Arab people, which was reflected in his poetic experience as he expressed the pains and sorrows of the Arab people following that defeat and the accompanying displacement of people from their homeland. Also, his poetry is considered existential romantic, which is embodied in his vision and contemplation of nature through his individual self, and the collection includes a number of poems that reflect Taysīr Subūl's view of women, reflecting love, tenderness, security, and tranquility. The poet Taysīr Subūl was a revolutionary protesting against the betrayal and defeats surrounding his words, which led him to suicide at the age of thirty-four on November 15, 1973.

The purpose and motivation behind selecting the topic of this study emerge from both a personal fascination with Taysīr Subūl's poetry and a noticeable gap in the scholarly examination of his work within the Jordanian literary corpus. While most studies addressing the poet Taysīr Subūl have highlighted his life and the thematic essence of his poetic journey, a detailed exploration into the stylistic and metrical formation in his collection "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" (Desert Sorrows) reveals a significant oversight. Few studies have explored beyond mere description to analyze the relationship between the prosodic meters and their use in his poems, their philosophical underpinnings, or the deliberate choice of rhymes and their intended meanings to the recipient. This scholarly oversight, especially within the Jordanian library, where most studies propose a broad scope in their titles—except for Ibrahim Khalil's study, which only dedicates a limited section to this aspect—highlights a critical gap. This gap is particularly attributed to Jordanian researchers' overlooking the intricate stylistic features of metrical structure in Subūl's poetry. No comprehensive study has been conducted that encompasses the stylistic attributes of the metrical structure in his poetry. Thus, this research aims to bridge this gap by adding another link to the chain of studies discussing Taysīr Subūl's profound poetic experience, specifically focusing on the metrical formation and its stylistic significance in conveying the poet's thematic intentions and emotional depth.

The study focuses on observing some stylistic features of the metrical formation and rhyme in "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" ('Desert Sorrows') collection, as well as highlighting the aesthetic value inherent in this poetry collection. Furthermore, it discusses the importance of the poetic meters' activations and their role in illuminating the stylistic aspects of Taysīr Subūl's poetry, which in turn delve into the poet's thoughts and emotions. Therefore, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the prosodic meters and their activations, the reasons for these activations, and the allowable variations used in Taysīr Subūl's "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" (Desert Sorrows)?
2. What are the most common rhymes at the end of his poetic lines?
3. How did the poet use external rhythm to convey his emotional experiences and its reflection on the recipient in "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah"?

In order to answer these questions, the methodology of the study is based on the descriptive, applied, and analytical approach in studying the poems of the collection "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" (Desert Sorrows) in terms of prosody, aiming to

extract the poetic meters used by the poet in his collection and to analyze the activations of those meters and the aesthetic technique the poet aimed to highlight through these diverse activations to reflect his poetic experience and its impact on the recipient.

Among the previous studies that have analyzed Taysīr Subūl's poetry from a prosodic perspective is a study titled "The Rhythmic Structure in the Poetry of Taysīr Subūl, 2021". Al-ʿĪsā discussed the frequent use of the "Fāʿilātun" activation in the collection and why Subūl preferred this activation over others in his collection. The current study, however, is a comprehensive examination of the metric structure and rhyme of the poems in the collection and how this prosodic structure conveys the poet's emotional experiences to the recipient.

II. DISCUSSION

A. Metrical Composition

The collection *Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah* for Taysīr Subūl consists of twenty-four poems crafted from five standard meters: Al-Raml, Al-Rajaz, Al-Mutadārah, Al-Mutaqārib, and Al-Kāmil. The poet, Taysīr Subūl, demonstrated a distinct preference for the Al-Raml meter due to its rhythmic flexibility, which allowed him to express a wide range of emotions and themes more effectively. This meter, in its standard form, features in several poems such as *Marḥaban* ('Welcome'), *Mallāh* ('Sailor'), *Laḥzāt min khashab* ('Wooden Moments'), *Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah (1, 2, 3)* ('Desert Sorrows (1, 2, 3)'), *'Awdat al-Shaykh* ('Return of the Sheikh'), *'Al-'Aqd al-Mafrūt* ('The Scattered Necklace'), *Ghajariyyah* ('Gypsy'), *'Awdat al-Rufāq al-Muta'abin* ('Return of the Tired Comrades'), and *'Wa-mā lam yaqul 'an Shahrazād* ('What Was Not Said About Scheherazade'). In addition, he blended this meter with other meters like Al-Rajaz and Al-Mutaqārib in *'Kilimāt Thaḳīlah* ('Heavy Words'), Al-Rajaz and Al-Mutadārah in *'Marthiyat al-Shaykh* ('Elegy of the Sheikh'), and Al-Kāmil in *'Qarārat Mawashshah Andalusī* ('Andalusian Muwashshah Decision').

Al-Rajaz, ranking second, is employed traditionally in four poems: *'Min Mughtarib* ('From Exile'), *'Qit'at Qalb li'l-Barā'ah* ('A Piece of Heart for Innocence'), *'Shahwat al-Turāb* ('Desire for Soil'), *'Hulūliyyah* ('Incarnation'). This meter is blended with Al-Kāmil meter, as in *'Qarārat Mawashshah Andalusī* (Andalusian Muwashshah Decision), and interwoven with Al-Mutadārah in *'Nīsān wa Hikmat al-Jidār* ('April and the Wisdom of the Wall').

As for Al-Mutadārah meter, it is used traditionally in his poems *'Thalāth Aghānī li'l-Ḍayā'* ('Three Songs for Loss'), *'Al-Nasr al-Ghā'ib* ('The Absent Eagle'), and *'Ru'b* ('Fear'). He composed two poems using Al-Mutaqārib meter: *'Shitā' Lā Yarḥal* ('Winter that Doesn't Leave') and *'Law* ('If'). Meanwhile, the poem *'Qarārat Mawashshah Andalusī* is composed using Al-Kāmil meter mixed with Al-Raml.

The predominant prosodic structure in Subūl's collection is Al-Raml's rhythm, whether traditionally used or blended with other meters. It occupies the first rank, followed by the rhythm of The Rajaz, standard or blended with other meters in the same poem. This is followed by The-Mutadārah meter, then The Mutaqārib, while The Kāmil meter is limited to only one poem.

The above arrangement highlights a clear distinction in using of poetic meters. The prominence of Al-Raml meter explains the poet's inclination towards it due to its freedom, fluidity, and ease, and its rhythm resonates with his emotional state, with its musical and dance-like tone. It also closely relates to the poetic imagery, the nature of letter composition, and the sequence of sounds that harmonize with the poet's emotional experience.

The use of Al-Raml meter may also be attributed to the liberty it offers the poet through various forms of Fāʿilātun, encompassing both deviations (al-Zuḥāfāt) and alterations in length through elongation or shortening (ʿIlal al-Naqṣ aw al-Ziyādah). This is notably evident in his poem *'Awdat ilā al-Rufāq al-Muta'abin* (Return to the Tired Comrades) (Subūl, 2001, pp. 82-83), where he says:

"Ghajariyyah" (Gypsy) –

Fāʿilātun

"Ya lahāth al-raml, ya insānī al-dā'i" (Oh, the pursuit of sand, oh my lost humanity) –

Fāʿilātun Fāʿilātun Fāʿilātun Faʿi

"Fī aṣḍā' mawwāl ḥazīn" (In the echoes of a sad tune) –

Lātun Fāʿilātun Fāʿilān

"Al-ḥikāyāt allatī tu'rūn" (The stories you tell) –

Fāʿilātun Fāʿilātun Fāʿi

"Fī khaljāt a'ṣābī 'ādat tatamallal" (In the depths of my nerves, restlessness returns) –

Lātun Fāʿilātun Fālātun Faʿilātun

In another section, he utilizes other forms of the meter, as follows:

"Anti tasmaʿn" (You hear) –

Fāʿilātu, Fāʿi

"Khawā' mala' 'aynayki balāhah" (Void fills your eyes, naively) –

Lātun, Fāʿilātun, Faʿilātun

The poet employed the standard Al-Raml mnemonic (Fāʿilātun -U--), along with variations such as the *Khubn* deviation (Faʿilātun UU--), and sometimes omitted segments, as in (Fāʿilātu -U-U). He also used metrical defects such *Tash'ith* (Fālātun ---) and *Tasbīgh* (Fāʿilātān -U--ḥ), adding a silent letter to *Sabab khafif* in Fāʿilātun. This metrical

variation disrupts monotony and enhances rhythm, deepening audience engagement with the poetic narrative. The stylistic impact is inversely related to its frequency, which can diminish its aesthetic value and influence on the audience (Al-Masdi, 2006, p. 86).

The contrast between the standard Fā'ilātun mnemonic and its various forms enhances the rhythm, aligning with the poetic flow through rotation in the poem to portray the lives of women leading frivolous lives in the gypsy society. It also embodies the poet's emotional disarray, fluctuating between the deteriorating reality and the innate gypsy life. Thus, it captivates the audience's attention and evokes their emotions towards the poem.

Al-Rajaz, the second most prominent meter in the collection, is characterized by its regularity and consistency, which helps maintain the poet's intellectual and emotional stance. The Tadhyīl defect (Mutaf'ilan U-U-◌) reoccurs at the end of lines in some poems, showing the internal tension facing the poet, as seen in his poem 'Qit'at Qalb li'l-Barā'ah' (A Piece of Heart for Innocence) (Subūl, 2001, p. 20):

"Akhālunī sharibtu jarratay ḥanān" (I think I drank two jugs of affection) –

Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilān

"Aḥussu fī famī marārat al-damū" (I feel the bitterness of tears in my mouth) –

Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilān

In his poetry, the poet frequently employs the Fa'ūlun mnemonic (U--) at the end of the lines. In terms of the mnemonic Mustaf'ilun, he introduces the defect of al-Qaṭ' ('cutting') (Mustaf'il ---), then the Khubn deviation, transforming it into (Mutaf'ilu), which then became Fa'ūlun. The poet, like other free verse poets, exploited these metrical deviations, such as the defect of al-Ḥadhf ('deletion') (Fa'u U-) and the defect of al-Qasr ('shortening') (Fa'ul U--) (Abdul Jawad, 2002, p. 62). This mnemonic and its deviations are used in the Mutaqārib meter as if the poet mixed two meters. This is evident in his poem Min Almanfa "From Exile" (Subūl, 2001, p. 10), where he says:

"Akhāf yā ṣadiqatī min awbat al-masā" (I fear, my friend, the return of evening) –

Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilun, Mustaf'ilun, Fa'ul

"Mawākib al-aḥzān fīhi tamlā' al-durūb" (Processions of sorrow fill the streets) –

Mutaf'ilun, Mustaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilun, Fa'ul

"Taḥāṣar al-gharīb" (Surrounding the stranger) –

Mutaf'ilun, Fa'ul

"Wajaddafū 'alayya" (And they rowed against me) –

Mutaf'ilun, Fa'u

"Walawwathat shafāhuhum ākhir mā ladayya" (And sullied their lips with my last) –

Mutaf'ilun, Mutaf'ilun, Mustaf'ilun, Fa'u

In the above poetic lines, the poet alternates between Al-Rajaz and Al-Mutaqārib meters, starting each line with Al-Rajaz mnemonic (Mustaf'ilun) in its various forms, then transitioning at the end to the Mutaqārib mnemonic (Fa'ūlun) using the shortening deviation (Fa'ul) and deletion deviations (Fa'u). This is due to its narrative fluidity and alignment with the poet's intense feelings of confusion and continuous pain. These transitions enrich the meaning (Falyih, 2011, p. 56), as the Mutaqārib meter is distinguished by its flow and monotony due to its rhythmic repetition and fluidity, which is fast and short. It resonates with the poet's deep feelings of alienation, sorrow, and loss (Al-Badrani, 2010, p. 278). All of this stimulates the audience, drawing them to explore the contents of the poetic lines and their expression of loneliness, tension, and fear of the coming evening when sorrows besiege the poet, compressing his melancholic feelings dripping with pain and overflowing with sorrow for the defeats faced by the Arab nation throughout history and its uncertain future (Al-Yaseen, 2016, p. 74).

The poet uses the Mutadārak meter in the third rank stems from its capacity to accommodate various dialogues. Its tone is light on the listener, easily accepted by the ear, and flexible for different poetic purposes (Salem, 1985, p. 295). The poet exploited the standard mnemonic forms (Fā'ilun -U-), like the Khubn deviation (Fā'ilun UU-), the implicit deviation (Fā'ilun --), and the tailing deviation (Fā'ilān UU-◌), or (Fā'lān - -◌) at the end of the poetic line ending with a silent letter after the prolonged Alif, as in: ḥalām (darkness), al-ayyām (days), masā' (evening), firāq (separation). This is exemplified in his poem Thalāth Aghānī lil-Ḍiyā (Three Songs for Loss) (Subūl, 2001, pp. 22-24), where he says:

"Aynāka ḥalām" (Your eyes are darkness) –

Fa'lun, Fa'ilān

"La-budda satufaj'unā al-ayyām" (Surely the days will shock us) –

Fa'lun, Fa'ilun, Fa'ilun, Fa'ilān

"Jama'atnā al-ṣudfah dhāta masa" (Chance brought us together one evening) –

Fa'ilun, Fa'lun, Fa'lun, Fa'ilān

"Lan nasfah adma'unā lifirāq" (We won't shed tears for parting) –

Fa'lun, Fa'ilun, Fa'ilun, Fa'ilān

The Mutadārak meter is characterized by seriousness and decisiveness, which aligns with the poet's goal of searching for the lost human self and the truth of things in a world dominated by darkness and ignorance. The standard Mutadārak mnemonic (Fā'ilun -U-) underwent various changes, either by condensing some of its sounds or lightening some of its movements (Rajeh, 2012, pp. 136, 151), allowing the poet to express his emotions, frozen due to unclear vision of what happened in the 1967 defeat, accompanied by feelings of loss of genuine emotions replaced by deceit, betrayal, and

momentary joy. The diversity of deviations and defects sometimes means a variety of ways to express the dramatic structure, requiring different musical variations exploited by the poet to express his poetic experience, including conflict and complexity (Zayed, 2002, pp. 189-190), and to impact the receiver to share his/her sadness due to the darkness and loss prevailing in the Arab world, and the sorrow, fear, and sense of betrayal felt by the Arab peoples after the Naksa and the loss of what remained of Palestine.

The poet also used the Mutaqārib meter to a lesser extent, employing its standard form (Fa'ūlun U--), along with deviations such as Qabdh (Fa'ūlu U-U), shortening (Fa'ūl U-), and deletion (Fa'ū U-), across various lines. This is exemplified in his poem *Shitā' Lā Yarḥal* "Winter That Doesn't Leave," (Subūl, 2001, pp. 13-14) where he says:

“Watūshik tahmis anna ash-shitā” (And it almost whispers that winter) –

Fa'ūlu Fa'ūlu Fa'ūlun Fa'ūl

“Tanāhā” (Has ended) –

Fa'ūlun

“Wawadda' ayyāmunā” (And bid farewell to our days) –

Fa'ūlu Fa'ūlun Fa'ū

“Wakhallaf fī al-arḍi aḥlāmunā” (And left in the earth our dreams) –

Fa'ūlu Fa'ūlun Fa'ūlun Fa'ū

“Wa'ūdan bikḥṣab” (And promises of abundance) –

Fa'ūlun Fa'ūlun

“Thamarān liḥubb” (Seeds of love) –

Fa'ūlun Fa'ūlun

“Wa'āh ḍamīr ath-tharā' wal-maṭar” (And the conscience of the earth and rain) –

Fa'ūlu Fa'ūlun Fa'ūlun Fa'ūl

The rhythmic structure in the previous poem is formed from the Mutaqārib mnemonic Fa'ūlun (U- in its various forms Fa'ūlu (U-U), Fa'ūl (U-), Fa'u (U-). Using them allowed the poet more freedom to express his inner feelings, fluctuating between sadness and loss to joy at the end of winter. The various forms of this meter and the ensuing prosodic disturbance aligned with the tension that dominated the poet's sorrowful self, with its repetition harmonizing with the flow of his emotions. It also draws the audience into this poetic experience and reflects on the lived reality with its concerns. Taysīr carried the burdens of the Arab nation due to its successive disasters and the occupation of Palestine (Alnajjar, 1993, p. 67).

Al-Subūl's choice of the meters above matched his intermingled emotions and the numerous mixed connotations arising from the rhythm of these meters. Most of the poems present psychological journeys that include states of tension, anxiety, and calmness through the evocation of life events filled with disappointment at his inability to change his surroundings. These psychological states found the prosodic meters a means that intensified the bonds of words in the poetic context, influencing each other, thus linking the movement of the meter to the movement of meaning.

The poet worked on developing the rhythm in a single poem by varying the meters, as in his poem *Andalusian Muwashshah Decision* (Subūl, 2001, pp. 89-91), where he used both the Kāmil and Raml meters, deepening the sense of his poetic experience and the audience capturing the inner pulse which is brimming with tension, pain, and nostalgia for the glory of the Arabs and their rich past. He exploited the Kāmil meter and its deviations, saying:

“Ishbīliyā, Ishbīliyā” (Seville, Seville) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun

“Fī qā'at Umayyiyah al-ajwā” (In a Umayyad-like Hall) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'i-

“Tarful bil-ḥarīr” (Adorned with silk) –

Lun Mutafā'ilun

“Wal-laḥn mawjū' āsīr” (And the tune, a wounded captive) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun

“Khalf al-maḥājir fī ikhtilājāt al-jufūn” (Behind the eyelids in the twitches of the eyelids) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun

“Ash-Shām tawlid taratan” (Damascus is born at times) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun

“Ash-Shām thāniyatan tamūt” (Damascus dies again) –

Mutafā'ilun Mutafā'ilun

The poet chose the Kāmil meter for the poem as it recounts the Arabs past full of victories and expresses the poet's astonishment at the Arab defeat in June and their current situation. The topic was consistent with the Kāmil meter, a meter with varied forms that granted the poet freedom to express his feelings and emotions. Furthermore, the emotional transition of the poet from one state to another was linked to a musical transition from one meter to another, resulting in a difference in poetic rhythm. He says (Subūl, 2001, p. 92):

“Taraqṣu ash-Shām 'alā qalbī nasyīmāt khafāfā” (Damascus dances on my heart, light breezes) –

Fā'ilātun Fā'ilātun Fā'ilātun Fā'ilātun

“Kull marjin 'āshiq bayna yadayhā” (Every meadow in love in her hands) –

Fā'ilātun Fā'ilātun Fā'ilatun
 "Kull 'aynin ra'at an-nūr 'alayhā" (Every eye that saw the light on her) –
 Fā'ilātun Fā'ilatun Fā'ilātun
 "Mustahāmah" (Enamored) –
 Fā'ilātun

The poet started the poem with the Kāmil meter (Mutafā'ilun), then transitioned to the Raml meter (Fā'ilātun) at the end, making this prosodic structure leave a significant impact on the stylistic structure at the rhythmic level (Abu Isba', 1979, p. 229). The variety in the poem's meters allowed the poet to express the richness of his poetic experience, enriching the poem with musical diversity that adds color to the meaning.

When using the Kāmil meter (Mutafā'ilun), the poet resorted to Tadhyīl defect (Mutaf'ilān), which involves adding a silent letter to the last silent letter in it, causing two consecutive silent letters in the meter. This represents an extra-long segment at the ends of the poetic lines, a rhythmic feature. It results in creating a sharp pause at the end of those lines, serving to halt the poet's flowing poetic stream, leaving specific connotations when the line endings become moments of musical tension and sharp pauses that draw the audience's attention, compelling them to uncover the implications hidden within the poetic line. The poet aims to make the audience recall the Arabs' illustrious past in Seville and their bygone glory, to reflect on the present state of the Arabs and their continuous setbacks, including 1967 and beyond. The poet has thus utilized Tadhyīl defect as a stylistic tool to infuse the poetic text with an evocative power, broadcasting the poet's deep-seated emotions. He then employed the standard Raml meter and its variations, placing them in interconnected musical variations to create a rhythmic disruption that intensifies the audience's awareness towards of the poetic text.

We also notice his use of the omission deviation Fā'ilu (-U U) in the poem Al-Nasr al-Ghā'ib (The Absent Eagle) (Subūl, 2001, p. 40), where he says:

"Ṭār yajī' bijar'at mā' " (Flew for a sip of water) –
 Fā'ilu Fā'ilu Fā'ilu Fā'
 "Ṭār watāh 'alā aṣ-ṣaḥrā' " (Flew and got lost in the desert) –
 Fā'ilu Fā'ilu Fa'lun Fā'

We note the omission defect on the first, second, and third meters of the first line and the first and second of the second line. This transformation in the meter's rhythm is accompanied by lightness and fluidity pleasing to the ear, as the last silent letter is removed, shortening the standard meter "Fā'ilun" to "Fā'ilu," leading to faster vocal performance. The omission deviation "Fā'ilu" is shorter than the original meter "Fā'ilun" and is characterized by flexibility, speed, and flow (Qattous, 1997, pp. 381-382).

B. Deviations and Defects

In his collection, the poet utilized a variety of deviations including Khubn, Ṭay, Khubl, Kaff, Shakl, and Idmār, alongside shortening defects including Hadhf (deletion), Batr (amputation), Qaṭ'(cutting), Qasr (shortening), and Aḥdath al-Mudmar (the concealed shortening). He also resorted to using some defects of addition like Tadhyīl and Tarfīl, without adhering to specific positions in his poems, aiming to achieve a phonetic and semantic harmony in his poetic composite. This enabled him to blend poetic meters in some of his poems, thereby unleashing varied rhythms that reflected his poetic vision and emotional fluctuations. For instance, in his poem 'Qarārat Mawashshah Andalusī' (The Decision of an Andalusian Muwashshah) (Subūl, 2001, pp. 93-94), which he composed by alternating between the Kāmil and Raml meters, he used the Idmār deviation, which involves silencing the second movable in the standard metric of Mutafā'ilun (UU-U-) to become Mutafā'ilun (- - U-) (Abu Al-Adous, 1999, p. 132). He also employed at the end of some lines the Aḥdath al-Mudmar in Al-Kāmil Mutafā (- -), a form of the standard Mutafā'ilun (UU-U-), by introducing the Idmār deviation to become Mutafā'ilun and then the Aḥdath defect, which is the omission of the united prop to become Mutafā (- -) (Abdul Jawad, 2002, p. 44). He alternated between Idmār and Aḥdath al-Mudmar in these poetic lines in a way that made the audience feel the musical sequence and clarity of melody, stirring their emotions and conveying the idea. The poet says (Subūl, 2001, pp. 93-94):

"Wayatūf sāqīnā' " (And circling our feet) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā
 "Kā'san tali kā'sā" (Cup after cup) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā
 "Bil-wahmi taghrīnā" (With illusion, it tempts us) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā
 "Fala'allanā nansā" (So maybe we'll forget) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā
 "In kān yansīnā" (If it can make us forget) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā
 "Wahmun walaw ḥīnā" (An illusion, even for a moment) –
 Mutafā'ilun Mutafā

The poet portrays his sorrow and pain, occasionally mixed with indignation and resignation, due to the illusion in which the Arab nation lives. His emotions resonated with the nature of Al-Kāmil meter, especially elements of flexibility, weakness, illusion, and breakdown based on surrendering to reality.

It is noted that the deviations used affected the metric composition of the aforementioned lines, and the meter, meaning, and the poet's emotions, feelings, and sensations are interwoven within these poetic lines. The music from the metric composition is an element linked with the rest of the poetic text's components (Nafe', 1985, p. 74). The poet then returns to use the Al-Raml meter and its formations in the same poem, saying:

“Baradā fī al-‘ayn ṣabḥan wa masā’an” (Barada in the eyes, morning and evening) –
Fa‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun Fa‘ilān

According to Issa (2021), the reason for alternating between Mutafā‘ilun and Fa‘ilātun meters may be to celebrate the Andalusian Arab spirit, which is represented by the Muwashshah composed on the Fa‘ilātun meter of Al-Raml (p. 45). Subūl also exploited most of the images inspired by the standard Raml meter Fā‘ilātun (-U-) as needed for the meaning, as in his poem Mallāḥ (‘Sailor’) (Subūl, 2001, pp. 16-17) where he used the Khubn deviation Fā‘ilātun (UU-) (Khalusi, 1977, p. 134) in the first and sixth lines of the stanza. He also used the Idmār deviation Fa‘ilātun, which involves deleting the second silent sound from the standard Fa‘ilātun, then silencing the ‘ayn, resulting in Fa‘lātun (- - -) in the sixth line (Abdul Jawad, 2002, p. 134). In the sixth line, as well as the deletion defect Fā‘ila in the second poetic line which transforms to Fā‘ilun (-U-), which is the removal of the Sabab khafīf from Fā‘ilātun for ease of pronunciation (Bakkar, 1984, p. 90), in addition to using the shortening defect which is the removal of the silent Sabab from the end of Fā‘ilātun to become Fā‘ilāt (-U-), then it transforms to Fā‘ilān (Abu Al-Adous, 1999, pp. 32-33) in the end of the eighth poetic line, as well as using the Tash‘ith defect Fālātun (---) (Abdul Jawad, 2002, p. 134) at the end of the sixth line, he says:

“Rubamā ghayrī malāḥūn ṭāfū kull baḥr” (Perhaps others, sailors, have roamed every sea) –
Fā‘ilātun Fa‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun
“Rubamā” (Perhaps)
Fā‘ilā
“Lakinanī waḥdī lā malāḥ ghayrī” (Yet I alone, no sailor but me) –
Fā‘ilātun Fa‘lātun Fā‘ilātun
“Mn ramā fī baḥr ‘aynayki sharā‘ah” (Who cast his sail in your eyes' sea) -
Fā‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun Fa‘ilātun
“Dā‘ fī ‘aynayki lam yakhsha diyā‘ah” (Lost in your eyes, fearing not his stray)
Fā‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun Fā‘ilātun
“Walyakun annī baddadt biṭawwāfī ‘umrī” (Even if I squandered my life wandering)
Fā‘ilātun Fa‘lātun Fa‘ilātun Fālātun
“Baynamā al-shaṭān tad‘unī watughrī” (While the shores beckon and entice)
Fa‘ilātun Fa‘ilātun Fa‘ilātun
“An a‘ūd” (To return)
Fa‘ilān

In his poem "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwīyyah" (Desert Sorrows) (Subūl, 32), he used the Shakl deviation, which is Khubn + Kaff, transforming Fā‘ilātun into Fa‘ilātun and then Fā‘ilāt (UU-U) (Abu Al-Adous, 1999, pp. 32-33), when he says:

“Wa sarā al-ṣawt ‘alā madā al-ṣaḥārā al-‘Arabiyyah” (And the voice traveled across the Arab deserts.)
Fā‘ilātun Fa‘ilāt Fa‘ilātun Fa‘ilātun

In "Nīsān wa-Ḥikmat al-Jidār" (April and the Wisdom of the Wall) (Subūl, 2001, pp. 43, 45), the poet interwove the meters of Mutadārak and Rajaz, exploiting their deviations. He says:

“Nīsān wa-mūsīqā al-‘a-māq” (April and the music of the depths)
Fa‘lun Fa‘ilun Fa‘lun Fa‘lān
“Wa ḥanāyā mubhama al-ashwāq” (Mysterious innards of longing)
Fa‘ilun Fa‘lun Fa‘ilun Fa‘lān
“Yā nab‘a sakhīyya al-ḥanān” (Oh generous source of affection)
Mustaf‘ilun Mutaf‘ilun Fa‘ūl
“A’dhkuruhā mā ‘ādānī Nīsān” (I remember her as April returns.)
Musta‘ilun Mustaf‘ilun Fa‘lān

In the first and second lines of the poem, the poet utilized various deviations affecting the standard Mutadārak meter (Fā‘ilun -U-). These include the Khubn deviation (Fa‘ilun), which is the deletion of the second silent sound from Fā‘ilun, turning it into Fa‘ilun (UU-), and the Idmār deviation (Fa‘lān --), which is the silencing of the second moving sound in the Khubn deviation (Fa‘ilun) to become Fa‘lān (- -) like in a‘māq (depths), ashwāq (longing), and Nīsān (April). The ends of the first, second, and fourth poetic lines are appended with Fa‘lān (--), where the poet added a silent letter at the end of the silent letter in the meter, resulting in two consecutive silent letters, called za‘d tawil. This stylistic feature is prevalent in Subūl’s poems, representing a decisive stillness in the poet’s emotional flow and affecting the extension of the poetic line. The reason for using Tadhīl might be to prompt the reader to pause briefly to contemplate the various meanings suggested by the poetic lines.

In the third and fourth lines, the poet utilized the standard Rajaz meter *Mustaf'ilun* (--U-) and its transformations, such as the *Khubn* deviation *Mutaf'ilun* (U-U-), which is the deletion of the second silent sound from the original meter and the *Ṭayy* deviation *Musta'ilun* (-UU-), which is the deletion of the fourth silent sound from the standard meter. Like other free verse poets, the poet used the shortening defect *Fa'ul* (--◌), as at the end of the third poetic line. These forms did not come from *Mustaf'ilun*, but rather from the *Mutaqārib* meter *Fa'ulun* (U--), as if the poet mixed the meters of Rajaz and *Mutaqārib* (Abdel Jawad, 2002, p. 63). Badr Shakir al-Sayyab (1971) previously used these in his poem "Anshūdat al-Maṭar" (Song of Rain), particularly at the end of some poetic lines, saying (p. 474):

"Aynāki ḥīn tubasmān tawriqu al-kurūm" (Your eyes, when they smile, the vineyards flourish.)

Mustaf'ilun Mutaf'ilun Mutaf'ilun Fa'ul

Most of the ends of the poetic lines in that poem contained an additional silent letter. This might indicate a rhythmic and meaningful function that alerts the listener and draws their attention to the meanings of the poetic text. In his poem "Min Mughtarib" (From Exile), composed in the Rajaz meter, Subūl used the shortening defect *Fa'ul* (--), as at the end of the poetic line, saying (Subūl, 2001, pp. 8-9):

"Tahīyah min mut'ab ḥazīn" (A greeting from a weary, sad one) –

Mutaf'ilun Mustaf'ilun Fa'ul

"Tahīyah tur'ashu bil-ḥanīn" (A greeting trembling with nostalgia) –

Mutaf'ilun Musta'ilun Fa'ul

"Lil-masah" (For the touch) –

Mutaf'ilun

"Likalimatay 'azā'" (For two words of consolation) –

Mutaf'ilun Fa'ul

"Fī al-muntā' āghālibu al-'iyā'" (In the distance, I fight off exhaustion) –

Mustaf'ilun Mutaf'ilun Fa'ul

"Aḥlamu bil-ma'ād" (I dream of the return) –

Musta'ilun Mutaf'i-

"Idh yaḍmannā liqā'" (When we are embraced by a meeting.) –

Lun Mutaf'ilun Fa'ul"

This shortening defect is widespread in the ends of his poetic lines composed in the Rajaz meter, as seen in his poems like "Ḥulūliyyah," "Shahwat al-Turāb," and "Qit'at Qalb lil-Barā'ah" (Subūl, 2001, p. 19).

C. Rhyme

Rhyme in contemporary Arabic poetry does not adhere to a uniform system. It plays a significant role in creating smooth musical atmospheres in Taysīr Subūl's poems (Mahmoud, 1996, p. 83), along with the harmony resulting from the poet's use of varied rhymes. This type of music, in concert with the metrical structure, facilitates the conveyance of poetic emotions to the audience (Abd Sabour, 1971, p. 76). Varied rhymes serve as a stylistic feature, fulfilling different aesthetic and semantic objectives, as the rhyme has an important functional role in serving the poem and capturing the audience's interest. The function of rhyme is most apparent in its relationship with meaning, as noted by Jean Cohen (1986, p. 74).

In some of his poems, Taysīr Subūl combines double, alternating, and varied rhymes, as in his poem "Mā Lam Yuqal 'An Shahrazād" (What Was Not Said About Scheherazade), where he says (Subūl, 2001, pp. 97-99):

"Shahrazādī" (Shahrazad)

"Shahrazādī yā ṣadiqah" (Shahrazad, oh my friend)

"Qīla mā qīla wa waḥdī" (What was said was said, and alone)

"Anti asrartu ilayhi bil-ḥaqīqah" (You were the one who revealed the truth to him)

"Alf Laylah" (A thousand nights)

"Kull Laylah" (Each night)

"Ḥulmuki al-awḥad an tabqī lillaylah" (Your sole dream to remain for the night)

"Fa-idhā mā ad-dīk ṣāḥ" (But when the rooster crows)

"Mu'linan lil-kawn milād ṣabāḥ" (Announcing to the world the birth of morning)

"Nimti wal-mawt sawiyyan fī firāsh" (You slept with death together on the bed)

"Alf Laylah" (A thousand nights)

"Ghāḍa fī 'aynayki imād at-taṣabbt" (The glimmer in your eyes faded away)

"Wa-stawat kull al-madhāqāt" (And all tastes became uniform)

"Famurr mithl 'adhb" (Bitter like sweet)

"Ba'dahā kān, wa mā kān ṣabāḥ" (After which, there was, and what was not, a morning)

"Anti fīhi ba'd dhikrā 'an ṣabiyyah" (You were in it a mere memory of a girl)

"Ayn minhā Shahrazād" (Where is she from Shahrazad?)

In this poem, alternating rhymes are used where *Al rawī* (the rhyme letter) of the first and third lines, and the second and fourth lines match (Shahrazādī - waḥdī), and the rhymes of the fourth and third lines are similar in terms of rhyme (ṣadiqah - ḥaqīqah). The double rhyme is observed where the eighth and ninth lines have the same rhyme letter end (ṣāḥ - ṣabāḥ), with the rhyme being the letter "ḥā".

In the diverse rhyme scheme from the tenth to the seventeenth poetic lines, the poet's use of varied rhyme was evident *Ṣabāh* (morning), *firāsh* (bed), *at-taṣbīḥ* (prayer beads), *al-madhaqāt* (tastes), *‘adhub* (sweet), *Shahrazad* (a character from *Arabian Nights*). The rhyme varied between (ḥ), (sh), (y), (t), (b), and (d). Through the variation of rhymes, the poet depicts the sorrows, despair, and pain experienced by the Arab people. He aspires to the dawn of distant freedom in the presence of oppressive rulers. These meanings were reflected in the metrical and rhyme structure. The poet employed *Al-Raml* meter and its various degrees, ranging from one mnemonic to four, depending on the length of the poetic line. He did not adhere to a single rhyme except at the end of his poetic text, creating a deep impact on the poem's audience, as in his words:

Wa-nughannī li-intiṣār (We sing for victory)
Lam yaku yawman wala yurjā intiṣār (It was never a day nor is victory hoped for)
Taḥta ‘aynay Shahrayār (Beneath the eyes of Shahrayar)

The manipulation of rhyme by the poet creates a musical effect that is considered one of the important features in the phonetic structure of his poetic texts. Furthermore, we can observe his inclination towards couplets in some of his poems, as in a stanza from his poem *Al-Iqd al-Mafrūṭ* (the *Scattered Necklace*), which he composed in the *Al-Raml* meter. He says (Subūl, 2001, pp. 71-72):

Athaqāl raṣāṣ fiḍ-ḍamīr (Heavy weights in conscience)
Wa tlawway yā'is khawf al-maṣīr (And followed hopeless fear of destiny)
Fa-smi ‘thā yā ṣaḍīqah (So, listen, O my friend)
Kharzātun zarqā’ lā tu ‘fī ḥaḳīqah (A blue bead that doesn't give reality)
Wa kullunā raḥlah mubhhamah al-ab ‘ād (And we all embark on a vague journey to distant lands)
Lā tudī li-marfa' (That doesn't lead to a harbor)
Fa-idhā ṭayf min at-tārīkh awmā' (But when a specter from history appears)
Lāmisa al-qalb wa-aghrā bi-khuld (Touches the heart and tempts with eternity)
Aw tabāshīr li-mīlād jadīd (Or brings tidings of a new birth)

In this poem, the first and second lines share the same rawi of rā (r) in words like "ḍamīr" and "maṣīr". The third and fourth lines rhyme with daal (d) in words like "ṣaḍīqah" and "ḥaḳīqah". The fifth and sixth lines rhyme with the letter hamza in words like "ab ‘ād" and "marfa'." The seventh and eighth lines rhyme with daal (d) in words like "khuld" and "jadīd". These rhyme pairs created a rhythmic musical ending that allows the audience to contemplate the poetic text.

One of the prominent stylistic features in his collection is the phenomenon of "taskīn (silencing)", or the placement of silent endings in some poetic lines. This allows the poet to maintain fluency and continuity in his poetic lines without forcing the reader to pause at the line's end. In his view, Ibrahim Anis (1972) defines rhyme as "multiple sounds that repeat at the ends of lines in a poem, and its repetition is an important part of the poetic composition. The semantic function of rhyme lies in connecting the words of the rhyme to the meaning of the poetic line" (pp. 149-150).

In "*Al-Nasr Al-Ghā'ib*" (The *Absent Eagle*), the poet employs the repetitive sound of ra (r) followed by the soft sound of ya (y) to express lament and sorrow over the loss of his brother *Shaukat*, saying (Subūl, 2001, pp. 38-40):

Ya nasrī, āh ya nasrī (O my eagle, oh my eagle)
‘arayta ‘arūqak ya nasrī (Did you see your veins, O my eagle?)
Wa kusirat janāḥak ya nasrī (And your wing was broken, O my eagle)

He also used the repetitive sound of noon (n) followed by ya (y) in the rhyme in the same poem to convey his regrets and sorrow for the loss of his brother, saying:

Law nazarat ‘ayn minka tarānī (If an eye from you were to see me)
Satara yā kam ṣirtu a ‘ānī (It would cover, O how I've become)

III. RESULTS

- Taysīr Subūl's musical composition adheres to specific traditional poetic meters (*Buhur*). The poet favored *Al-Rajaz* meter for its ability to incorporate diverse deviations and defects, breaking the rigidity of standard meters (Altayeb, 1970, p. 230), providing his texts with expressive depths that convey his emotions.
- The poet employed *Al-Raml* meter, which presents a calm and regular rhyme. In this poetic text, the meter changes as the poet transitions from one situation or emotional state to another.
- Occasionally, the poet utilized phonetic similarities between the final meter of one poetic segment and the opening meter of the next segment, even if they originally did not share a common meter. An example of this can be found in the poem "*Kalimāt Thaḳīlah*" (*Heavy Words*). The second segment's final meter, *Fā'ilātun*, belongs to the *Raml* meter and phonetically coincides with the first meter of the third segment, even though the second line belongs to the *Mutaqārib* meter. This creates a rhythm, as the *Raml* meter *Fā'ilātun* includes sounds from the *Mutaqārib* meter (*Fa'ūlun*). By dropping the first *Sabab* (fa) from *Fā'ilātun* and reading (‘ilātun), it phonetically aligns in the reader's perception with *Fa'ūlun* (Hijazi, 1989, p. 248). The rhythm of these meters reflects the psychological atmosphere dominating the poet's creative experience and the visions from which these experiences emerge.
- The *Raml* meter emerges as the most frequently employed, with the *Rajaz* meter following in second place. The *Mustaf'ilun* meter, with its diverse deviations, mirrors the poet's anxious state stemming from his surroundings,

adding a rhythm that depicts the noise of the city. In third place is the Khubb meter (Al-Mutadārak), whose meter Fa'lun derives its simplicity and musicality from alternating between movement and stillness, and from the succession of three movements ending in stillness in Fa'ilun. The meter Fa'ilun appears only once, faced with Khubb deviation to become Fa'ilun with a broken 'ayn once and a silent 'ayn another time. In both cases, the meter transforms into what is known as the Khubb meter, as in some segments of his poem "Nīsān wa Hikmat al-Jidār" (April and the Wisdom of the Wall), as well as "Al-Nasr Al-Ghā'ib" (The Absent Eagle), "Thalāth Aghānī lil-Dhayā'" (Three Songs for Loss), and "Ru'b" (Fear). The dramatic nature of these poems is linked to the use of this meter, whose variant form (Fa'lun--) consists of a moving sound followed by a silent one, making it more adaptable than its original form in expressing dialogical and dramatic situations, as in his poem "Thalāth Aghānī lil-Dhayā'" (Subūl, 2001, pp. 22-23), where he says:

'abath an nadhayyi' dhaḥkatunā
 Fa'ilun Fa'lun Fa'ilun Fa'ilun
 wal-qalbu taghallafahu al-ḡulmah
 Fa'lun Fa'ilun Fa'ilun Fa'lun
 la-budda sayufj'unā al-ayyām
 Fa'ilun Fa'ilun Fa'ilun Fa'lān"

- The diverse use of metric deviations aligns with the dramatic contexts presented. The poet abandoned the traditional form of the verse, using the metering system and dealing with standard meters, focusing on five meters: Raml, Rajaz, Mutadārak (Khubb), Mutaqārib, and Kāmil, with the dominance of the Raml meter, whether standard or blended with other meters.
- His approach to rhyme, a refined musical element adaptable to changes, allows the poet to employ various rhyming schemes, including paired rhymes. Whether his rhyme is varied or unified, it is not essential for controlling the meter but is unified when necessary.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study delves into Taysīr Subūl's "Aḥzān Ṣaḥrāwiyyah", uncovering the sophisticated use of metrical formation and rhyme. Subūl's poetry, echoing with the rhythms of traditional Arabic meters such as Al-Raml, Al-Rajaz, and others, demonstrates a profound connection between form and meaning. His manipulation of these meters, along with their variations, vividly reflects his emotional and psychological experiences that are mainly affected by the status of the Arab country. Moreover, Subūl's approach to rhyme enhances his collection's thematic and emotional continuity, contributing to a deeper, more resonant engagement with the reader. This analysis, bridging a gap in Jordanian literary studies, underscores the relevance and adaptability of modern Arabic poetic forms in expressing contemporary sensibilities. It is evident that Subūl's stylistic choices in meter and rhyme are not mere aesthetic decisions but are integral to the thematic fabric of his work, offering a window into his artistic vision and the rich landscape of modern Arabic poetry. Therefore, this study enriches our understanding of Subūl's poetic oeuvre and contributes to the broader discourse on the evolution of form and style in Arabic Jordanian literature.

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Floral Lexicons in Javanese Proverbs: An Ecolinguistic Study

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Abstract—This study aimed to analyze and elaborate on the dimensions of meaning in the floral lexicons in Javanese proverbs. Employing an ecolinguistic approach, this study focused on the expressions in Javanese proverbs that entail floral lexicons. The data were collected using an uninvolved observation method, as well as documentation, observation, and interviews with relevant informants. The data were then analyzed using the referential identity method, translational identity method, and immediate constituent analysis or distributional technique. Further, data triangulation was also conducted to validate the data with the following steps: discussion, re-checking, and expert consultation. The result shows that the floral lexicons entailed in Javanese traditional proverbs take the form of words and phrases. In word or morpheme form, the lexicons are categorized as nouns and polymorphemic expressions consisting of affix, reduplicative, and compound words. The floral lexicons in Javanese proverbs, in accordance with the cultural values they embody, include depicting attitudes and worldviews; reflecting negative attitudes; being related to strong determination; portraying the relationship between humans and God; and illustrating human interactions with other humans, as well as their connection with nature. The lexicons also represent the thought process and cultural values of Javanese society.

Index Terms—cultural values, ecolinguistics, fauna lexicon, floral lexicon, Javanese proverbs

I. INTRODUCTION

Javanese proverbs are imbued with profound values closely tied to the Javanese perspective on life, emphasizing a vigilant and cautious approach when interpreting events. Javanese proverbs, whether in the form of *paribasan*, *bebasan*, or *saloka*, carry valuable teachings, typically offering advice, recommendations, commands, prohibitions, and admonishments. The Javanese people are meticulous in their approach to all aspects of life, including their ability to discern and interpret both the state of affairs and natural signs. This acute awareness is a reflection of the Javanese people's high sensitivity in navigating their lives, encompassing their relationships with the Divine, fellow human beings, and the surrounding environment. For example, in Javanese proverbs, we find expressions such as *timun wungkuk jaga imbuh*, which means 'a person kept as a reserve resource (in case of emergencies)'; *bathok bolu isi madu*, which describes 'someone who may appear foolish or of low status but is, in fact, highly knowledgeable and noble-hearted'; *njanur gunung*, referring to 'a person doing something out of the ordinary (a surprise)'; *gajah ngidak rapah*, which characterizes 'someone who disregards their own rules'; and *kebo nusu gudel*, which denotes 'an older person seeking to learn from someone younger'. With such sensitivity, Javanese people are able to connect or analogize specific events with the choice of lexicons derived from their surroundings, including both the flora and fauna in their environment, as the components that shape Javanese proverbs.

In ecolinguistic studies, the lexicons of flora and fauna used in Javanese proverbs are not merely interpreted as names attached to those flora and fauna. Instead, the presence of flora and fauna is just as significant as the presence of humans within an ecosystem. The shared consideration of the interconnectedness of humans with other organisms and their environment is known as ecosophy. The term ecosophy is an acronym for ecological philosophy proposed by Næss and Sessions (Yuniawan et al., 2020). Ecosophy describes a set of philosophical principles encompassing ecological considerations (Stibbe, 2015). This research explores Javanese proverbs from a global ecolinguistic perspective, specifically focusing on the lexicons of flora and fauna used in the formation of Javanese proverbs. The analysis will

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not mention specific types of Javanese proverbs, such as *paribasan*, *bebasan*, and *saloka*, but will instead describe the classification of Javanese proverbs based on their lexicons. Specifically, the objectives of this research are: (1) to analyze the forms of flora lexicons in Javanese proverbs; (2) to analyze the forms of fauna lexicons in Javanese proverbs; and (3) to describe the dimensions of meaning associated with the lexicons of flora and fauna in Javanese proverbs. This study involves several concepts, i.e., ecolinguistics, lexicon, and Javanese proverbs.

Ecolinguistics, an interdisciplinary field within applied linguistics, focuses on the interaction between language and the cultural environment, incorporating ecological concepts from biology. It is also referred to as language ecology, linguistic ecology, or green linguistics (Crystal, 2008; LeVasseur, 2015). Ecolinguistics is the study of the impact of language use on sustainability, bridging the relationships between humans, other organisms, and the physical environment with a normative orientation towards the preservation of sustainable relationships and life (Stibbe, 2015; Xiong, 2023). Therefore, ecolinguistics is closely related to how language shapes, maintains, influences, or disrupts relationships among humans, living conditions, and their environment. In conclusion, ecolinguistic studies encompass parameters of interrelationships (language-environment interrelations), environment (physical and sociocultural environment), and diversity (language and environmental diversity) (Fill & Peter, 2001).

The term 'lexicon' is commonly used to encompass the concept of a 'collection of lexemes' within a language, whether it's the entire collection or just a portion of it. A lexicon is a compilation of lexemes within a language. In lexicon studies, the scope includes what is meant by a word, vocabulary structure, word learning, word usage and storage, the history and evolution of words (etymology), relationships between words, and the processes of word formation in a language. In everyday usage, a lexicon is often considered synonymous with a dictionary or vocabulary (Sapir, 1912).

Traditional Javanese expressions, known as Javanese proverbs, serve as the language or vernacular of the Javanese community. They are used to portray the community's culture, experiences, and thought patterns. Javanese proverbs are categorized into five groups: those related to animals, plants, humans, family members, and body parts (Dananjaya, 2007). This research specifically focuses on Javanese proverbs related to animals and plants. These proverbs frequently incorporate the lexicons of plants and animals. Flora and fauna are living entities in nature, each possessing distinct parts that carry specific correlated meanings.

Javanese proverbs that feature lexicons of flora and fauna are traditional expressions in the Javanese language that use the names of plants, animals, or their parts as comparisons. The lexicons of flora and fauna in Javanese proverbs signify a form of wisdom that is employed to depict a person's character, a specific situation, or a particular matter. Suhandano (2012) classifies the lexicons related to plant parts in the Javanese language into ten categories: *wit* (tree), *godhong* (leaf), *pang* (branch), *kembang* (flower), *yang* (fruit), *wiji* (seed), *kulit* (fruit skin), *oyot* (root), and *rim pang* (rhizome). Moreover, the lexicons related to plant parts in the Javanese language are classified into ten categories: *wit* (tree), *godhong* (leaf), *pang* (branch), *kembang* (flower), *yang* (fruit), *wiji* (seed), *kulit* (fruit skin), *oyot* (root), and *rim pang* (rhizome). Additionally, other plant structures are categorized as follows: 1) tree names, 2) leaves, 3) stems and branches, 4) flowers, 5) fruits, 6) seeds, 7) fruit skin, 8) roots and tubers, 9) wild plants, 10) climbing plants, and 11) rhizomatous plants.

Further elaboration is provided, includes: 1) the names of trees are divided into three types: a) woody-stemmed trees, b) wet-stemmed trees, and c) grass-stemmed trees, 2) leaves are categorized into: a) pinnate-veined leaves, b) palmate-veined leaves, c) parallel-veined leaves, and d) curved-veined leaves. For example, the word *godhong* (leaf), *godhong jati* (teak leaf), *daun beringin* (banyan leaf), *godhong kelor* (moringa leaf), and so on, 3) in Javanese proverbs, stems and branches are key lexicons. This category includes: a) stems; b) branches; and c) variations of both stems and branches. Examples are the banana tree's stem *debog*, a dry wood stem *kayu aking*, a dry branch *carang*, and a coconut tree's stem *glugu*, 4) flowers also feature prominently in Javanese proverbs. This includes specific flowers such as the lotus *tanjung*, general terms like *kembang*, *kusuma* for flowers, jasmine *mlathi*, and cempaka *cempaka*, 5) the lexicon of fruits in Javanese proverbs encompasses: a) fleshy fruits, such as cucumber *timun*, banana *gedhang*, jackfruit *ngangka*, durian *duren*, young coconut *cengkir*, and old coconut *kiring*; and b) non-fleshy fruits, like the castor plant *jarak* and candlenut *kemiri*, 6) seeds in Javanese proverbs are categorized into: a) *dicotyledonous* seeds, like jackfruit *beton*; and b) *monocotyledonous* seeds, such as tamarind *klungsu*, 7) fruit peels are also featured, divided into: a) peels from fleshy fruits, like coconut shell *bathok*; and b) peels from non-fleshy fruits, exemplified by onion skin *siliring bawang*, 8) roots and stumps form part of the lexicon in Javanese proverbs, including examples like the banyan tree root *oyod mimang* and stumps from the castor and teak *tunggak jarak dan jati*, 9) wild plants, a crucial part of Javanese proverbs, are divided into: a) grasses and small shrubs, like cogon grass *suket teki*; b) fungi and ferns, exemplified by *kemladheyan* and *jamur*; and c) parasitic plants, 10) climbing plants in Javanese proverbs are distinguished as: a) those bearing fruits, like long beans *kacang*; and b) those without fruits, such as water spinach *kangkong*, 11) *rhizomatous* plants, with an example being lesser galangal *kencur*.

The pertinent research studies referenced in the literature review are as follows: Pasaribu et al. (2023); Thamrin and Suhardi (2020); Yuniawan et al. (2013); Yuniawan et al. (2014); Yuniawan et al. (2015, 2016); Suktiningsih (2016); Yuniawan et al. (2017); Yuniawan et al. (2018); Yuniawan et al. (2020); Yuniawan et al. (2022); Yuniawan et al. (2023). Other scholarly investigations on proverbs incorporating animal or fauna lexicons have been undertaken by Abdullah (2011) in a study titled Cognitive Semantic Analysis of Malay Proverbs with References to Dogs. Kinanti

(2019) also researched Plant Metaphors in Indonesian Proverbs: A Cognitive Semantic Examination. This research delves into the utilization of plant metaphors within Indonesian proverbs, revealing a prevalent use of plant names, encompassing specific plant parts and plants identified by their seeds. Furthermore, Noviana and Saifudin (2021), Priyatiningsih (2020), Rakhmawati and Istiana (2021), and Sumarlam (2020) have explored Javanese proverbs, focusing on their philosophical aspects and their presence in social media and society.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive research approach. Qualitative research procedures yield descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words from individuals and observed behaviors (Denzin, 2009). The data utilized in this research consists of vocabulary suspected to contain lexicons related to flora and fauna in Javanese proverbs. The data source is derived from lexicons found within Javanese proverbs.

In this research, we collected data through the following methods: 1) unstructured, non-participatory listening with note-taking techniques, 2) written documentation, including photographs and images containing Javanese proverbs, 3) observation guidelines, and 4) interview guidelines (Sudaryanto, 2015; Rohidi, 2011; Santosa, 2016).

Classification techniques were incorporated into the process of sorting data. Classification in this study refers to data organization according to the similarities and dissimilarities of data identities. Ecocinguistic matching was utilized in the data analysis of this research, which includes: 1) the use of referential and translational matching techniques, and 2) the application of a distributive approach for direct or distributional segmentation of elements (Sudaryanto, 2015; Mahsun, 2005). For ensuring data validity in this research, triangulation was the chosen method, combining established data collection techniques and sources, encompassing stages, such as: 1) discussions, 2) re-examinations, and 3) consultations with specialists (Miles & Huberman, 1992; Rohidi, 2011; Mahsun, 2005; Sudaryanto, 2015).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the conducted research, three primary aspects were discerned: the structure of the flora lexicon, the structure of the fauna lexicon, and the semantic dimensions of the flora-fauna lexicons within Javanese proverbs. A more comprehensive description is provided below.

Structural and Semantic Analysis of Flora Lexicon in Javanese Proverbs

The study revealed various forms of flora lexicons. Presented here are examples of Javanese proverbs that incorporate nomenclature related to flora.

Flora Lexicon in the Proverb esuk dhele sore tempe

The Javanese proverb *esuk dhele sore tempe*, translating to 'soybean in the morning, tempeh in the evening, is an allegory for someone who lacks firm convictions or is indecisive in their stance.


Signifier of Floral Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Dhele</i> <i>Dhele</i> or soybeans are a type of legume used as a basic ingredient in foods such as tempeh and soy sauce.	Noun	+	-

Figure 1. *Dhele/Soybean*

The analysis of this data indicates that the Javanese proverb *esuk dhele sore tempe* contains a botanical lexicon, specifically *dhele* (soybean), which falls under the Noun category. This term is characterized as biotic. In its idiomatic interpretation, *esuk dhele, sore tempe* translates to soybean in the morning, tempeh in the evening. This proverbial expression in Javanese culture symbolizes an individual who is unstable in their convictions, inconsistent in their speech, and unreliable. Further examining its sociocultural implications, the proverb critiques the incongruity between one's words and actions, highlighting a tendency towards inconsistency. It also reflects a broader cultural ethos within Javanese society that emphasizes the importance of measured speech and meaningful action. This aligns with the Javanese philosophy, which prioritizes impactful deeds over extensive dialogue. Thus, the proverb conveys that substantial benefits and positive outcomes are more likely to be achieved through meaningful, action-oriented conduct rather than excessive verbal expression.

Flora Lexicon in the Proverb Jati Ketlusupan Ruyung

The Javanese proverb *jati ketlusupan ruyung*, which translates to teak wood pierced by palm tree fibres, metaphorically signifies a group of good people infiltrated by an individual or a faction with malevolent intentions or behavior.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Jati</i> <i>Jati</i> refers to teakwood, type of tree known for producing high-quality timber.	Noun	+	-

Figure 2. *Jati*


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Ruyung</i> <i>Ruyung</i> is the hard wood derived from the trunk of the palm (often referred to as <i>enau</i> or a type of palm tree), typically used for making handles of hoes or spears.	Noun	+	-

Figure 3. *Ruyung*

The analysis of the Javanese proverb *Jati Ketlusupan Ruyung* identifies the use of *jati* (teak) and *ruyung* (sugar palm wood) as key flora lexicons, both classified as nouns and biotic in nature. In the proverb's idiomatic context, teak is highly valued in Javanese culture for its durability and strength, making it ideal for construction and various other applications. It's also believed to bring positive effects, which explains its esteemed status among the Javanese. On the other hand, *ruyung*, the sugar palm wood, is typically used for firewood due to its fibrous interior. This wood type is generally less preferred in Javanese society because it burns quickly, the flames are short-lived, and its fibrous texture can easily cause hand injuries. Socioculturally, this proverb is intended as a warning, advising caution in choosing one's companions. It suggests that poor judgment in social associations can lead to a life of hardship and distress. Thus, the proverb underscores the value of wise social connections in Javanese culture.

Floral lexicon in Kênladheyan ngajak s ênpal

The Javanese proverb *kênladheyan ngajak s ênpal*, which translates to a parasite causing breakage, metaphorically means helping other people or a stranger but instead causing misfortune to the person.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Kênladheyan</i> A parasitic plant that attaches itself to and derives nourishment from the host plant it inhabits.	Noun	+	-

Figure 4. *Kênladheyan*/Parasitic plant

In the analysis of the Javanese proverb *Kênladheyan ngajak s ênpal*, the term *kênladheyan* emerges as a key floral lexicon, which categorized as a noun with biotic characteristics. The proverb's idiomatic dimension portrays *benalu* (a parasitic plant) as a metaphor. In Javanese culture, this metaphor is applied to newcomers or outsiders who harbor malevolent intentions towards their benefactors. The phrase *ngajak sempal* in this context is indicative of detrimental or negative actions. From a sociocultural perspective, the proverb functions as a cautionary advisory, urging the community to exercise vigilance against the alluring yet deceitful overtures of those with harmful agendas. Furthermore, it critically addresses the behavior of individuals who depend on others yet paradoxically inflict disruption, loss, or even financial ruin upon their hosts. This proverb underscores the significance of cautious engagement in social relations and highlights the potential hazards associated with naively extending trust or support without adequately assessing underlying motives.

Floral lexicon in dadiya banyu emoh nyawuk, dadiya godhong emoh nyuwek, dadiya suket emoh nyenggut

This Javanese proverb, *dadiya banyu emoh nyawuk, dadiya godhong emoh nyuwek, dadiya suket emoh nyenggut*, roughly translates as even if turned into water, will not wash; even if turned into a leaf, will not tear; even if turned into grass, will not be cut. It metaphorically describes a person harboring such deep animosity towards another that they utterly refuse any interaction or communication with them.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Godhong</i> Godhong refers to the part of a plant that grows in layers on branches, serving as an organ for respiration and the management of nutrients. These are essentially the leaves of the plant.	Noun	+	-

Figure 5. Godhong/Leaves


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Suket</i> The group of plants described as having small, jointed stems, long narrow leaves, and grain-like flowers is typically known as grasses. These characteristics are indicative of the botanical family	Noun	+	-

Figure 6. Suket/Grass

The data analysis of the Javanese proverb *dadiya banyu emoh nyawuk, dadiya godhong emoh nyuwek, dadiya suket emoh nyenggut* reveals the inclusion of the floral lexicons *godhong* (leaves) and *suket* (grass), both categorized as nouns and biotic in nature. In the idiomatic dimension of this proverb, it reflects an intense loathing or deep-seated grudge within the Javanese community towards others, known in Javanese as *nandes*. This sentiment is characterized by a refusal to greet or maintain any relationship with the despised individual. From a sociocultural perspective, the proverb serves to remind people that even the closest bonds in kinship or friendship are vulnerable to rupture if the binding variables are not nurtured. Additionally, it serves as a warning or *pepeling* that human patience has limits and can transform into hatred if subjected to extremely hurtful or negative treatment by others. Therefore, in the context of kinship or friendship, it is crucial to maintain appropriate social behavior, uphold etiquette, and respect the prevailing norms and values.

Floral lexicon in ancik-ancik pucuking eri

The Javanese proverb *ancik-ancik pucuking eri*, which translates to standing at the tip of a thorn, signifies undertaking something highly dangerous or with a very high level of risk.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Eri</i> A thorn part of a plant	Noun	+	-

Figure 7. Eri/Thorn

The data analysis in this study points to the presence of a Floral lexicon in *ancik-ancik pucuking eri*, with *eri* categorized as a Noun and characterized as biotic. From the proverb's idiom perspective, *pucuk duri* (thorn tip) is readily capable of causing harm and penetrating the human body. Literally or textually, the proverb conveys the notion of relying on the tip of a thorn. In a broader context, this proverb paints a picture of a highly perilous, critical, and nearly irreparable situation. One can envision the danger, pain, and anxiety associated with depending on the tip of a thorn. From a sociocultural standpoint, the proverb aims to offer advice and emphasize the significance of refraining from actions that could lead to harm or peril for oneself and others. This viewpoint underscores the importance of caution and the avoidance of risky behavior, as perceived by the author.

Floral lexicon in anggugat kayu aking

The proverb *anggugat kayu aking*, which translates to using dry wood, signifies a person who still seeks trouble against someone who has already passed away.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Kayu aking</i> Deadwood	Noun Phrase	+	-

Figure 8. *Kayu Aking*/Dead Wood

The data analysis indicates that within the proverb *anggugat kayu aking*, a Floral Lexicon is identified, specifically in the form of *kayu aking*, categorized as a Noun Phrase (Noun+Noun). This lexicon exhibits characteristics associated with living organisms. In the ideological context of the proverb, *kayu aking* or dry wood is a reference to a tree that has ceased to live and no longer serves any functional purpose. In Javanese culture, *kayu aking* is of limited utility and is primarily used as firewood. The proverb symbolically represents futile activities or endeavors. From a sociocultural perspective, the proverb imparts advice to individuals, urging them to refrain from engaging in frivolous pursuits in their lives. It encourages individuals to exercise vigilance and caution in their actions and decision-making. Furthermore, the proverb subtly critiques those who engage in unproductive behaviors, such as idling away their time without purpose, excessively criticizing the shortcomings of others, and similar actions.

Floral Lexicon in ar êp jamure ênoh watange

The proverb *ar êp jamure ênoh watange*, which translates to want the mushroom but not the stem, conveys the meaning of desiring the benefits without being willing to put in the necessary effort or work.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	Mushroom A type of plant that lacks leaves and fruits reproduces through spores, and thrives in wet or humid areas.	Noun	+	-

Figure 9. Mushroom

The Javanese proverb *ar êp jamure ênoh watange* features the Floral Lexicon mushroom, categorized as a Noun with Biotic characteristics. Ideologically, mushrooms are popular for their taste, and this proverb metaphorically describes individuals who want to enjoy benefits without the necessary effort. Socioculturally, it satirizes those seeking comfort without hard work, teaching the importance of effort and prayer in achieving success. The proverb emphasizes that hard work and sacrifice are essential for pursuing ambitions and that worthwhile results require a process, not instant gratification.

Floral lexicon in bathok bolu isi madu

The Floral lexicon in *bathok bolu isi madu*, which translates to a coconut shell filled with honey, symbolizes a person who may appear simple or of low status but is actually highly knowledgeable and noble-hearted.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Bathok</i> Coconut shell	Noun	+	-

Figure 10. *Bathok*/coconut shell

The proverb *bathok bolu isi madu* features the Floral Lexicon *bathok* (coconut shell), categorized as a Noun with Biotic characteristics. Ideologically, the *bathok*, though seen as having minimal utility, symbolizes a simple exterior hiding something valuable, like honey. This metaphor represents a person who appears ordinary but possesses extraordinary abilities, knowledge, or skills. Socioculturally, the proverb praises those who seem simple yet have

exceptional qualities, cautioning against judging others by their appearance and reminding us not to underestimate people based on superficial impressions.

Floral lexicon in bung pring petung

The Floral lexicon in *bung pring petung*, which means young bamboo turning into old bamboo, metaphorically refers to a child who physically matures quickly. This proverb uses the growth process of bamboo, transitioning from a young, tender stage *bung pring* to an older, more developed stage *petung*, as an analogy for a child's rapid physical development.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Pring Petung</i> One type of bamboo has a large trunk circumference and belongs to the grass family	Noun Phrase	+	-

Figure 11. *Pring Petung*/Large Bamboo

In Javanese literature, the proverb *bung pring petung* features the Floral Lexicon *pring petung*, a Noun Phrase (Noun+Noun) with Biotic characteristics. The term *bung* refers to a young bamboo shoot, *pring* to a bamboo tree, and *petung* to a large bamboo tree. This proverb metaphorically illustrates rapid physical development, often used to describe a person, especially a child, who matures physically faster than mentally. It highlights the disparity between physical growth and emotional or intellectual maturity, using bamboo growth stages as a symbol.

Floral lexicon in donya ora mung sagodhong kelor

The Floral lexicon in *donya ora mung sagodhong kelor*, which translates to 'the world is not only as wide as a moringa leaf' symbolizes the idea that the world is vast, offering numerous choices and opportunities. It advises against easily giving up or losing hope when faced with disappointment.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Godhong Kelor</i> Moringa leaves contain protein, vitamins, minerals to combat malnutrition	Noun Phrase	+	-

Figure 12. *Godhong Kelor*/Moringa Leaves

The proverb *donya ora mung sagodhong kelor* uses *godhong kelor* (moringa leaves) as a metaphor to emphasize the world's vastness, contrasting the small leaves with the broader scope of life. In Javanese culture, moringa leaves are significant due to their traditional associations with health and supernatural beliefs. The proverb encourages optimism and hope, reminding individuals that the world offers more opportunities than what is immediately visible. It advises against despair in the face of failure, urging a resilient and positive outlook to explore new possibilities.

Floral Lexicon in gupak pulute ora mangan nangkane

The proverb *gupak pulute ora mangan nangkane* paints a vivid picture of someone who has dedicated themselves to a demanding endeavor, exerting significant effort, yet finds themselves unable to partake in or savor the resulting rewards.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Jackfruit</i> Jackfruit	Noun	+	-

Figure 13. Jackfruit

The proverb *gupak pulute ora mangan nangkane* metaphorically highlights the situation where one suffers the consequences without enjoying the benefits, akin to getting smeared with jackfruit latex without eating the fruit. In Javanese culture, this saying emphasizes the values of *eling* (mindfulness) and *waspada* (caution), encouraging vigilance in life and careful judgment in social interactions. It advises choosing friends wisely, favoring those of good character, to avoid unfavorable situations and support personal and moral growth.

Floral Lexicon in kapok lombok

The Floral Lexicon in the proverb *kapok lombok* refers to the specific usage of the word *lombok* within this saying. The proverb *kapok lombok* signifies a person who has promised not to repeat a certain action but later goes back on their word and repeats the same behavior.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Lombok</i> Chili	Noun	+	-

Figure 14. *Lombok/Chili*

Data analysis indicates that in the proverb *kapok lombok*, the Floral Lexicon *Lombok* is categorized as a Noun. This lexicon is of a biotic nature. In the ideologic dimension of the proverb, *kapok lombok* refers to individuals who are addicted or unable to resist something. While they may experience some form of regret, it typically remains superficial because the spiciness of *lombok* or chili does not truly deter them; they often find it enjoyable and become addicted to it. This proverb is metaphorical in nature. From a sociocultural perspective, the proverb serves the purpose of subtly criticizing those who repeatedly commit the same mistake. *Kapok lombok* also reminds us not to be careless when carrying out tasks or actions.

Floral lexicon in klungsu-klungsu waton wudhu

The proverb *klungsu-klungsu waton wudhu* or 'donating the seeds of a tamarind' advises that during meetings or gatherings, it's a good practice to offer your input or opinions, even if they are brief or not extensive.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Klungsu</i> Tamarind seeds	Noun	+	-

Figure 15. *Klungsu/Tamarind seeds*

The proverb *klungsu-klungsu waton wudhu* uses the term *klungsu* (the less valuable content of tamarind) as a metaphor for limited utility, while *wudhu* suggests a sacrificial contribution. Socioculturally, it critiques passive behavior in situations requiring active participation, particularly in collective decision-making. The proverb encourages individuals to engage meaningfully and contribute, no matter how small their efforts may seem, to benefit the broader community.

Floral lexicon in lanang kemangi

The proverb *lanang kemangi* translates to 'male basil'. It signifies a man who is weak and timid.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	<i>Kemangi</i> Basil leaves	Noun	+	-

Figure 16. *Kemangi/Basil leaves*

Data analysis indicates that in the proverb *lanang kemangi*, the Floral Lexicon 'basil' is categorized as a Noun and falls within the Biotic classification. Within the proverb's ideological context, *lanang* refers to a male, while 'basil'

represents leaves commonly used in fresh vegetables due to their health benefits. Basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is associated with fragility and weakness. *Lanang kemangi* metaphorically describes a man who is likened to basil leaves, characterized as fragile, indecisive, and lacking strength. From a sociocultural perspective, this proverb satirizes men who exhibit unmanly, timid, or feminine traits.

Floral lexicon in nandur pari jero

The proverb *nandur pari jero* means 'planting rice deeply' in English. It signifies a person who performs acts of goodness and generosity for the benefit of future generations.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	Rice	Noun	+	-

Figure 17. *Pari/Padi*

Data analysis reveals that in the proverb *nandur pari jero*, the Floral Lexicon categorizes *pari* as a Noun, falling under the Biotic classification. In the proverb's literal sense, it conveys the act of planting rice deeply to ensure that the plant's roots establish a secure and deep foothold in the soil. In a broader context, this proverb serves as guidance for individuals to engage in acts of kindness and benevolence whenever and wherever possible, to the fullest extent. Within Javanese society, the concept of karma is prevalent, signifying that both positive and negative actions have consequences. There is a strong belief that when one consistently practices benevolence, the rewards of such goodness extend to oneself and future generations.

Floral lexicon in tunggak jarak mrajak tunggak jati mati

The proverb *tunggak jarak mrajak tunggak jati mati* means that negative or unfavorable matters tend to spread and become widespread, while positive or good matters are scarce or diminishing.


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	The <i>jarak</i> tree is a type of tree with a sturdy trunk that typically grows in forests, open land, or plantations.	Noun Phrase	+	-

Figure 18. *Pohon Jarak*


Signifier of Lexicon	Floral Lexicon	Form	Biotic	Abiotic
	Teak tree	Noun Phrase	+	-

Figure 19. *Pohon Jati*

The proverb *tunggak jarak mrajak, tunggak jati mati* contrasts the resilience of *jarak* (castor oil plant) with the vulnerability of *jati* (teak) trees. In Javanese culture, *mrajak* refers to the ability to regenerate or propagate. The proverb highlights that *jarak* trees can sprout new growth even after their trunks are severed, while *jati* trees often die or struggle to regrow if cut. Socioculturally, this metaphor illustrates the idea that ordinary individuals often show resilience and the ability to thrive, while those from noble or high-status backgrounds may lack the same vitality or ability to continue their lineage.

IV. CONCLUSION

The floral lexicons in Javanese proverbs consist of words and phrases, categorized as nouns and polymorphemic expressions, including affixed, reduplicated, and compound words. Most of these phrases are endocentric in structure.

These lexicons are crucial in reflecting cultural values, depicting attitudes, worldviews, and human interactions with both the divine and nature, highlighting the richness of Javanese cultural and linguistic expressions.

This research offers significant theoretical contributions to the study of floral lexicons in Javanese proverbs by expanding knowledge in ecolinguistics and lexicology, enhancing analytical models, and introducing an interdisciplinary approach that integrates ideological, sociological, and biological perspectives. Practically, it provides a foundation for teaching Indonesian and regional languages with a conservation focus, analyzes the richness of the flora lexicon, and supports cultural integration in educational settings. This study deepens linguistic understanding and suggests further exploration of how modern influences may transform these traditional proverbs.

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Instruction in the Language Classroom and the Saudi Vision 2030: A Study Using Delphi Technique With Academics

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Abstract—It is imperative to evaluate contemporary language instruction practices to modify the curriculum to ensure that it fulfills the objectives of Vision 2030 which lays down detailed targets for the education sector. In this background, the current study adopts the Delphi Technique with nine recognized language specialists in Saudi Arabia to evaluate the prevalent language instruction environment and predict the desirable changes. Experts' consensus and survey results indicated many issues that point towards a more inclusive, adaptive, and globally sensitive language education as the most pressing need of the hour. The participants' agreement is evidence of the persisting chasm between conventional language standards and the massive changes in global communication, and it also highlights the need for translanguaging as a strategy to address this chasm. In addition, results also indicated the need for the teaching community to adapt, develop, and prepare to suit the changing language scenario in the world. This need is dire to meet the massive social, cultural, and economic changes that are characteristic of Saudi Arabia today. The study concludes with emphasizing the need for translanguaging in meeting the targets and aims spelt in Vision 2030, thus being of significance to academics, curriculum designers, and administrators who are committed to achieving those goals.

Index Terms—Delphi Technique, linguistic landscape, Saudi Arabia, Vision 2030

I. INTRODUCTION

The function of language has undergone a sea change with technology-fueled globalization. In its new place, language is not merely a means of communication, but also, a means of enhancing global cooperation, cross-culture understanding, and socio-economic progress (Deardorff, 2011). The complexities of global communication, coupled with technological advancements, have created a demand for individuals proficient in multiple languages and for flexible language teaching approaches (Jenkins, 2015). Countries worldwide are now reassessing their strategies in language education, recognizing its pivotal role in nurturing cross-cultural comprehension and fostering international collaborations (Mauranen, 2018). This reassessment aims to align linguistic paradigms with the urgent global needs of our time. Asia, a region marked by a rich diversity of cultures, languages, and traditions, has played a significant role in these changes. The concept commonly known as the Asian century underscores the growing influence of Asian nations in global politics, economics, and culture (Khanna, 2019).

Consequently, the Middle Eastern region, which encompasses a substantial part of Asia, has been recognized for its remarkable linguistic variety, characterized by the coexistence of ancient languages alongside contemporary linguistic needs (Suleiman, 2013). As countries in this particular geographical area confront the complexities of modernization while simultaneously valuing their diverse linguistic legacies, a distinctive challenge is that of cultivating educational approaches in language instruction that are deeply grounded in cultural history, responsive to global requirements, and equipped to fulfill communicative needs of the changed times.

Contemporary Saudi Arabia, standing at a cusp of tradition and modernity is faced with these very challenges as it tries to achieve a balance between its Arabic legacy and the transformative national ambition, almost setting an example for the other countries in the region as it is a prominent actor in the Middle East (Al-Ahdal & Alqasham, 2020; Bsheer, 2020). The Saudi Vision 2030 is a comprehensive plan that outlines the future trajectory of the Kingdom. It aims to achieve not just economic diversification but also anticipates the development of a culturally vibrant and globally connected society (Vision 2030, 2016). In the overarching framework of this narrative, the field of language education faces a complex and multifaceted situation, presenting both obstacles and possibilities. The current demands driven by a shrinking world and Vision 2030 highlight the necessity for a revised language strategy in Saudi Arabia (Albiladi, 2022). However, the implementation of this change remains uncertain. Traditional approaches, often favoring monolingual instruction and emphasizing the preservation of the Arabic language's integrity, may fail to address the evolving requirements of international communication (Al-Seghayer, 2014). Simultaneously, adopting global language trends without considering the Saudi context may risk undermining the profound linguistic and cultural legacy of the nation (Atwell, 2018). The primary challenge lies in effectively balancing a linguistically dynamic future aligned with international expectations while preserving a distinct national identity. The significance of this research lies in shaping the future trajectory of language education in Saudi Arabia. Utilizing the Delphi Technique with recognized language

specialists ensures findings grounded in expertise and forward-looking perspectives. Given Saudi Arabia's impending transformation, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders must comprehend potential language changes and their consequences. This understanding will aid in developing effective and culturally appropriate policies. Furthermore, the outcomes of this research could potentially serve as a model for other countries facing such transformation, contributing significantly to the broader academic discourse on language teaching in the context of globalization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The bases of this study lie in the Linguistic Landscape theory and the Delphi Technique. Together, these frameworks prepare a perspective for the convergence of language and sociopolitical change, and at the same time, they enable the inquiry to take a structured approach. The concept of linguistic landscape pertains to the visibility and intelligibility of languages displayed in public and commercial signages within a specific area or domain (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). Over time, this particular concept has undergone changes to incorporate digital environments and other modes of communication, reflecting the evolving dynamics of language use in various socio-cultural settings. Language and Linguistics (LL) as a field not only operates through the reflection of language use but also functions as a guiding force influenced by power dynamics, historical contexts, and socio-political factors (Blommaert, 2013). With the ongoing social, political, and economic changes owing to Saudi Vision 2030, understanding the role of language and linguistics (LL) becomes crucial, as it inevitably gives birth to linguistic outcomes. This study provides a structured framework for understanding prevalent language norms in Saudi Arabia, acknowledging the impact of socio-political, cultural, and economic elements on their development. By employing the Delphi Technique with expert negotiations, it establishes a foundation for insight and suggestions, enhancing the validity and strength of the perspectives generated. This approach ensures that the results are not merely confined to nature but are rooted in thorough consideration. A unified framework sheds light on the necessity of an active linguistic initiative that aligns with national objectives while emphasizing the interdependence between language and socio-political changes.

Research questions

1. How do linguists assess the prevalent language paradigm vis-à-vis the aims and objectives outlined in Vision 2030 document?
2. What are the recommendations of language specialists on language change and modifications to ensure that language education in Saudi Arabia is in line with the larger objectives of Vision 2030?

III. METHODOLOGY

Research design

The research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. This approach aimed to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, leveraging the specific strengths of each methodology. The qualitative aspect utilized the Delphi Technique, a systematic data collection method involving a group of experts to attain consensus on a particular topic. Notably, this technique involves non-physical discussions, maintaining an iterative process by administering repeated rounds of questionnaires to participants.

Participants

A purposive sample of 9 recognized language specialists in Saudi Arabia was the basis of this study as the study objectives demanded a sample with a comprehensive understanding of the language paradigms in Saudi Arabia and their possible transformation within the framework of Vision 2030. The group was heterogeneous as they were employed in different educational institutions such as language schools, and educational policy-making agencies, and therefore, it could be assumed that they have a fairly reasonable knowledge of the language issues in the country. Informed consent was obtained from each participant after they were educated about the research objectives, methodology, and possible results. Participant information was ensured by encoding their personal details, a step that also ensured that they were happy to voice their innermost thoughts with minimal or no inhibition. Moreover, the researcher also shared the study results with the participants and sought their opinion on the right and truthful presentation of their views, affording them the opportunity to verify the conclusions derived from their input.

Instruments

The Delphi Technique is a useful method of data collection where physical interaction is fraught with obstacles. Iteration or repetition of processes is one of its core characteristics. In this study, we used a set of standardized surveys for data collection targeted to elicit information on the existing language paradigms, prospective changes, and the required adaptive strategies within the framework of Vision 2030. Iterations were used to fine tune and adjust the variables and this was based on the feedback and insights that came in from the participating experts. Post each iterative round, of the Delphi process, quantitative analysis on the gathered data was conducted to gauge the level of consensus among the experts. Simple measures of mean, median, and standard deviation were computed. Employing a quantitative assessment in this context aimed to complement the qualitative feedback, offering an impartial metric. It helped determine whether further iterations were required or if a consensus had been achieved. The incorporation of the Delphi Technique with quantitative analysis facilitated a thorough evaluation of experts' perspectives, providing empirical

evidence of agreement and highlighting areas of disagreement. On the other hand, qualitative data contributed to a comprehensive understanding and contextualization of the subject matter. The simultaneous application of both methodologies generated a nuanced and well-rounded perspective on the topic under examination.

Data building, validating and analysis

The study used primary and secondary data sources to ensure greater reliability of the data and findings. In the first phase, a preliminary questionnaire was sent to the experts with the aim of gathering their perspectives on the present language environment and possible modifications in view of Vision 2030 objectives. Following the first round, the questionnaires were revised and subsequently reassigned to the experts to ensure validity of the modified versions. The aforementioned iterative procedure was conducted until an agreement was reached over the primary themes and results. Following the attainment of a collective agreement, the data was systematically collated and arranged in a manner conducive to further study. Thematic analysis was used to examine and interpret data to uncover patterns, trends, and insights. The cyclical nature of the Delphi Technique facilitated the process of refining and consolidating these ideas. After the identification of the topics, a comprehensive analysis was conducted within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 to derive findings and make pertinent suggestions.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1: How do linguists assess the existing linguistic paradigm in Saudi Arabia against the framework of the aims and objectives of Vision 2030?

Based on the perspectives of the 09 renowned authorities in the field, an analysis of the linguistic environment in Saudi Arabia revealed many key themes, shed light on the present condition of language education and provided progressive suggestions to match with the Vision 2030 framework. The dominant language framework, as emphasized by Experts 1, 4, 9, seems to be based on established, conventional methodologies. Nevertheless, there is a noticeable trend towards adopting educational techniques that are more consistent with global standards. The ongoing visible transformation indicates Saudi Arabia's intention to align with prevailing global language patterns. Experts 2 and 3 more vocally, and all the others mildly observed a prevailing tendency to place excessive emphasis on vocabulary and grammar. This highlights the need of shifting from a narrow focus on linguistic knowledge to a more comprehensive language competence that prioritizes practical knowledge application and effective communication abilities. The significance of bridging the divide between home language goals and international expectations was emphasized by experts 5, 8, 9 in the context of global alignment and translanguaging. One of the resonating themes was the need for flexible language use by the teachers to encourage translanguaging practices in class. For instance, experts 6 and 7 jointly supported comprehensive changes in prevalent pedagogies. All specialists upheld the critical shift from mere memorization to fostering critical and creative thinking. Furthermore, they stressed the importance of providing educators with the essential tools and knowledge to effectively apply these modern teaching methods. Expert 7's perspective underscored the significance of merging language instruction with cultural nuances and practical applications, asserting that this approach not only enriches the educational journey but also prepares students for global interactions.

TABLE 1
LEADING VIEWPOINTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE OF FOURTEEN EXPERTS ABOUT LINGUISTIC PARADIGMS IN SAUDI ARABIA AND THE
FRAMEWORK OF VISION 2030

Expert No.	Assessment of Current Linguistic Paradigm	Suggested Shifts for Vision 2030
1	The existing paradigm is based on conventional approaches that may not be entirely congruent with worldwide patterns.	Place a significant focus on the implementation of multilingual education and establish the concept of translingual pedagogies.
2	The linguistic approach in Saudi Arabia is now undergoing a change from traditional to modernity.	Advocate for curricular modifications that prioritize the development of linguistic flexibility and adaptation.
3	Presently, there is a greater emphasis placed on the mastery of grammar and vocabulary as opposed to the development of overall language proficiency.	Greater emphasis on the development of communicative competence and the application of language skills in real-life contexts.
4	The current method demonstrates efficacy in domestic contexts, although its effectiveness may be limited when applied to foreign environments.	Implementing worldwide linguistic standards and using benchmarking practices..
5	There is an observable transition occurring from the practice of teaching only in one language to the adoption of bilingual instruction. However, there is a need for more emphasis on the concept of translanguaging.	Advocate for the adoption of translingual techniques as a standard practice in language instruction.
6	Our current educational practices continue to rely heavily on rote learning and memorization approaches.	Shift towards understanding, application, and creativity in language learning.
7	The language paradigm in Saudi Arabia is now undergoing a process of transition, although this is still in an early stage.	Prioritize training for instructors to equip them with new language teaching methodologies.
8	The existing curriculum has limitations in its ability to adapt to the ever-evolving character of language and language needs.	Design a more flexible curriculum that aligns with Vision 2030 objectives of inclusivity and global relevance.
9	Currently, there exists a disproportionate emphasis on the instruction in formal Arabic, with some attention given to the acquisition of global languages.	Encourage the teaching of global languages and dialects.
10	The language training provided has good quality, however, it is deficient in terms of including cultural immersion and practical application components.	Introduce cultural exchange programs and real-world language application exercises.

The themes that emerged from the opinions expressed by the study participants highlight the fact that the Saudi language education sector is currently at a critical juncture as it is juggling the socio-cultural ethos with the demands placed on it by the Vision 2030 targets that conform with global dynamics. These objectives can be summarized as the need for translanguaging, rejigging of the education sector, and greater preparedness to foster multilingualism since the Vision document prioritizes inclusiveness, global relevance of education, and greater adaptability across all segments. The implications of these outcomes hold significant importance from an educational standpoint. Above all, it is crucial for curriculum designers to proactively integrate these recommendations. This involves ensuring that language education not only imparts content but also provides students with the essential global communication skills. Additionally, there is a need to revamp teacher training programs to meet contemporary requirements, ensuring that educators possess the necessary abilities to adeptly employ translingual and global pedagogical approaches. In a broader social context, embracing these linguistic paradigm shifts would prepare successive generations of Saudis to assert themselves on the global stage. Their education would facilitate cross-cultural interactions, foster stronger global partnerships, and contribute to the realization of the forward-thinking objectives outlined in Vision 2030.

The quantitative analysis results summarized in Table 2 offer useful insights into the viewpoints of experts on the future direction of linguistic paradigms in Saudi Arabia within the context of Vision 2030 with mean of 4.67 and standard deviation of 0.436. The average ratings for all statements fall between 4.5 and 4.8 on a 5-point scale, suggesting a high level of agreement among experts about the importance and immediacy of the proposed changes and priorities. The assertions that obtained the highest average scores, namely 4.8, are related to the significance of prioritizing communicative skill above conventional linguistic structures and the need for orienting language instruction towards cultural immersion and practical application. The ratings indicate that language learning professionals prioritize the practical application of language acquisition. In contrast, statements that highlight the need for shifting away from conventional approaches, giving precedence to comprehension and creativity rather than mere memorization, and including global languages alongside official Arabic were shown to have somewhat lower average ratings, at around 4.6. This implies that while these factors are considered important, they may be seen as less important in comparison to the aforementioned aspects. The mean score, albeit not significantly lower, was ascribed to the development of a versatile curriculum that aligns with the goals of Vision 2030. This observation suggests that while professionals acknowledge the significance of this approach, there might be other pressing issues that take precedence or it could represent an awareness of the intricate nature and time-consuming process involved in revamping current courses. The small range of standard deviations, between 0.40 and 0.47, provides further evidence to substantiate the presence of a robust agreement among the experts, a higher degree of proximity to the mean, hence indicating a greater level of consensus among the participants. The experts highly endorse a comprehensive, interactive, and immersive methodology for language instruction that is in accordance with international benchmarks. While the authors also emphasize the need for

curricular flexibility and current teaching approaches, these aspects may be seen as secondary measures that follow the creation of the essential educational concepts that they have highlighted.

TABLE 2
QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF EXPERTS' VIEWPOINTS ON LINGUISTIC PARADIGMS WITHIN THE VISION 2030 FRAMEWORK

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Implementation of multilingual education and translanguing pedagogies is crucial.	4.7	0.43
A shift from traditional techniques to curricular modifications that foster linguistic flexibility.	4.6	0.45
Emphasis should be on communicative competence rather than just grammar and vocabulary acquisition.	4.8	0.41
Adopt worldwide linguistic standards and benchmarking practices.	4.7	0.44
Adoption of translanguing techniques should be standardized in language instruction.	4.7	0.46
Prioritize understanding, application, and creativity over rote learning in language education.	4.6	0.42
Language teachers need training with contemporary teaching methodologies.	4.7	0.43
Create a flexible curriculum in alignment with Vision 2030 global objectives.	4.5	0.47
Place emphasis on teaching global languages alongside formal Arabic.	4.6	0.45
Integrate cultural immersion and practical application in language training.	4.8	0.40
Total	4.67	0.436

RQ2: What linguistic alterations or modifications have language specialists suggested to guarantee that Saudi Arabia's language training is in line with the larger aims of Vision 2030?

Experts reported the following suggestions for modifications:

1. It is imperative to enhance the use of multilingual teaching methodologies, with special emphasis on the acquisition of languages spoken by Saudi Arabia's principal trading partners.
2. Prioritize communicative competence over absolute correctness, thus encouraging students to gravitate towards successful communication in real-life situations without the inhibitions of making mistakes.
3. Emphasizing the integration of cultural knowledge and language training, equipping students with the essential skills to navigate diverse and multicultural scenarios proficiently.
4. Making learning interactive and dynamic and in tune with the times by leaning on technology and online platforms.
5. Substituting the conventional emphasis on memorization-based pedagogical approach to a communicative methodology, emphasizing the real-life application of language skills in real-world contexts.
6. Opting for the immersive approach that offers students opportunities to engage in authentic language use in real-life settings, such as study abroad initiatives or cultural exchange programs.
7. Adopt a modular framework in language education, allowing students to select subject matters and linguistic competencies aligning with their vocational or academic aspirations.
8. Establish a system ensuring continuous professional development for language teachers, guaranteeing their knowledge of current language pedagogies and adherence to best practices.
9. Infuse the curriculum with elements of translanguing, enabling students to seamlessly navigate between languages, reflecting the interconnected nature of today's global world.
10. Strengthen collaborations with international language institutions and universities, ensuring that Saudi Arabia's language instruction aligns with global standards.

In expressing these themes, it is notable that the Saudi academic diaspora is conscious of the changed learner and learning needs in tune with global changes, prioritizing multilingualism, effective communication, and cultural competence in accordance with the objectives of Vision 2030, which intends to place KSA on the global scene as a leader of the Arab region. Incorporation of technology and authentic language immersion aligns with the global educational trends, emphasizing an interactive and hands-on learning approach. Recognition of connecting globally and prioritizing the professional development of educators evidences an understanding that a comprehensive transformation of the entire educational system is essential to enhance learning outcomes. These findings have numerous implications. For policymakers, it calls for a thorough re-evaluation of the country's language curricula, with an increased emphasis on the recommended adjustments. Educators, in turn, must prioritize continuous professional development and keep evolving their pedagogies. The study's results also highlight the need for infrastructural changes, including the integration of technology in educational settings and the introduction of additional exchange programs. Furthermore, the emphasis on global relationships underscores the potential benefits for Saudi Arabia through collaboration with foreign language institutes, ensuring that its language training remains globally relevant and of the highest quality.

As summarized in Table 3, there are indications of a high degree of consensus amongst the participants (M=4.67, SD=0.45) that the changes they have proposed are important. Here too, integration of cultural component into the language education curriculum tops the score at 4.8 as being primary to teacher development and growth geared to global needs. In other words, the socio-cultural element coupled with recent and developing pedagogies will ensure the best practices for language acquisition. Meanwhile, a slightly lower mean score of 4.5 for the modular framework indicates lack of consensus, yet holds a significant place in the considerations. Standard deviations below 0.5 are a good indicator of all opinions being directed in a common direction, the low variation suggests a general agreement on the presented theme topics. Upon analysis, it becomes evident that there is a crucial need to adapt language approaches and

curriculum in line with global patterns. All participants underscored the importance of ensuring learners possess not only language competence but also cultural proficiency. Moreover, the emphasis on integrating technology and moving away from memorization practices aligns with current worldwide educational trends that value a dynamic, interactive, and practical approach to learning. These findings broadly reflect the global scene in language education. The increasingly connected global community highlights the growing importance of multilingualism, cultural competency, and the practical application of linguistic abilities. Additionally, the prioritization of educators' professional development highlights the need to view education as a dynamic discipline, where instructors play a pivotal role in driving its progress. These findings indicate that for Saudi Arabia to achieve the objectives outlined in Vision 2030, a significant transformation in its language education approach is necessary, with a focus on aligning it with international norms and practices.

TABLE 3
QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT ON LINGUISTIC MODIFICATIONS FOR VISION 2030

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Enhancing multilingual teaching methodologies is vital for Vision 2030.	4.7	0.45
Emphasizing fluid communication over linguistic correctness is more effective for real-life situations.	4.6	0.48
Cultural nuances in language training are crucial for navigating diverse situations.	4.8	0.40
Incorporating technology in language education boosts student engagement and understanding.	4.7	0.44
A shift from memorize-recall to a communicative approach is necessary for practical application of language skills.	4.6	0.47
Immersion programs like study abroad significantly enhance language proficiency.	4.7	0.46
A modular framework in language education offers personalized learning experiences.	4.5	0.50
Continuous professional development of language teachers is essential for up-to-date pedagogical practices.	4.8	0.42
Implementing translanguaging in curriculum helps students adapt to the interconnected global environment.	4.7	0.43
Collaborations with international language institutions ensure Saudi Arabia's alignment with global standards.	4.6	0.45
Total	4.67	0.45

This study used the Delphi Technique with a panel of 09 language professionals, to identify key linguistic modifications necessary for the successful implementation of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. Many issues and recommendations emerged from the contributions of the participants, such as, the need for multilingual approaches that emphasize competency in Arabic and English, as well as languages spoken by the country's global partners. In addition, there emerged the possibility of global collaborations in the language education sector. Pedagogical developments the world over have been trendsetting, emphasizing the development of communicative competence rather than focusing just on linguistic correctness. In other words, communication rather than grammatical accuracy takes primacy. This discussion also highlights the importance of cultural competency, emphasizing the need to transcend language technicality in favor of socio-cultural nuances essential to effective communication. We live a digital age, it is but natural to integrate technology in language education, acknowledged as a means to elevate student engagement and the practical applicability of skills. Additionally, a more pragmatic and interactive pedagogical approach, aiming to equip students for practical, real-life scenarios, cannot be discounted either. This approach seamlessly aligns with the idea of immersing students in authentic language environments, potentially enhancing the accuracy and effectiveness of language learning. The suggestion to adopt a modular teaching approach reflects the prevalent educational philosophy of tailoring instruction to meet each student's unique requirements. At the core of these proposed changes is the continuous professional growth of educators, ensuring their ongoing engagement with the latest pedagogical developments. Furthermore, the introduction of the concept of translanguaging advocates for breaking down rigid language boundaries in favor of a more flexible linguistic exchange that mirrors the interconnected nature of our contemporary global society.

These findings shed light on the need for Saudi Arabia to readjust its linguistic frameworks in order to connect more effectively with the goals and aspirations of Vision 2030. One of the prevailing feelings that arises from this investigation is the pressing need to readjust conventional language approaches towards a more comprehensive and participatory approach on a global scale. One of the key recommendations put out by experts, centers on the adoption of multilingualism (Experts 1, 7, 9). The significance of this matter should not be underestimated in the context of our more globalized world (Canagarajah, 2018; Kramsch, 2014; Rashed & Al-Faraj, 2021). According to Kramsch (2014), in contemporary times, languages are seen not just as means of communication, but also as conduits for cultural interchange. By implementing measures to improve multilingual education, Saudi Arabia would not only be cultivating language proficiency but also, nurturing cultural aptitude. The implementation of this dual strategy will enhance the preparedness of Saudi students for global platforms and industries, aligning with the core principles of Vision 2030. Pedagogical reforms refer to changes and improvements in educational practices and approaches with the aim of enhancing teaching and learning outcomes. The results strongly indicate the need for massive changes in the current instructional methods. The Experts 6, 7, 8 observed that there is a notable focus on rote learning, which stands in contrast to the prevailing worldwide trend that places more importance on practical application and understanding (Canagarajah, 2018). They further emphasized the need to ensure that educators possess a high level of proficiency in modern teaching strategies (Experts 8, 9). The use of technology in language instruction, as highlighted by Expert 4,

aligns with the perspectives of other instructors worldwide (Thorne & Reinhardt, 2019). Knowledge acquisition has taken a new shape in the digital era, and KSA is no exception. Much like its peers, in Saudi Arabia too, technology integration into education is expected to cultivate an educational setting that is more immersive, inclusive, and comprehensive in nature. Moreover, the new tech-powered system has paved the way for virtual cultural exchange programs, presenting students with opportunities for immersive language experiences irrespective of geographical boundaries. The perspectives articulated by Experts 5 and 9 regarding the significance of translanguaging find resonance in the scholarly works of Canagarajah (2013), who contends that translanguaging practices serve as a deliberate and strategic response to the forces of globalization. By dismantling rigid language barriers, Saudi students can develop versatile linguistic flexibility, taking on their rightful place in the global scene. Additionally, the emphasis placed by Experts 1 and 3 on fostering international collaborations aligns seamlessly with the foundational principles of Vision 2030. These connections play a pivotal role not only in facilitating academic partnerships but also in creating a better place for humanity with greater cultural empathy. The findings show that the linguistic landscape in Saudi Arabia is dynamically evolving. To fully leverage the benefits of these changes, it is imperative to align curricular designs with the insights and expertise derived from these advancements. Moreover, educators need access to continuous professional development opportunities and ample resources to effectively implement these changes. In a broader context, these linguistic adaptations will not only cater to the scholarly community but also strategically position Saudi Arabia on the world stage, aligning it with the objectives outlined in Vision 2030.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The aims of the Saudi Vision 2030 are highly comprehensive and intend to open the Saudi socio-economic milieu to global partners across sectors that define a nation, primarily education, these foresights foster inclusion, and alignment with global standards and practices. Language is a powerful tool to achieve these objectives since language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a manifestation of cultural development and worldwide adaptation. Using the Delphi Technique, this study not only highlighted the prevalent linguistic frameworks in Saudi Arabia. A shift in the paradigm is the need of the hour, characterized by substituting the conventional pedagogies with global practices that reflect the spirit of internationalism. However, a notable concern highlighted by some experts is the excessive emphasis placed on grammar and vocabulary. The purpose of language instruction should transcend mere rote memorization and recall of information, aiming instead to foster proficiency in communication, comprehension, and cultural adaptability. 'Translanguaging' is characterized by flexibility and versatility, underscoring its significance in the contemporary global environment. Furthermore, the integration of technology is not merely a luxury but a fundamental necessity. In an increasingly interconnected global landscape, the use of technology tools and platforms has become indispensable in the realm of language training. Additionally, prioritizing cultural immersion and practical application will empower students with a communicative advantage, nurturing their development as global citizens. The implementation of Vision 2030 necessitates substantial changes, and our research, incorporating the perspectives of prominent language specialists in the country, provides a foundational understanding of the prevalent situation and the path forward.

The foundational principle should be the adoption of multilingualism, enabling students to effectively communicate with key trade partners. Beyond revising the curriculum, allocating substantial resources for the creation and execution of robust teacher training programs is imperative. Merely adjusting the curriculum, without equipping educators with the requisite skills and expertise for effective teaching, might not yield desired outcomes. Organizing regular seminars and training sessions, in collaboration with international language institutions, could offer significant advantages.

The research primarily emphasizes macro-level factors while giving comparatively little attention to micro-level features such as regional linguistic diversity and the significance of indigenous languages. The examination of the implementation feasibility of the suggested solutions, with regards to logistical, budgetary, and cultural considerations, was not extensively explored here, a factor that may be significant for policymakers.

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English Learners' Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning

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Abstract—Apprehensive pronunciation is crucial for learners' language competence and is an integral aspect of language instruction. Although English major students in China demonstrate improvement in their overall English proficiency when they enter university, many still struggle with their English pronunciation. Scholars have identified several internal and external factors that influence English pronunciation learning. However, little attention is given to the role of learners' beliefs and investment as possible factors that influence English pronunciation learning, which in turn affect the learning approach and learning strategy used. To fill the gap, the current study adopts a qualitative design with multiple case studies to explore students' beliefs, investments, and the relationship between these two concepts within the normative, meta-cognitive and contextual approach as well as investment theory. A semi-structured interview was conducted on three university students with different language abilities. The data obtained was analysed using NVivo 12 software. The findings of the study indicate that middle and high-level participants held positive perceptions, while low-level participants held negative perceptions in terms of English pronunciation learning. The study also reveals two forms of investment; diverse investment and incidental learning. In addition, the relationship between students' beliefs and investments exhibited complex phenomena such as positive and negative congruence as well as incongruence. Based on these findings, some pedagogical implications and areas for ongoing research were proposed.

Index Terms—congruence, English major students, English pronunciation, investment, learning belief

I. INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation in language studies is a fundamental component of communicative competence (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Jones, 2018). English pronunciation represents a significant challenge for ESL learners, who must invest considerable time to improve in this area (Aliaga-García, 2007; Gilakjani, 2016). Despite having perfect grammar and vocabulary, those with pronunciation issues have a lower chance of being understood correctly in oral communication (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Thomson & Derwing, 2014; Gilakjani, 2016). Conversely, with acceptable pronunciation, a speaker's speech can be understandable despite having problems with other aspects of the language (Gilakjani, 2016). Although there are some improvements in overall English proficiency in China among major university students, a significant proficiency gap in pronunciation persists, necessitating focused research (Zhou & Song, 2015; Duan & Cao, 2017; Liu, 2021). Unlike some studies that have explored English learners' pronunciation learning beliefs in terms of importance (Pawlak, 2015; Phuong & Phuong, 2019), strategy (Simon & Taverniers, 2011), and difficulty (Benzies, 2013; Pawlak et al., 2015), in China, scholars (Zhang, 2009; Dang & Cui, 2013) just identified internal factors like age, aptitude, attitude, motivation, and external factors such as educational factors that influence English pronunciation learning. Hence, more researches need to investigate Chinese learners' English pronunciation beliefs and investment in English pronunciation learning.

According to Norton (2013), if learners invest in the target language, it is because they believe they will acquire wider access to symbolic and material resources, thereby adding value to their cultural capital and social power. It is evident that learners' language investment choices are affected by their views on the social status of the mainstream language (Babino & Stewart, 2017; Ballinger, 2017; Babino & Stewart, 2019; Bea, 2014). However, an individual's beliefs and actions are not always consistent (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011). Therefore, the gaps between English learners' beliefs and investment are worthwhile to explore. Given that there are over 600,000 English major students currently studying English at tertiary institutions nationwide in China (Guo, 2020), it is necessary to hear learners' own beliefs and investment in English pronunciation learning in these institutions. In addressing these issues, this study hopes to contribute to the theoretical explanation of the nature of relationships between learner beliefs and learning investment in

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English as a foreign language within the Chinese context. In addition, the outcome of this study could provide implications for English teachers and the country's policymakers to make adjustments based on learners' needs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Studies on Learners' Beliefs About English Pronunciation Learning*

While Cohen (1984) and Horwitz (1988) established foundational aspects of language learning beliefs, their application to pronunciation specifically remains underexplored, warranting further investigation in this study. These groundbreaking studies in theoretical frameworks such as normal and meta-cognitive approach treated beliefs primarily as stable cognitive entities deriving from one's own experiences or the opinions of others (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2013). Nonetheless, there has been a shift in the way that research has conceptualised beliefs during the past 20 years. Recent work in the contextual approach has emphasised the subjective aspects of language learning (Ellis, 2008; Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011). This has led to the recognition of beliefs as being highly contextual, social, and dynamic. Thus, language acquisition beliefs comprise a multifaceted system of dynamic, interconnected elements, such as cognitive, social, cultural, and personal. They necessitate a thorough analysis of the distinct learning experience, including all of its constituent parts, including the student, instructor, learning process, particular learning environment, peers, curriculum, and the outside world (Inözü, 2018).

While learner beliefs have been investigated in various areas of language learning acquisition, the learning and teaching of language pronunciation are scarce in the literature on language acquisition beliefs (Brown, 2009). So far, only a small number of studies have been conducted in this area. Similarly, even though existing studies, such as those by Kanellou (2011), Tokumoto and Shibata (2011), Pawlak et al. (2015), and Phuong and Phuong (2019) have examined attitudes toward pronunciation and objectives of mastering pronunciation, the interplay between beliefs and investment within this domain remains under researched. Furthermore, some studies have focused on learners' preferences or challenges when learning pronunciation (Benzies, 2013; Pawlak et al., 2015) as well as strategies for English pronunciation learning (Simon & Tavernniers, 2011). Another topic of research interest is learners' beliefs about the factors influencing pronunciation acquisition (Cenoz & Lecumberri, 1999). Since language and identity are closely related, research has also been done on how EFL learners see themselves when pronouncing English (Szyszka, 2011; Trofimovich & Gatbonton, 2006) and how this influences their oral performance (Szyszka, 2011).

In essence, the majority of the previously described research exclusively uses questionnaires to gather learners' opinions, with two of the studies utilising speech evaluation tasks. These data collection methods are believed to greatly restrict students' opportunity to share their opinions and facilitate in-depth discussion. Since most of these studies are conducted outside of China, this study aims to investigate how Chinese learners understand learners' English pronunciation, and their learning beliefs, especially in terms of its status where English pronunciation is tested in high-stakes examinations.

B. *Investment Theory in English Learning*

Norton and Darvin (2015) put forward the model of investment to comprehensively explain the language learning problems from social-cultural problems. It is an important concept that is hinged on the other three concepts: identity, capital, and ideology. In language learning and teaching, investment is a crucial explanatory concept that provides a framework for comprehending students' diverse desires to participate in social interactions and community activities (Norton, 2013). Investing in second language acquisition suggests a change in motivation research from the prevailing cognitive psychology approaches to a more sociocultural one, highlighting the intricate connection between language learner identity and language learning commitment (Norton Peirce, 1995). It challenges the conceptualisation of motivation as a binary, static, and singular construct. It also adopts a more fluid, dynamic, and contextualized perspective, regarding language learners as historically and socially constructed individuals with a variety of desires and identities. This social turn (Block, 2003) supports the study of language learners' identities that fundamentally vary over different times and places, and they may even contradict one another within a single person (Norton, 2013).

Since it was proposed, "investment" has attracted the attention of second language acquisition scholars and led to several relevant studies. Some studies refer to "investment" in the target language (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002; Potowski, 2001), learners' language investment in the dual immersion classroom (Babino & Stewart, 2017; Ballinger, 2017), and multilingual investment of language learners (Babino & Stewart, 2019). Other studies involve "investment" in specific language skills such as writing (McKay & Wong, 1996), in particular, aspects of language such as discourse (McKay & Wong, 1996), and language learning projects such as adult ESL training projects (Skilton-Sylvester, 2002). Therefore, it is clear that these studies have focused on the investment in English as a whole, more attention is needed to see the influence of investment in the framework of EFL, such as English pronunciation learning. Investment theory, as articulated by Norton, underscores the socio-cultural dimensions of language learning, which this study applies to unravel the nuanced ways learners invest in pronunciation skills.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Question*

The present study adopts a multiple case study to investigate English major students' English pronunciation learning belief and investment in China, with a particular focus on the nature of belief–investment relationships under the guidance of normative, metacognitive and contextual approaches (Barcelos, 2003) and Norton's (2015) proposed investment model. The research questions that guide the analysis of this study are as follows:

1. What are the beliefs of English major students regarding their English pronunciation learning in China?
2. How do English major students invest in their English pronunciation learning in China?
3. How are English major students' pronunciation learning beliefs congruent with their investment in learning English pronunciation?

B. Participants

In this study, participants were selected via purposive sampling. The selection criteria were based on the potential of learning the most from the participants' experiences (Merriam, 1998). The first criterion is the difference in their language proficiency levels, which is one of the key factors that shape their different language learning beliefs (Barcelos, 2003; Simon & Taverniers, 2011; Mercer, 2011) and their investment (Norton, 2015). The second criterion is differences in academic backgrounds, as the learners' learning experiences play an important role in shaping their unique learning beliefs (Barcelos, 2003; Horwitz, 1987). Hence, the participants selected for this study are from different academic backgrounds and English pronunciation proficiency. Table 1 summarizes the demographic information of the participants in this study; students' real names have been replaced by pseudonyms.

TABLE 1
PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Name	Age	Major	Pronunciation proficiency	Grade	Family Background
Chen	19	English Education	High level	Freshman	Saleswomen
Xi	21	English Translation	Middle level	Sophomore	Migrant workers
Lan	21	English Business	Low level	Sophomore	Businessmen

C. Data Collection

The multiple data collection methods in this study were face-to-face semi-structured interviews that were audio-taped, classroom observation, students' diaries, and related documents. All the data were recorded to better compare and triangulate different sources to make the research findings and interpretation credible (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The data were collected between March to June 2022. Each interview lasted for an hour and was conducted in Mandarin within the university compound. In between the data collection process, the researcher maintained regular communication with the participants via email and phone calls. Although these data are not collected for analysis, they increase the credibility of the stories that participants share.

D. Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was iterative and dynamic, entailing several (re)readings of data collected from diverse sources (Patton, 1990). The interview material was translated into English after being verbatim transcribed. The translations from Mandarin to English were sent to the participants for verification and to authenticate the data. After that, they were encoded with the help of NVivo 12 software and analysed using a paradigm analysis programme to generate taxonomies and categories from common elements throughout the database (Polkinghorn, 1995). To confirm the emergent findings, major themes from the interviews were identified and triangulated with other data. The recurrent themes and patterns found in the analysis were further examined in terms of theoretical framework. Finally, following a member-checking process, summaries of the initial findings were sent back to the participants for their feedback, (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

IV. RESULTS

Data from the semi-structured interviews, class observation, diaries, and related documents were used to answer the three research questions of participants' beliefs regarding their English pronunciation learning, how they invest in their English pronunciation, and whether their pronunciation learning beliefs are congruent with their investment in learning English pronunciation. From the analysis, the three participants appear to have their own beliefs and investments, and revealed different congruency between belief and investment in English pronunciation learning.

A. Chen's Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning

(a). Chen's Belief in English Pronunciation Learning

1. Imagined Identity

Chen believed that good pronunciation helped her realise her imagined identities. Since childhood, she has been watching movies, TikTok videos, singing songs and dubbing short videos that are in English. These audio and video

materials not only made her feel the elegance of the British accent and the confidence of the American accent but also made her realise that pronunciation was the soul of a character. It played a critical role in shaping her imagined identity as a famed celebrity such as an English blogger, singer, and actress. For example, she dreamed of being a singer like Taylor Swift who spoke authentic General American and encouraged her fans to be positive people. Chen also imagined that she could be a lively and interesting English blogger like Ma Siri and Cardi B who shared cultural differences around the world.

Chen: I imagined that if I became famous in the future, I would go abroad, and my fans would communicate with me.

Interviewer: To be famous, what kind of celebrity do you become?

Chen: Singer. The music style tends to be Western genre. If my fans were from abroad, I wanted to communicate with them. Then if my English pronunciation was not good enough, it would make me feel embarrassed and my fans may think that I didn't respect them. I wanted to speak English well and had a better chance to communicate with them, which made them feel that I loved them very much.

Interviewer: How do you understand the relationship between these identities and pronunciation?

Chen: Pronunciation is the soul of a person. You can judge a person's character, temperament, and even identity through their pronunciation. (CIT2-557-578)

2. *Social Capital*

Social capital refers to connections to networks of power (Bourdieu, 1986), which includes amicable relationships with peers and teachers as well as access to quality learning environments, either at school or home, that facilitate learning (Park, 2019). For Chen, English pronunciation helped her realise her imagined identity and broaden her social capital. Chen admitted that she was dissatisfied and despised her current circle of friends as, according to her, they were too lazy to improve their English skills. She expressed eagerness to integrate into more supportive social circles elsewhere. As she loved singing and performing, she hoped to make friends with her favourite stars to gain more performance experience, singing skills, and multicultural knowledge. Chen believed that proficient English pronunciation would facilitate her integration into these esteemed social circles.

Chen: I enjoy making friends. If I speak English well, I wish I could make friends with my idols like Taylor Swift, Ma Si Rui, etc. I think they are very interesting and versatile so I can learn some English singing skills and multicultural knowledge from them. Unlike some girls who gossip and haggle, I don't like them at all.

Interviewer: How is this related to your pronunciation learning?

Chen: If you want to get into these high-quality friend circles, good English pronunciation is necessary. Otherwise, there is no way to effectively communicate with them. (CIT3-257-268)

3. *Cultural Capital*

Chen also realized that English pronunciation can improve English listening scores in the examination. Since primary school, she has attended different extra-curricular training classes to learn English. Unlike teachers in formal schools who focused on written examinations, teachers in training classes systematically focused on lecturing English phonetic knowledge, which helped her to improve her English listening and speaking abilities. As a result, her listening scores were always among the highest in junior and senior high schools and universities,

Interviewer: What do you think about the role of English pronunciation in the exam?

Chen: The teacher also told me that if you can't speak clearly, you will not hear clearly and your listening will be poor. So, I thought if I could speak clearly and well, my listening would be better.

Interviewer: To get a high score in the examination?

Chen: Yes, like CET-4, CET-6, TEM-4, or IELTS. (CIT3-565-579)

(b). *Chen's English Pronunciation Learning Investment*

Diverse Investment

Chen believed that English pronunciation was important as it could help her gain symbolic and material resources as well as construct an imagined identity. Hence, in and out of class, she took her agency to invest in English pronunciation learning. Based on classroom observation, Chen managed to create the opportunity to improve her fluency through her pair work and group discussion participation. In these activities, she was willing to be a little teacher who shared her opinions and corrected her classmates' pronunciation, thus confirming the view that the English oral classroom provided an opportunity to speak English.

Interviewer: How do you learn English pronunciation out of class?

Chen: Outside of class, almost no one spoke English. Then I grasped the chance to speak English in the English oral class. Otherwise, there will be fewer opportunities to speak. (CIT2-120-122)

Sitting in the front row of her classroom, Chen was an active learner in the English listening and speaking classes, participating in occasional phonetic learning activities. For example, when her teacher lectured phonetic knowledge in a sentence, she listened intently to the teacher's instruction and was the first to raise her hand to demonstrate.

Teacher: Let's look at the sentence. Chang was feeling very unhappy because a friend had died. The bold parts should be read louder and more clearly than the other parts. Understand?"

Students: Yes.

Teacher: Any volunteers who can read for us?

Chen: I want to have a try (hands up and then proceeded after the teacher allowed it). Chang was feeling very unhappy because a friend had died.

Teacher: Good. A friend had died. Only the bold could be read louder. Read again.

Chen: Chang was feeling very unhappy because a friend had died.

Teacher: Good. Sit down please. (ELSCFN - 5 -15)

Chen's desired method of learning phonetics is through oral communication. Since her circle of friends was not willing to speak in English outside of the classroom, she had to persist in self-study by singing songs, acquiring phonetic knowledge through network resources, and doing English dubbing exercises. She spent a lot of time and energy imitating the intonation, strong form, weak form and pauses to perfectly portray the emotions and personalities of different characters in the video that she watched. In her diary, she recorded in detail how to learn English pronunciation while dubbing an American television sitcom series.

During my engagement with the series *Broken Girls*, I discovered a pertinent clip I first listened to the dialogue between the two women, then began to imitate them. To better show their get-rich-overnight mentality, I annotated the clip to indicate rising and falling intonation weak form, and strong form and pause to assist me. (CD-1-3-May-13)

(c). *Congruent Between Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning*

Based on Chen's formal and informal English pronunciation learning experiences, she strongly believed that good English pronunciation could help her construct her imagined identities as well as cultural capital. Hence, she continued investing in English pronunciation with positive identities both in and out of the classroom. Chen's investment in English pronunciation learning is closely aligned with her beliefs.

B. *Xi's Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning*

(a). *Xi's Belief in English Pronunciation Learning*

1. *Imagined Identity*

Despite being an English translation student, Xi aspired to become an English teacher, finding the challenges in translation work too formidable. She related how her English pronunciation had been deeply influenced by her English teacher in junior high school and the phonetic teacher at the university. The former teacher was her English pronunciation learning enlightenment teacher, who shaped her correct pronunciation habits, while the latter, professionally increased her phonetic knowledge. While affirming the positive impact of these two teachers on her pronunciation learning, she also criticised other teachers for their unqualified pronunciation which resulted in poor pronunciation of students. Influenced by the Confucian culture of respecting teachers and valuing education in China, she thought teachers are regarded as role models for students and good English pronunciation is a prerequisite for becoming a teacher. Thus, it was her imagined identity as an English teacher that made her realise the importance of English pronunciation.

Interviewer: How did you think your future employment would affect English pronunciation learning?

Xi: I was an English translation student. But I want to be an English teacher. There was another matter to be an English teacher. When you were a teacher, you had to learn it well, because you couldn't hand over the bad English pronunciation to the students, nor did you bring negative influence on them. If you let the bad influences go, that was very serious in his entire learning journey. (XIT2-30-36)

2. *Cultural Capital*

At the university, Xi was influenced by the view of her English translation teacher who said that intelligible English pronunciation was crucial for successful communication. Xi then realized that English pronunciation was not merely a component of English learning, but also affected listening and speaking. She argued that if learners' pronunciation was not achieved at the comprehensible level, communication would be a big problem.

Interviewer: How did you think of the role of pronunciation in English learning?

Xi: I thought it was a basic role for listening and communication. At least your pronunciation should make others understand. (XIT1-585-589)

Additionally, Xi believed that English pronunciation affected listening scores in the written examination. In China, the English examination is focused on listening, writing, and reading. The listening score accounted for one-fifth of the total score in both the high school and college entrance examinations. Furthermore, the proportion of listening scores for English majors in CET-4 and CET-8 has even increased to one-third of the total score. As a test-educated student, Xi was acutely aware that if her English pronunciation was not good, she would not be able to get the correct answers in the listening section, which could lead to failing these high-stakes examinations.

Interviewer: How do you think its role in terms of examination?

Xi: Generally speaking, it is important for the examination as it is related to English listening and accounted for a big proportion of the total score of the examination. If your pronunciation were not good, the chances to

fail would rise. (XIT1-594-598)

(b). *Xi's English Pronunciation Learning Investment*

1. *Incidental Pronunciation Learning*

Xi perceived English pronunciation as primarily beneficial for obtaining symbolic and material resources as well as realising her imagined identity. However, in practice, she characterised her pronunciation learning as incidental, secondary to her primary focus on vocabulary. For example, since sophomore year, Xi has been concentrating more on passing her TEM-4 examinations and has not paid as much attention to English pronunciation in her daily learning, like "Now I am occupied with the TEM-4 exam and haven't paid attention to the pronunciation"(XD-22-May-8). In the class, even though Xi actively took part in the oral discussion in the English listening and speaking class, her focus was almost on looking for the answers to questions and taking advantage of opportunities to express her opinion, rather than on the pronunciation.

Interviewer: How did you feel in the process of communicating with your teacher?

Xi: The teacher was always engaging and supportive in communication, keen to understand student perspectives. At the same time, he also liked to share his ideas with us.

Interviewer: Okay. Did you think it was significant to improve English pronunciation?

Xi: It might enhance my confidence and fluency. Nevertheless, I concentrated more on exchanging ideas rather than English pronunciation at that moment. (XELSSIT1-290-303)

For Xi, English pronunciation learning was only occasionally acquired while memorising words, doing dictation, and watching videos online. For instance, she believed vocabulary was the most important factor affecting the written examination as many English words were polysemy. Thus, each day, she intentionally insisted on reciting the high-frequency vocabulary in the TEM-4 with the app named BuBeiDanCi, concentrating her effort on the meaning, usage, and pronunciation of English words. She recorded in her diary how she learned English pronunciation.

During May Day, I learned the pronunciation by memorising words, such as soliloquy/ sə'li:ləkwi/n. vicious/'viʃəs/adj. In this process, I paid more attention to the spelling and meaning of words. The pronunciation learning was incidental. The reason for learning pronunciation was to know the pronunciation of words. I did not deliberately learn pronunciation. (XD-1-5-May-8)

2. *Key Challenges*

Xi mentioned three factors that inhibited English pronunciation learning investment. Firstly, English pronunciation was not tested in the written examination. As an undergraduate student, her biggest wish was to pass both the TEM-4 and TEM-8 examinations and be admitted to a graduate student in English education. These high-stakes exams had almost no requirement for pronunciation. Thus, at the current stage, she chose to be a test-machine and ignored English pronunciation learning.

Interviewer: Did you mean giving up learning English pronunciation?

Xi: No. But at present, I would not go to learn (about pronunciation). I have to pass the TEM-4 and TEM-8. They were extremely important for English major students in China. If we failed in these exams, we will face big trouble when we look for jobs.

Interviewer: How about English pronunciation learning?

Xi: These exams do not detect pronunciation. Maybe in my postgraduate period, I anticipate dedicating more time to pronunciation improvement despite current exam pressures. (XDIT5-719-722)

Secondly, there was a lack of institutional support for English pronunciation learning. Xi complained that the English phonetic courses were too short to cover supra-segmental features in the freshman year. There was neither an English pronunciation-related course since sophomore nor a systematic English pronunciation examination designed by China's English examination policy to test her English pronunciation ability. Hence, Xi felt confused about how to improve and overcome her English pronunciation problem. She hoped to be led by the teacher hand in hand like in the freshmen year.

Interviewer: Then, what else factors influence your disinvestment?

Xi: Currently, there is an absence of dedicated English phonetic courses or related examinations that limit our guidance in this area. The teachers did not pay attention to this pronunciation problem and did not emphasize it, so we did not pay attention to it. Like in the first year, when the teacher paid attention to it, we would spend a lot of time on it. But now, so I didn't intentionally care about pronunciation anymore. (XIT1-763-767)

Due to the influence of long-term exam-oriented education, few students around her were willing to communicate in English. Thus, the third challenge was the fear of being ridiculed by her friends for speaking in English. She complained that some classmates mocked her for deliberately showing off when she took the initiative to speak in English in their daily life. Gradually, her desire to invest in second language communication activities to improve English pronunciation began to decrease.

Interviewer: You mentioned that it was influenced by the environment so you rarely communicated with each other in daily life. Can you particularly talk about the environment?

Xi: They were used to communicating in Chinese and unwilling to break through their comfort area to

communicate in English. Sometimes, when I talked to them in English, hoping to practice fluency, they thought I was showing off and laughed at my Chinglish. Hence, I had to give up. (XIT4-437-442)

(c). *Incongruent Between Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning*

In Xi's case, her belief was different from her investment in English pronunciation learning. She cherished the role of pronunciation in listening and speaking as well as imagined identity construction. However, in reality, due to some contextual factors, her main energy and time were invested in written exams, while only incidentally learning English pronunciation either in the classroom or outside.

C. *Lan's Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning*

(a). *Lan's Belief in English Pronunciation Learning*

Cinderella

In Lan's view, English pronunciation learning was unimportant. Since pronunciation is not tested in the written exams, just like a Cinderella, Lan ignored it. During junior and senior high schools, Lan spent most of her energy and time on vocabulary and grammar which were crucial for the junior and senior high entrance examinations. In the first semester of freshman year, despite the English phonetic teacher emphasising the way and manner of articulation, and telling students the role of English pronunciation in listening and speaking, Lan's belief still did not change. She persisted that English pronunciation did not need as much attention as the CET4, CET6, TEM4, and TEM8. None of these examinations tested English pronunciation. The following narratives highlighted her beliefs;

Since I began to learn English, what I learned most was vocabulary and grammar. In the college entrance examination, it didn't test our pronunciation. Now in the university, all exams do not involve pronunciation. Actually, if you don't know the words, you're in trouble. While, if your pronunciation is not good, it will be fine. (LIT2-478-480)

Besides, English pronunciation played a limited role in her daily communication. Lan recalled that from childhood to adulthood, everyone communicates in Chinese. Even in the classroom, there are not many opportunities to communicate in English. Thus, she felt that even if the English pronunciation is not good, it will not bring any problems or disadvantages.

I thought its status is pretty low, and everyone didn't pay much attention to ityou know daily communication is in Chinese. Even in the English class, there are few opportunities to communicate in English. It's okay to ignore it. (LIT1-638-640)

(b). *Lan's English Pronunciation Learning Investment*

Incidental Pronunciation Learning

Since English pronunciation acquisition is rarely covered in her classes, Lan suggested to the researcher that classroom observations were not necessary. Hence, the researcher focused on Lan's extra-curricular pronunciation learning. Lan admitted that her energy was centred on her TEM-4 examination, thus did not invest in English pronunciation outside of the classroom. Based on the findings in her diary, Lan described how she incidentally learned English pronunciation. For example, aiming to successfully deal with the reading and cloze exercises in the TEM-4, she took a certain amount of time every day to memorize vocabulary with the help of the MaiMemo app. In the process of encountering unfamiliar words, she would look up the pronunciation of the words.

Today, as usual, I recited words with the MaiMemo app. I learned the word *avenge* /ə'vendʒ/ that meant revenge for., but I read it as /a'vendʒ/. Meanwhile, I thought of another word *arise*/ə'raɪz/ which meant produced, appeared, so I adopted associative memory to think of other words like *away* /ə'weɪ/, *asleep* /ə'sli:p/, *America* /ə'merɪkə/. The letter A in all these words can be pronounced /ə/. In this process of memorizing unfamiliar words, while associating them with more familiar words, I thought this method could make me understand and memorise the unfamiliar words faster. Moreover, incidentally, memorizing their pronunciations was also helpful for spelling words. (LD-4-7-March-23)

(c). *Congruent Between Belief and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning*

Generally speaking, Lan seldom paid attention to English pronunciation both in and out of the classroom. Instead, she focused on preparation work for the TEM-4 examination, such as reciting vocabulary and grammar knowledge. In terms of pronunciation learning, it was usually incidental learning when she met unfamiliar words in the process of reading and reciting vocabulary. It was evident that her investment behaviors were mapped with her English pronunciation learning belief.

V. DISCUSSION

A. *The Middle and High-Level Proficiency Participants Hold Positive English Pronunciation Learning Beliefs, While the Low-Level Proficiency Participants With Opposing Ideas*

This study reveals that middle and high-level participants held positive English pronunciation learning beliefs, while low-level participants had opposing ideas. These findings concur with other studies that found differences in learning

beliefs held by participants at different language levels (Barcelos, 2003; Simon & Taverniers, 2011; Mercer, 2011). Influenced by their past and present formal or informal English pronunciation learning experiences and teachers' opinions, high and middle-level participants like Chen and Xi believe that pronunciation can improve their English listening scores and increase the chance of making friends with other excellent individuals. These findings are similar to studies in other EFL contexts (Alghazo, 2015; Pawlak et al., 2015; Nowacka, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2021) and further supported the view that learners' beliefs are based on their personal experiences as well as the opinions of others. (Kalaja & Barcelos, 2013).

By examining their English pronunciation learning importance beliefs, it is suggested that there is an interrelationship between their imagined identities and beliefs, which aligns with the findings of other EFL studies (Nowacka, 2012; Nguyen et al., 2021). In this study, Chen believed that good English pronunciation played a crucial role in constructing her imagined identities such as a Western singer, actor, and blogger. Similarly, Xi thought good English pronunciation was a prerequisite for her to be an English teacher. It indicated that learners' beliefs are intrinsically related to identities (Woods, 2003; Chen et al., 2020).

However, Lan who has a low proficiency of English pronunciation believes that English pronunciation is Cinderella, concurring with other findings in the Chinese EFL contexts like Xu (2015). William et al. (2015) explained that national or educational culture at the macro level, and various aspects at the micro level such as friends, peers, and family members, influence individual beliefs. Thus, under the influence of English written-examination education culture and in an environment where there is limited use of English in daily life and learning, Lan felt that vocabulary and grammar are the most important English language skills, treating English pronunciation as unimportant and can be ignored. In this sense, learner beliefs are contextually oriented and socially constructed (Barcelos, 2003; Mercer, 2011).

B. Learners' Sense of Agency Influences Investment in English Pronunciation Learning

Agency encompasses both the will of the individual to act and the actual acts taken to accomplish their objectives (Pavlenko, 2000). In this study, as a high-level participant, Chen actively exerted her agency to construct numerous positive identities such as a little teacher in the English oral class, an active learner in the English listening and speaking class, and a self-disciplined learner out of class. These were done to promote her investment in English pronunciation learning to achieve the symbolic and material resources and to realise her imagined identities. However, since the agency was not "socially unfettered free will" (Ahaern, 2001, p. 112), it was equally critical to recognize the numerous contextual and personal limitations on participants' exercise of agency in investing in learning English pronunciation. Thus, agency can be both constitutive of and constituted by social structures (Block, 2007). In this study, when Xi faced constraints such as a written exam culture, a lack of institutional support for English pronunciation learning, and abusive power, she did not use her agency to overcome them. Instead, she cast herself as a poor, passive English pronunciation learner and test-machine to escape English pronunciation learning. These findings corresponded with Norton and Toohey's (2001) view that good learners are more likely to take advantage of human agency to negotiate their way into social networks, thereby practicing and improving their proficiency in the target language. However, the impoverished students were constrained by their contexts and were unwilling to use their agency to promote improvements in their EFL learning (Teng, 2019).

C. Complex Relationship Between Belief and Investment

In terms of the relationship between belief and investment, three categories emerged that illustrate different degrees of congruency or incongruency between learners' beliefs and investment. Only Chen demonstrated a positive congruence between her beliefs and investment. In other words, her belief and investment displayed the importance of English pronunciation learning. These results corroborated Norton's (2015) claims that language learners invested in a language with the hope of gaining access to a greater variety of tangible and symbolic resources, which improved their self-perception and aspirations for the future.

On the other hand, Lan showed a negative congruence between her belief and investment. Her belief and investment did not show the importance she attached to English pronunciation learning, which indicates a serious problem faced in English teaching and learning. Although adult learners advance at different degrees due to factors like motivation and attitude (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011), it has already been demonstrated that pronunciation components contribute to increasing learners' abilities in the English language. Therefore, communicative competency would not be achieved if English pronunciation—one essential component—was ignored and the situation continued. Learners would be denied the opportunity to form positive self-images with good pronunciation (Ahmad Shah, 2014).

In her case, Xi showed an incongruent between her beliefs and investment. This finding not only indicated that putting learners' beliefs into investment was not a smooth process (Barcelos & Kalaja, 2011) but also revealed that learners' beliefs were not the only variable affecting the formation of their investment in and out of the classroom. There were some social-cultural and contextual factors (Sung, 2019) like written examination, lack of institutional support for English pronunciation learning, and abusive power (Mona & Rodríguez, 2017) that prevented her from investing in English pronunciation learning.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This multiple-case study involving three English major students in China has examined ESL learners' beliefs and investment patterns specifically in English pronunciation as well as the relationship between their belief and investment in the framework of normative, metacognitive and contextual approaches (Barcelos, 2003) and investment (Norton, 2015). The findings indicate that participants have positive and negative beliefs and investments in terms of English pronunciation learning. In addition, the relationship between their beliefs and investments also exhibits diversity. Based on these findings, this study provides some significant insight.

From a theoretical perspective, there are two aspects worth noting. Firstly, while previous studies are limited to general English learning, the current study attempts to apply investment theory to explore English pronunciation learning in the EFL context. This study contributes to expanding investment theory research, endorsing the 'social turn' in English pronunciation learning. Secondly, previous studies only pointed out that learners' beliefs affect their investment (Norton, 2015), but did not explore the relationship between the two concepts. This study fills this gap by revealing positive congruent, negative congruent and incongruent relationships between learners' beliefs and investment, which not only proves that learners' beliefs influence their investment behaviour but also finds that some social-cultural and contextual factors will restrict the transformation of learning beliefs into investment behaviour.

In addition, this study also provides several empirical implications for policymakers, schools, and teachers. Firstly, the study illustrated that some participants' negative beliefs were shaped by the exam-oriented education system, where the instruction objectives, content, and methods neglect English pronunciation. Therefore, English education policymakers should incorporate English pronunciation tests into English exams to increase students' emphasis on English pronunciation. Secondly, there is a lack of support for an English pronunciation environment in and out of the classroom. Hence, foreign language schools should increase the activities related to English pronunciation learning such as English corner and cross-cultural communication periodically. Thirdly, the English teacher should be responsible for correcting learners' naive beliefs and creating a positive English pronunciation learning environment to help learners build more realistic and achievable beliefs in English pronunciation learning.

In conclusion, this multiple case study is limited to the three participants in their first year of university. Overall, while exploring their beliefs and investments to understand ESL learners' English pronunciation learning, it is important to note that learners' beliefs and investments are unique and should be understood in their contexts. A more comprehensive understanding would have been elicited if more participants were interviewed. Therefore, one of the limitations of this study is not to generalise these findings to all ESL learners. Besides, since the data collection phase was carried out during the COVID-19 epidemic and schools were almost closed, the observation was only conducted on campus and not in other situations. Hence, for future studies, other research can be conducted to explore other learning contexts of learning pronunciations.

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The Effects of Problem-Based Learning on the Writing Skills of Students Across Various Personality Types

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Abstract—Problem-based learning (PBL) is an approach where group discussions and collaboration are apparent during problem-solving activities. Accordingly, learners' personality types that affect the way they think, feel, behave, and interact may potentially have a role in PBL classrooms. This study tries to reveal the possible roles personality types play in PBL by investigating the effects of PBL on the argumentative essay writing of both extroverted and introverted students. This study employed a quasi-experimental design by randomly selecting students in academic writing courses for both the experimental and comparison groups and involving them in the intact classes. The findings revealed that the students in the PBL group scored higher than those in the guided writing group. Moreover, the extroverted students in the PBL group achieved higher mean scores than the extroverted students in the comparison group; however, the difference was insignificant. On the contrary, the statistical analysis showed that the introverted students in the experimental group outperformed those in the comparison group. This is to say that the introverted students taught using PBL had better skills in writing argumentative essays compared to those taught using guided writing techniques. This finding implies the need to use suitable teaching strategies that facilitate both extroverts and introverts in developing their writing skills while also sharpening their communicative and social skills.

Index Terms—problem-based learning, essay writing, personality types

I. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions have placed critical thinking skills as some of the most fundamental skills to possess in the 21st century (Yuan et al., 2021; Lin, 2018). These skills are defined as the ability to analyze the causes and effects of a problem and to propose solutions for them (Hallinger & Lu, 2011; Othman & Shah, 2013). As a result, problem-solving activities within a collaborative approach are utilized to develop students' skills in thinking critically, indicated by the ability to analyze the causal effects of a real-life issue and solve it (Soland et al., 2013). Studies reveal that this approach facilitates the development of students' knowledge about an issue; improves their reasoning skills; increases learning engagement where students work collaboratively to explore a problem and generate solutions; and develops problem-solving skills (Hallinger & Lu, 2011; Ho et al., 2014; Li & Liu, 2021; Kok & Duman, 2023).

Studies have been conducted to investigate the roles of PBL in the field of language teaching and learning, and research has revealed that PBL contributes to the development of students' abilities in writing argumentative essays (Li, 2013; Othman & Shah, 2013; Jumariati & Sulisty, 2017), an increase in EFL students' reading comprehension (Lin, 2017), and an improvement in problem-solving skills in English language teaching (Kok & Duman, 2023). The PBL approach prepares students for facing real-world problems by equipping them with the skills to solve problems, practice higher-order thinking skills, and perform both self-direction and learning reflection (Hung, 2013). This approach also develops students' interpersonal skills since they interact with other members of the PBL group to communicate, negotiate, and collaborate (Ho et al., 2014).

When it comes to PBL in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms where group discussions and collaboration are apparent, the roles of extroverts and introverts remain unclear due to the lack of studies investigating these roles in PBL settings. Interestingly, personality types are among the factors that affect students' strategy use while learning a foreign language (He, 2019; Oxford, 2003) although Dörnyei (2006) claims that the association between personality factors and learning achievement is often indirect. In fact, during learning, the personality types of learners will affect the way they think, feel, behave, and interact. Likewise, Johnson and Finucane (2000) assert that in any PBL group, different personality types are obvious, and therefore, their contributions to the group process are unequal. Consequently, it is reasonable to include students' personality types in the current study to respond to such claims.

Based on the hypothesis proposed by Cummins (Ellis, 1994) that extroverts prefer working in groups and enjoy spoken interactions, it can be hypothesized that extroverts may be more active and dominant in PBL group discussions than their introverted counterparts. On the other hand, introverts who prefer to work alone and tend to be thoughtful in

making decisions are assumed to be passive in PBL group discussions. This tentative hypothesis on the roles of personality types in PBL needs to be verified as this study's investigation focuses on the argumentative essay writing skills of both extroverts and introverts to better understand the potential of PBL in EFL classrooms across individual differences.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a teaching and learning approach that engages students and encourages them to collaboratively solve a problem through cause-effect analysis and propose a viable solution (Savery, 2006; Hung, 2013). This approach is currently gaining attention in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language. As a result, some research has been carried out on the roles of PBL in this field with results showing that students taught using PBL gained better scores in argumentative writing compared to those taught in the traditional way (Othman & Shah, 2013). Other research found that PBL improved students' scores in writing argumentative essays significantly especially pertaining to offering strong arguments to support their claims (Li, 2013). Furthermore, although there was no real significant difference between critical thinking test scores and argumentative writing scores, students' critical thinking skills improved after they were taught using PBL (Li, 2013).

To write argumentative essays, the skills of establishing a good claim, offering relevant reasons, providing evidence, acknowledging a counterclaim, refuting a counterclaim, and providing reasons for the refutation are required (Johnston, 2000; Smalley et al., 2001). The development of these micro-skills is accommodated during the implementation of PBL through the stages of problem presentation, problem analysis, research, and reporting which helps students in learning. However, the nature of PBL requires group work to build knowledge of the problem, collect information, share information, and propose a solution to the problem. Accordingly, students' personality types, which determine the way they think, behave, learn, interact, and make decisions (Johnson & Finucane, 2000) are assumed to play a role in the students' learning in PBL groups.

The notion of personality types including introversion and extroversion was first introduced by psychoanalyst Carl Jung (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Swanberg & Martinsen, 2010), but has since widened to cover more characteristics such as intuitive sensing, feeling-thinking, and judging-perception (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Sharp, 2008; Swanberg & Martinsen, 2010). Among the various personality types, introversion and extroversion are the most widely focused on in research on second or foreign languages because these are fundamental to the theories of personality (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Dörnyei, 2006; Dewaele, 2013). Within these personality types, students have distinctive ways to process information, behave, and communicate ideas.

There is a universal, yet not absolute, behavioral pattern that determines extroverts and introverts. Extroverts are often characterized as those who like to try new things, obtain great energy from the external world, and like to interact with many people. On the other hand, introverts are those who like to consider things before doing them, derive energy from their inner world, tend to be solitary, and have only a few close relationships with other people (Oxford, 2003; Sharp, 2008). The differences in how extroverts and introverts process information, behave, and communicate can be explained based on biological perspectives. As proposed by Eysenck in 1967, the brains of extroverts tend to have lower levels of dopamine, while introverts tend to have higher levels of it (Dewaele & Furnham, 1999; Kumari et al., 2004). Consequently, extroverts are unenthusiastic and more resistant to stressful situations; they tend to enjoy activities that involve greater sensory stimulation, whereas introverts are over-enthusiastic, and thus they tend to avoid stressful situations (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Dewaele, 2013). Additionally, the blood pathways of introverts' brains are longer and more complicated than those of extroverts which makes the linguistic units of information line up before being processed, consequently slowing down brain processing (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Dewaele, 2013; Dow, 2013). Accordingly, when compared to extroverts, introverts need more time to process information and react, particularly when offering their opinions.

There are two hypotheses introduced by Cummins in 1979 on which most research on extraversion and introversion has been based which are pertinent to basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) (Ellis, 1994). Within these skills, Cummins argues that BICS is critical for oral fluency, whereas CALP is relevant to literacy skills such as reading and writing (Ellis, 1994; Dow, 2013). The first hypothesis is that extroverts are better at acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills than introverts. Within this hypothesis, extroverts are viewed as individuals who prefer to socialize which allows them more practice in their spoken communication skills and eventually improves their oral fluency. Meanwhile, the second hypothesis posits that introverted learners perform better when it comes to acquiring cognitive academic language proficiency as they tend to enjoy the subject more than their counterparts.

Extroverts are better language learners, particularly in spoken communication, than their introverted counterparts, while introverts tend to slightly outperform their extroverted counterparts in language learning that involves reading and writing activities (Dewaele, 2013). Thus, extroversion is a strong predictor of success in second language learning (Cao & Meng, 2020) wherein the skills to use the language actively play an essential role. In fact, there is no single personality trait that pre-determines success in second language acquisition (SLA) (Dewaele, 2013) though it is one of the factors that contribute to the accomplishment of L2 acquisition. Learning achievement is also determined by

motivational constructs in addition to students' personality types (Cao & Meng, 2020; Liang & Kelsen, 2018), even though extroverts outperform their counterparts in oral communication (Liang & Kelsen, 2018). Thus, extroverts and introverts are not superior to one another, and it is necessary to note that most people are a combination of both with tendencies toward one more than the other (Liang & Kelsen, 2018; Cain, 2012; Dow, 2013).

Studies that investigated the effects of personality types on students' learning yielded various results, and research found that the writing performance between extroverts and introverts is not significantly different (Nejad et al., 2012; Alavinia & Hassanlou, 2014; Hemmatnezhad et al., 2014; Shorkpour & Moslehi, 2015). The performance between extroverts and introverts was also not significantly different in virtual reality writing online (Khodabandeh, 2022), and the use of self-correction did not affect the quality of writing between the extroverts and introverts (Hajimohammadi & Mukundan, 2011). However, other studies showed that personality types affect students' learning strategies where extroverts use cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and social strategies during writing exercises (Liyana & Bartlett, 2013) which improves their writing. On the contrary, research by Boroujeni et al. (2015) discovered that the introverts' descriptive writings were better than those of the extroverts particularly in terms of content, language, mechanics, and vocabulary. In line with this, Sanjaya et al. (2015) discovered that introverts outperformed extroverts in writing essays concerning content, syntax, and mechanics, but not in organization, discourse, and vocabulary. Meanwhile, studies by Qanwal and Ghani (2019) and Zaswita and Ihsan (2020) revealed that introverted students have better writing scores compared to the writing scores of extroverted students.

Referring to the gap, this study tries to investigate the roles of personality types, particularly the roles of extraversion and introversion within problem-based learning and the learning of argumentative essay writing. The roles of individual differences, particularly extrovert and introvert personality types, and EFL writing proficiency, remain unsolved since studies on PBL have not investigated the possible roles of these individual differences. In fact, individual differences, particularly in students' personality types, are evident in any PBL group (Johnson & Finucane, 2000). This implies the need to investigate the potential roles of personality types in PBL classrooms.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quasi-experimental design in order to reveal the effects of PBL on students' writing quality between extroverted and introverted students. The research questions are formulated as follows:

1. Is there any significant difference in the mean scores of the argumentative essays between students taught using PBL and those taught using guided writing?
2. Is there any significant difference in the mean score of the argumentative essays between the extroverted students taught using PBL and those taught using guided writing?
3. Is there any significant difference in the mean score of the argumentative essays between the introverted students taught using PBL and those taught using guided writing?

The study involved English Department students from the Faculty of Teachers Training and Education of the University of Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), Banjarmasin, Indonesia, who were enrolled in Academic Writing courses as intact classes. The classes were equal in terms of the number of students and the level of writing ability. The homogeneity test found that the significance level was $.302$ ($p = .302 > \alpha = .05$). It indicated that the subjects' skills in writing argumentative essays were homogeneous. These classes were then randomly selected as the experimental and comparison classes.

The instruments of the study were a personality-types inventory, a writing test, and a scoring rubric. The design of the inventory was based on the dimensions of the extrovert and introvert personality types proposed by Lieberman and Rosenthal (2001), Dörnyei and Skehan (2003), Swanberg and Martinsen (2010), and Dewaele (2013) which were basically rooted in the notions of extraversion and introversion introduced by Carl Jung. The personality-types inventory consisted of 38 items with 19 items revealing the introverted type and another 19 items revealing the extroverted type. A five-scale response was selected with the scales including "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Neutral", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree" to represent the subject's preference on the tendency of thinking, behaving, or acting toward the thought, actions, or behaviors in various situations. Each scale was scored 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. When a student obtained a higher score on the extrovert items than the introvert items, s/he was categorized as an extrovert and vice versa. The inventory was validated by two experts and then tested before actual use. After revision, the inventory was administered to the subjects of the study. The results showed that there were nine extroverted students and 19 introverted students in the comparison group while there were 11 extroverted students and 17 introverted students in the experimental group.

The writing test consisted of the prompts which were evaluated in terms of the relevancy of the topics with the students' needs and interests and the appropriateness of the prompt with the genre and rhetoric task. Furthermore, the wording of the instructions was evaluated in terms of the clarity and accuracy of the language used which meant that the instructions were clear and understandable. Meanwhile, the scoring rubric focused on the quality of the content, and its organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. Specifically, the content aspect of the essay is measured based on the clarity of the claim, the relevancy of the evidence, the acknowledgment of the opponent's views, and the relevancy of the refutation. The four-point scale ranged from 1 (Poor), 2 (Average), 3 (Good), and 4 (Very Good) with specific

weight for each component based on the level of importance: 6 for content and organization, 5 for vocabulary and grammar, and 3 for mechanics. The writing prompt and scoring rubric were validated by involving three experts to measure the suitability of the components evaluated in the students' essays.

The test was then tried out by involving 27 students having similar characteristics to the subjects of the study and involving two raters. Before its usage, however, a training session was given to ensure that the raters had a consensus on how to use the scoring rubric in evaluating the essays. After trying out the writing test, the scores from two raters were analyzed. The result showed that the obtained *r* value for the content aspect was .709, the organization aspect was .826, the vocabulary aspect was .624, the grammar aspect was .596, and the mechanics aspect was .458. Interestingly, these *r* values were greater than the *r* table for 50 samples (.235). Further, the obtained significance value was .000 for the content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar while the obtained significance value for the mechanics was .001. These values were less than the .05 significance level. Accordingly, the raters' scores were valid concerning the students' argumentative writing skills. To measure the consistency of scores among raters, the inter-rater reliability was employed by utilizing the Intra-Class Correlation (ICC) coefficient. The analysis revealed that the obtained reliability coefficient *r* was .942. This value indicated a high inter-rater consistency, which showed a high reliability.

The treatment was conducted by implementing PBL in the experimental group and guided writing instruction in the comparison group. The procedure of PBL was developed by adapting the procedure proposed by Burch (2000) which originally consisted of problem presentation, problem analysis, research (collecting information), and reporting. A minor modification was made by adding the application stage after the reporting stage to allow students to write argumentative essays. The application stage was designed by following the principles of process writing, namely planning, drafting, revising, and editing to increase cognitive activities in each stage which gradually improves the quality of students' writing (Graham & Sandmel, 2011).

In the present study, solving a problem through PBL groups and writing an argumentative essay individually were accomplished in two meetings taking into consideration that the process of problem-solving and writing an essay was complex and that the students needed sufficient time before they finally produced a composition. After practicing writing for four weeks, a test was administered to obtain data on students' abilities in writing argumentative essays. This study involved two raters to evaluate the students' argumentative writing from the test.

IV. FINDINGS

The students' writings were evaluated by two raters using the scoring rubric. The scores were then tabulated and calculated by using SPSS version 16.

A. The Result of the Writing Test of the Experimental and Comparison Groups

The experimental group gained a higher mean score than the comparison group, as depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF WRITING TEST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL AND COMPARISON GROUPS

Group	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	28	32.50	59.50	92.00	74.2500	8.21527
Comparison	28	33.50	51.50	85.00	68.1250	10.53992

Table 1 shows that the scores in the PBL group were between a minimum of 59.50 and a maximum of 92.00. The range was 32.50, and the standard deviation was 8.21. Meanwhile, in the comparison group, the scores were from 51.50 to 85.00. The range was 33.50, and the standard deviation was 10.54. Finally, the mean score of the experimental group was 74.25 while the mean score of the comparison group was 68.12.

Next, a statistical analysis was employed by using an independent sample t-test with a .05 significance level to find the effect of PBL on students' skills in writing argumentative essays. The results are displayed in Table 2.

TABLE 2
RESULTS OF THE INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST ON THE SCORES OF STUDENTS IN THE EXPERIMENTAL AND COMPARISON GROUPS

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Essay scores	Equal variances assumed	-2.580	54	.013	-6.12500	2.37396	-10.88449	-1.36551

Table 2 displays the *p*-value as .013 ($p = .013 < sig. = .05$). Concerning the result, it was concluded that the students taught using the PBL approach performed better in writing argumentative essays compared to students taught using guided-writing techniques.

After that, the scores on the writing test were then classified based on the students' personality types. The analysis was made by comparing the mean scores of extroverted students taught using problem-based learning and those taught

using guided writing. A comparison was also made concerning the mean scores of the introverted students in both groups.

B. The Results of the Writing Test Based on Personality Types in Both Groups

The data from the writing test in both groups were analyzed using an independent sample t-test. Table 3 summarizes the data on the writing test for both extrovert and introvert students in both the experimental and comparison groups.

TABLE 3
DATA OF THE WRITING TEST BASED ON PERSONALITY TYPES IN BOTH GROUPS

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Scores	Extroverts of Experimental Group	17	73.7647	8.12042	1.96949
	Introverts of Experimental Group	11	75.0000	8.70057	2.62332
	Extroverts of Comparison Group	19	66.9737	10.73866	2.46362
	Introverts of Comparison Group	9	70.6111	10.26456	3.42152

Based on Table 3, the mean score of the extroverts in the PBL group was 73.76 while the mean score of the extroverts in the comparison group was 66.97. Likewise, the mean score of the introverted students in the experimental group was 75.00 whereas that of the comparison group was 70.61. Therefore, the mean score of the introverted students was better than their counterparts in both the PBL and guided writing groups.

C. The Results of Homogeneity Testing

In order to find out whether the data across personality types in both the experimental and comparison groups were equal and consistent, homogeneity testing was carried out. Hence, Levene's test of the SPSS 16.0 version was employed with .05 as the significance level. The results of the homogeneity testing are displayed in Table 4.

TABLE 4
RESULTS OF HOMOGENEITY TESTING

Homogeneity Group	Levene's Statistic	Sig.	Interpretation
Experimental and Comparison Groups	11.598	.001	Heterogeneous
Introverts in Both Groups	1.791	.197	Homogeneous
Extroverts in Both Groups	3.728	.062	Homogeneous

Based on the homogeneity tests, the data on the writing test in both groups were not homogeneous since the p -value was .001 ($p = .027 < \text{sig.} = .05$). Meanwhile, the data of the extroverts in both groups and the data of the introverts in both groups were homogeneous since the p values were greater than a significance level of .05 at .197 for the introverted students and .062 for the extroverted students.

D. The Results of Normality Testing

The normality testing was carried out using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test utilizing the SPSS 16.0 version of the computer program. The results of normality testing are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
RESULTS OF NORMALITY TESTING

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
	Statistic	Std. Deviation	Sig.	Normality
Writing Scores-Experimental Group	.507	8.24	.960	Normal
Writing Scores-Comparison Group	.904	10.54	.387	Normal
Introverts' Writing Scores- both	.806	9.45	.534	Normal
Extroverts' Writing Scores - both	.937	10.06	.343	Normal

Based on data shown in Table 5, the p -value in each group was greater than the significance level of .05. The p -value for the writing scores in the experimental group was .960, whereas in the comparison group, the p -value was .387. Then, the p -value for the writing scores of the introverts in both groups was .534 and the p -value for the writing scores of the extroverts in both groups was .343.

To find the answer to the second research question, an independent sample t-test was carried out resulting in an alpha value of .05. The result is displayed in Table 6.

TABLE 6
RESULT OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON THE SCORES OF THE EXTROVERTED STUDENTS IN BOTH GROUPS

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper	
Scores_Extro_Exp	Equal variances assumed	1.036	18	.314	4.38889	4.23746	-4.51369	13.29147
Extro_Comp								

The result displayed in Table 6 showed that the *p*-value was .314. Since the *p*-value was greater than a .05 level of significance ($p = .314 > sig. = .05$), there was no significant difference in the mean scores of the extroverted students' argumentative writing skills who were taught using PBL and those who were taught using guided writing.

The next analysis was based on the result of the independent sample *t*-test with a .05 significance level to answer the third research question. Table 7 shows the summary of the result of the analysis.

TABLE 7
RESULT OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON THE SCORES OF THE INTROVERTED STUDENTS IN BOTH GROUPS

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper	
Scores	Equal variances assumed							
Intro_Exp		2.120	34	.041	6.79102	3.20360	.28053	1.330151
Intro_Com								

As depicted in Table 7, the *p*-value was .041, which was less than the .05 significance level ($p = .041 < sig. = .05$). This indicated that the introverted students taught using PBL had better argumentative essay writing skills than those taught using guided-writing.

V. DISCUSSION

This study attempted to discover the potential roles of students' personality types on their performance in writing argumentative essays within PBL instruction. The first analysis was carried out on the writing scores of the students from both the experimental and comparison groups. An analysis of the findings revealed that the students in the PBL group achieved better scores than those in the guided-writing group. The hypothesis testing shows that the obtained *p*-value was .013 which was smaller than the .05 level of significance. This means that there was a significant difference in the mean scores between the students in the PBL group and those in the guided-writing group. This finding is in line with previous research showing that PBL contributes to increasing students' scores in argumentative writing (Li, 2013; Othman & Shah, 2013). The stages of PBL allow for exploration of the issue, analysis of the cause-effect, and proposing a viable solution, each of which facilitates students in making a good claim, providing arguments and evidence, and refuting opponents' points of view – all of which are essential in writing argumentative essays (Johnston, 2000).

Next, the writing scores between the extroverts and introverts in both the experimental and comparison groups were analyzed and revealed that the extroverted students in the experimental group achieved higher mean scores than the extroverts in the comparison group. However, the analysis using the *t*-test showed that the difference was insignificant as the *p*-value was greater than the .05 significance level ($p = .314 > \alpha = .05$). On the contrary, the statistical analysis on the writing scores of the introverted students showed that the introverted students in the experimental group outperformed those in the comparison group. Furthermore, an independent sample *t*-test showed that the difference in the mean scores of the argumentative writing skills of the introverted students in both groups was significant ($p = .041 < \alpha = .05$). This is to say that the introverts taught using PBL had better skills in writing argumentative essays compared to the introverts taught using guided-writing.

The possible reason for introverts scoring higher than their counterparts is that the structure of the brain of introverts is longer and consists of more complex blood pathways than the brains of extroverts which causes the information to line up before being processed, gradually slowing down the brain's processing (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Dewaele, 2012; Dow, 2013). Consequently, introverts tend to be more thoughtful before they make decisions. From the observations in the experimental group, the researchers found that during PBL group discussions, introverts tended to listen more and think before talking. In contrast, extroverts tend to think by talking. While writing their drafts, the introverts checked their drafts more often than the extroverts which might be due to the slow information process in their brain making them focus more on the quality of the content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics than their counterparts. As previous theories postulate, this might indicate that introverts are more thoughtful (Lieberman & Rosenthal, 2001; Dewaele, 2012; Dow, 2013). For that reason, the introverted students taught using problem-based writing instruction were facilitated through the stages of problem-solving and the stages of writing an essay; thus, they performed better than those taught using guided writing instruction who were not provided with collaborative activities such as the opportunities to comprehend an issue, find a solution, and write an essay.

The finding of the present study also confirms the findings of the studies conducted by Layeghi (2011), Boroujeni et al. (2015), and Sanjaya et al. (2015) which revealed that the introverted students' skills in writing argumentative and descriptive essays were better than the extroverts' skills. Similar to the present study, a study by Layeghi (2011) involving high-intermediate students and two raters who evaluated the students' essays using an analytical scoring rubric discovered that introverts had better content and form when it came to their writing skills than their extroverted counterparts. Meanwhile, a study by Boroujeni et al. (2015) utilizing a test that involved writing descriptive paragraphs

found that introverts outperformed extroverts in all of the writing components studied including content, organization, vocabulary, language, and mechanics. Finally, the result of the current study is also in line with the findings of research conducted by Sanjaya et al. (2015) that compared extroverts and introverts in an argumentative writing test using an independent samples t-test. In their research, Sanjaya et al. (2015) found a significant difference between extroverts and introverts when it came to the argumentative essay scores with regard to the content, syntax, and mechanics. However, no significant difference was found concerning organization and vocabulary.

Nonetheless, the findings of the current study are in contrast with the findings of the studies by Marefat (2006), Hajimohammadi and Mukundan (2011), Alavinia and Hassanlou (2014), Hemmatnezhad et al. (2014) which revealed that there is no significant difference in the writing performance of extroverts and introverts. The contrastive findings may be due to the different methods applied in the studies including different instruments to measure personality types, different instruments to measure writing skills, and different variables involved. In studies by Hajimohammadi and Mukundan (2011), Alavinia and Hassanlou (2014), and Hemmatnezhad et al. (2014), two different measurements were utilized including Eysenck inventory. Meanwhile, the study by Marefat (2006) utilized the MBTI questionnaire. The current study utilizes researcher-made questionnaires by adapting available questionnaires for extroverts and introverts and integrating theories of the dimensions of personality. Although all the measurements have been validated, they might yield different results due to dissimilar psychological types that are included in the questionnaire. Furthermore, the studies utilize different writing tasks, which include descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative essays, each of which requires a different approach to thinking and different patterns of organization and word choice. Consequently, the task type might explain the reason why the writing performance between the extroverts and the introverts is dissimilar.

VI. IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study provide evidence of the need to use suitable teaching strategies that facilitate both extroverts and introverts in developing their writing skills. While problem-based writing instruction benefits introverted students, teachers need to select the appropriate strategy that can facilitate extroverted students' writing development to respond to the majority of research findings on the low writing performance of extroverts.

VII. CONCLUSION

The findings suggest that PBL affects students' writing quality, especially students with introverted personality types. The introverts who were taught argumentative writing using PBL achieved better scores than the introverts who were taught guided writing. Meanwhile, the difference in the writing scores was not significant between the extroverts in the PBL group and the extroverts in the guided writing group.

APPENDIX A WRITING PROMPT (TEST)

Directions:

- Write an argumentative essay consisting of **5 paragraphs** (410-460 words) by **choosing one** of the two topics below.
- Your essay should consist of an introductory paragraph, three body paragraphs, and a concluding paragraph.
- You have 100 minutes. Spend the time effectively drafting, rereading, and revising your essay.
- Using any gadget or dictionary is **not** allowed.

-
1. The Ministry of *Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak* is now working on the draft of the regulation that forbids students at any level of education to bring cellular phones to schools. However, some people believe children should be allowed to bring cellular phones to schools. Which position do you agree with? Provide reasons to support your position.
 2. English in elementary schools in Indonesia is no longer a compulsory subject but a local one. People react differently to the change in the status of English. Some people believe that English should be taught in elementary schools, while others think the opposite. Which position do you agree with? Provide reasons to support your position.

Your work will be evaluated on: (1) content (claim, reasons, evidence, recognition of opponent's view, and refutation), (2) organization, (3) vocabulary, (4) grammar, and (5) mechanics.

Please use clear handwriting because poor handwriting can affect the readability of your essay.

Do your best!

APPENDIX B SCORING RUBRIC

Elements	Weight	Score	Category	Criteria
Content	6	4	Very Good	The essay is consistently focused on the central idea that clearly shows the writer's argument; the writer's reasons are supported with accurate, relevant, and detailed evidence while the opponent's view is fully explained and refuted using accurate, relevant, and detailed evidence. It summarizes the main points, demands action, and warns of some consequences.
		3	Good	The essay is focused on the central idea. It contains the writer's reasons; however, a piece of evidence is inaccurate, irrelevant, or not detailed. The opponent's view is addressed where only some points are explained and refuted with some evidence. It contains the summary of the main point or the demand of an action.
		2	Average	The essay is focused on the central idea, but the writer's argument is rather weak as it contains some irrelevant reasons and/or inaccurate, irrelevant, and limited evidence; the opponent's view is addressed but not fully refuted as the evidence is not provided. It summarizes the main points.
		1	Poor	The essay fails to show the writer's argument since it discusses the issue in general without stating the writer's argument. It provides very little or illogical evidence and mostly contains fallacies. The opponent's view is not explained nor refuted.
Organization	6	4	Very Good	The essay is well-organized using accurate and varied cohesive devices that make the relationships among the claim, counterclaim, reasons, and evidence very clear. The length of the essay is proper.
		3	Good	The essay is adequately organized in that the relationships among the claim, counterclaim, reasons, and evidence are quite clear, although one or two cohesive devices are missing. It has an appropriate length.
		2	Average	The essay is rather disorganized because of a few incorrect or limited cohesive devices while the length is fairly appropriate. Some sentences are irrelevant, which makes the essay rather loose, though the essay has an appropriate length.
		1	Poor	The essay is disorganized because many irrelevant ideas are discussed, and some cohesive devices are used incorrectly. It does not have an appropriate length.
Vocabulary	5	4	Very Good	The essay shows exceptional vocabulary and hedging usage with almost no errors or less than 3 total errors in dictions appropriate for formal writing, wordiness, and unclear expressions.
		3	Good	The essay shows good vocabulary and hedging usage with 3-6 total errors in dictions appropriate for formal writing, wordiness, and unclear expressions.
		2	Average	The essay shows moderate vocabulary and hedging usage with 7-10 total errors in dictions appropriate for formal writing, wordiness, and unclear expressions.
		1	Poor	The essay shows limited vocabulary and hedging usage, containing more than 10 total errors in dictions appropriate for formal writing, wordiness, and unclear expressions.
Grammar	5	4	Very Good	The essay demonstrates excellent grammar usage with complex sentences; it contains almost no errors or less than 5 total errors in singular-plural, subject-verb agreement, tense, cohesive devices, pronouns, prepositions, and articles.
		3	Good	The essay shows good grammar usage with good simple sentences and some incorrect complex sentences; it contains 5-10 total errors in singular-plural, subject-verb agreement, tense, cohesive devices, pronouns, prepositions, and articles which do not distract the readers.
		2	Average	The essay shows moderate grammar usage, containing problems with simple and complex sentences; it contains 11-16 total errors in singular-plural, subject-verb agreement, tense, cohesive devices, pronouns, prepositions, and articles that distract the reader.
		1	Poor	The essay shows poor grammar usage with no mastery of sentence constructions; it contains severe and persistent errors (more than 16 total errors) in singular-plural, subject-verb agreement, tense, cohesive devices, pronouns, prepositions, and articles that distract the reader.
Mechanics	3	4	Very Good	The essay shows excellent mechanics usage with almost no errors or less than 3 total errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, while the handwriting is neat and legible.
		3	Good	The essay shows good mechanics usage, containing 3- 5 total errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, while the handwriting is somewhat neat and legible.
		2	Average	The essay shows moderate mechanics usage, containing 6-8 total errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, while the handwriting is not neat but still legible.
		1	Poor	The essay shows poor mechanics usage, containing severe errors (more than 8 total errors) in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, while the handwriting is neither neat nor legible.

APPENDIX C PERSONALITY-TYPES INVENTORY

No.	Items	Responses				
		5	4	3	2	1
1.	I like working in groups better than working alone.					
2.	I concentrate best in a silent room.					
3.	When confronted with a sudden question, I am usually the first to respond.					
4.	In conversations, I usually listen to others.					
5.	I like trying challenging sports.					
6.	To express my ideas, I'd rather write than talk.					
7.	I tend to make decisions quickly without thinking too much.					
8.	In discussions, I tend to think silently.					
9.	I usually learn by observing how others do the task.					
10.	I check my assignments many times before submitting them.					
11.	I prefer spending my leisure time reading books rather than hanging out with my friends.					
12.	I find it easy to start conversations even with people whom I don't know.					
13.	I feel like I am full of energy when I am interacting with people.					
14.	People say that I am a silent person.					
15.	In discussions, I usually let others talk first.					
16.	I usually need a lot of time to prepare before I speak in front of the public.					
17.	I tend to make decisions quickly and think about the consequences later.					
18.	I find it uneasy to act as a leader in a situation.					
19.	I have emotional relationships with only a few friends.					
20.	I usually write what I want to say especially before I speak in front of the public.					
21.	I'd rather spend holidays at a popular beach than in a small, quiet one.					
22.	I rarely show my emotions (happy, sad, worried, or angry) to others.					
23.	I dislike small talk but I enjoy talking in depth about topics that matter to me.					
24.	I enjoy multitasking (doing more than one thing at a time).					
25.	In classroom situations, I prefer group discussions to lectures.					
26.	When solving a problem, I consider a rational approach to be the best.					
27.	I prefer to discuss my work when I have finished doing it.					
28.	I usually try new things for the sake of fulfilling my curiosity.					
29.	I usually finish my work/assignments quickly.					
30.	I prefer doing assignments alone or with only one classmate to working with groups.					
31.	I enjoy being a part of the crowd at sporting, music, or amusing events.					
32.	I am not as quick and lively (energetic) as other people.					
33.	Working in groups usually energizes me.					
34.	I usually do school assignments by learning from the examples of others' works.					
35.	I usually practice in front of a mirror before I speak, especially in front of the public.					
36.	When I study in the library, I prefer to sit in solitary.					
37.	I prefer oral tests to written tests.					
38.	I usually do the school assignments with my classmates.					

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Does Translation Technology Affect Translators' Performance? A Meta-Analysis

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Abstract—Translation technologies, including computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, translation memory (TM) systems, and machine translation (MT), are increasingly utilized in professional translation workflows and training. However, the effects of these technologies on translators' performance remain inconclusive. This meta-analysis examines the overall impact of translation technologies on translator performance by synthesizing data from 12 experimental studies published between 2000 and 2023. The study investigates the effectiveness of translation technologies compared to traditional translation methods. The findings reveal a significant positive effect size, indicating that translation technologies have the potential to improve translators' performance relative to purely human translation. The integration of advanced interactive CAT systems and post-editing MT demonstrates larger advancements compared to basic TM match retrieval. Moreover, experienced professional translators derive greater benefits from incorporating technologies than student translators, highlighting the importance of leveraging automation capabilities alongside human expertise. However, the study identifies significant heterogeneity among the studies, influenced by factors such as translation direction. Translators translating into their native language exhibit greater advancements, emphasizing the advantages of technologies that strengthen fluency in the target language.

Index Terms—CAT tools, meta-analysis, translator's experience, translation technologies, translators' performance

I. INTRODUCTION

The translation industry has undergone significant technological transformation with the introduction of various computer-assisted tools and automation. Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, such as translation memory (TM), terminology management, and project management systems, have been developed to optimize translators' workflows (Melby, 2012). Translation memory systems act as repositories of previously translated content, facilitating efficient retrieval of matches for new similar texts (Lagoudaki, 2006). Machine translation (MT) utilizes artificial intelligence to generate automated translations, which can potentially be post-edited by a human translator (Carl et al., 2011). Additionally, online corpora and parallel texts provide translators with multilingual databases for linguistic reference during translation (Sabzalipour & Rahimy, 2012). As these technologies have become increasingly prevalent in the translation sector, questions arise regarding their real impact on the performance of human translators who rely on these tools in their daily work. Key performance metrics of interest include productivity, quality, errors, and cognitive effort. However, the existing body of research investigating the effects of these technologies on these indicators presents conflicting evidence. Some studies demonstrate improved productivity and quality when translators utilize CAT tools compared to traditional human translation. For instance, Guerberof (2013) reported a 29% increase in productivity with TM tools, while Garcia (2010) found a 50% increase. Post-editing of MT output has also shown potential for enhancing quality compared to human translation alone, as indicated by Lee and Liao (2011). On the contrary, other studies have presented less favorable outcomes. O'Brien et al. (2017) revealed decreased productivity and worsened quality when translators used TM tools, and Kassem (2021) indicated lower productivity and quality when students employed CAT tools compared to traditional teaching methods without technology. Gaspari and Hutchins (2007) even suggested that post-editing MT could lead to increased errors and cognitive effort relative to human translation.

The variability in these existing results underscores the need for an integrated meta-analysis that evaluates overall effect sizes across studies. Meta-analyses leverage the statistical power of aggregating data from multiple studies on a specific topic, enabling more precise calculations of effect sizes compared to individual studies (Cohn & Becker, 2003). The present study aims to conduct a meta-analysis that synthesizes experimental research conducted between 2000 and 2023 on the impacts of translation technology on translators' performance. The aim is to answer the following:

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- 1) What is the overall effect size of translation technologies on translators' performance? And,
- 2) How do moderating factors, such as translator's experience, language pair, and technology type, influence the overall effect size of translation technologies?

By evaluating the overall magnitude of the effects of translation technologies and exploring factors that moderate these outcomes, this study is hoped to provide valuable insights for effectively integrating automation capabilities with human skills in professional translation workflows and training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The translation industry has experienced speedy technological transformation through the expansion of computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and machine translation (MT) systems. CAT tools encompass specialized software programs designed to optimize and automate certain translators' performances. Prominent functions of CAT tools comprise translation memory (TM) databases, terminology management systems, project management platforms, quality assurance checks, and text alignment capabilities (Melby, 2012).

TM systems perform as large repositories which store previously translated content and segment matches, allowing efficient retrieval and leveraging of existing translations for consistent terminology when translating new and similar texts. This can increase translator productivity by reducing duplication (Lagoudaki, 2006; Lagoudaki, 2009). Additionally, MT utilizes artificial intelligence algorithms to generate raw automated draft translations without human intervention. The machine-generated outcome can then potentially be post-edited by a human translator to enhance overall quality (Carl et al., 2011). Online corpora and parallel texts also provide additional multilingual databases that translators can reference as linguistic assets during the translation process (Alotaibi, 2017; Sabzalipour & Rahimy, 2012; Verplaetse & Lambrechts, 2019). Core performance metrics of interest include productivity, translation quality, errors, and cognitive effort during the translation process. Regardless, the existing body of research examining the effects of CAT tools, TM systems, and MT on these key indicators reveals contradicting evidence.

Regarding productivity, certain studies illustrate performance improvements when translators use CAT tools corresponded to purely human translation without technology assistance. Guerberof (2013) noted a 29% increase in translator speed using TM tools. Gaspari et al. (2015) also exhibited productivity increases from post-editing raw MT output into higher quality final translations. Yet, other studies uncover detrimental impacts on productivity. O'Brien et al. (2017) found lower productivity when translators employed TM tools compared to human translation alone without technology. Green et al. (2013) likewise reported less productivity post-editing MT outcome versus purely human translation.

In terms of translation quality, some studies denote potential advancements with CAT tool use. Garcia (2010) exhibited enhanced quality when translators utilized TM tools. Further, Lee and Liao (2011) found better overall quality when translators post-edited MT outcomes compared to purely human translation. Nevertheless, other studies demonstrate lessened quality outcomes. O'Brien et al. (2017) showed decreased quality when translators used TM tools. Moreover, Kassem (2021) observed lower overall translation quality when students post-edited MT output compared to traditional teaching methods without CAT tools. It is analytically evidenced that the use of translation technologies and software programs play on improving the professional standards of translation and EFL students' translation productivity; they are still far from being applied as institutionally authorized parts of translation pedagogy. Without the use of translation technologies, translators cease to operate adequately to offer high-quality translation services (Omar et al., 2020).

Regarding translation errors, Gaspari and Hutchins (2007) suggested that post-editing raw MT output could diminish errors in the final translations. Yet Green et al. (2013) contrarily identified increased errors when translators post-edited MT output compared to purely human translation. The researchers used individual student performance without a specific translation tool as the standard score, individual scores were then compared. Although the use of dedicated translation tools did not seem to affect the quality delivered by the students accomplishing the highest and lowest benchmark scores, performance was far less consistent for those between the two extremes. Some students executed especially well or poorly with one of the three translation tools while acquiring good or average quality scores with the others (Morin et al., 2017). For cognitive effort, Moorkens et al. (2015) reported a lower mental workload for translators employing TM tools. However, O'Brien (2017) demonstrated increased cognitive load inflicted by TM tools relative to human translation alone without technology.

A. *Factors Influencing the Impact of Translation Technology*

The impact of translation technology on translators' performance is influenced by various factors, including the tools used, translation direction, and translator's level. These variables play a crucial role in shaping the outcomes and are discussed in more detail below.

(a). *Translation Tools*

One significant factor is the choice of translation tools. Different types of tools, such as Machine Translation (MT), Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools, Translation Memory (TM) systems, and corpora, can have a moderating effect on the outcomes. For example, studies conducted by Guerberof (2013), Garcia (2017) have shown that using

advanced interactive CAT tools with integrated TM functions leads to productivity and quality gains compared to relying solely on basic TM match retrieval. This indicates that the level of tool sophistication can significantly impact performance. Additionally, Lee and Liao (2011) found that combining MT with human post-editing resulted in improved translation quality compared to using uncontrolled MT output alone. However, it is essential to consider that the impact of translation tools is not uniformly positive. O'Brien et al. (2017) demonstrated that basic TM systems had detrimental effects on both productivity and translation quality when compared to human translation. This highlights the importance of selecting the appropriate tool for a given task.

Moreover, the variety of available tools also influences the balance between automation and human input, which, in turn, can affect performance outcomes. Translators must strike a balance between leveraging the advantages of automation provided by translation technology and utilizing their linguistic expertise and creativity to ensure high-quality translations.

(b). Translation Direction

The choice of language direction in translation, whether from a foreign language to the native language or vice versa, can significantly impact the results obtained when using translation technology. Several studies have demonstrated that working in one's native language using technology can yield greater improvements compared to translating from a foreign language into the native language (Kassem, 2021; Lee & Liao, 2011).

When translators work in their native language and utilize translation technologies, such as CAT tools or MT followed by human post-editing, they may experience enhanced fluency and leverage their linguistic expertise more effectively. The familiarity with the distinctions, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references of their native language allows them to make more informed decisions during the translation process, resulting in higher-quality translations.

On the other hand, when translating from a foreign language into their native language, technological advantages may be somewhat restricted. In such cases, human judgment and expertise play a more significant role in ensuring accurate and culturally appropriate translations. Translators need to rely on their interpretive skills and cultural knowledge to bridge any gaps or challenges posed by the source language, which may limit the extent to which translation technology can facilitate the process.

It is important to acknowledge that the impact of language direction on the effectiveness of translation technology is not absolute. Factors such as the complexity of the texts, the availability of linguistic resources and tools tailored to specific language pairs, and the individual translator's proficiency in both the source and target languages can also influence the outcomes.

(c). Translator's Experience

The translator's level of experience plays a crucial role in moderating the impact of translation technology. Numerous studies have consistently shown that professional translators tend to derive significant advantages from using CAT tools, TM systems, and MT compared to students or less experienced translators (Carl et al., 2011; Guerberof, 2013).

Professional translators, who have accumulated extensive practical experience in the field, often possess a range of strategies and techniques that allow them to seamlessly incorporate translation technologies into their workflow. Through years of practice, they have developed specialized aptitudes and refined their skills to effectively leverage these tools. As a result, professional translators can capitalize on the benefits offered by CAT tools, TM systems, and MT to enhance their productivity, improve the consistency of their translations, and streamline their overall workflow (Green et al., 2013; Guerberof, 2013).

In contrast, student translators or those with less experience may require additional training and support to effectively harness the potential of translation technology. While they may possess foundational knowledge and skills, they may still be in the process of developing the necessary expertise to fully utilize these tools. Student translators may need guidance to navigate the complexities of the technology, understand its functionalities, and integrate it seamlessly into their translation process. Furthermore, inexperienced translators may face challenges related to cognitive load, as they need to allocate mental resources to both the translation task and the utilization of technology, which can be overwhelming without proper training.

It is important to note that the impact of experience on the effectiveness of translation technology is not absolute, and individual differences among translators should also be considered. Factors such as the level of technological proficiency, adaptability to new tools, and openness to learning can influence how effectively translators at different experience levels can leverage translation technology.

To sum up, the translator's level of experience significantly influences the outcomes achieved using translation technology. Professional translators, with their accumulated experience and specialized skills, tend to derive substantial benefits from these tools. On the other hand, student translators or those with less experience may require additional training and support to effectively utilize translation technology, ensuring that they can fully leverage its potential and avoid unnecessary cognitive load. To sum up, the tools used by the translators, the language pair they work with, and the translator's experience, may significantly moderate the impact of translation technologies on productivity, quality, errors, and cognitive effort. Carefully assessing their impact through moderator analyses can provide a clear understanding of blending automation capabilities and human judgment during translation. This knowledge can disclose evidence-based implementation of technologies for optimal complementarity with human expertise. Ultimately, the

variability in existing findings stresses the need for an integrated meta-analysis to determine the overall effect sizes of CAT tools, TM systems, and MT on critical translator performance indicators. Synthesizing data across empirical studies allows more robust findings compared to individual studies (Cohen, 1988; Cohn & Becker, 2003). Moreover, exploring moderator variables helps explain heterogeneous results, while evaluating publication bias ensures precise interpretation. This meta-analysis aims to guide the informed implementation of technologies to augment rather than replace specialized human translation expertise.

In the next section, a detailed description of the methodology used in this meta-analysis is presented.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

A comprehensive meta-analysis was conducted to evaluate the influence of technology on translators' performance. This study employed a robust meta-analysis design, which involved synthesizing results from multiple experimental studies. This approach allowed for a thorough summary of findings, with effect sizes calculated to provide a quantitative estimate of the differences observed in post-test scores between experimental and control groups. The analysis followed a sequential procedure, incorporating various stages: (1) an extensive literature search, (2) the establishment of strict inclusion criteria, (3) coding selected studies, and (4) calculating effect sizes. By adopting a multi-methodological approach, this analysis ensured a rigorous and systematic evaluation of the impact of technology on translation.

B. Searching the Literature

To identify relevant studies for the analysis, an exhaustive search across prominent databases was performed, including the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC), Web of Science, and SCOPUS. The search, based on key terms like "translation," AND "technology," OR "computer-assisted translation tools," OR "machine translation," OR "artificial intelligence," resulted in 1500 articles between 2000-2023, all studies published until December 31, 2023, were considered eligible. Exclusions were made based on predefined criteria, ultimately resulting in the inclusion of 12 studies. These studies are listed in Appendix A.

C. Study Inclusion Criteria

The formulation of inclusion criteria played a pivotal role in selecting studies for the analysis. Each study that met the following conditions was considered: (1) an experimental or quasi-experimental design was employed, (2) translation technology was used as the primary instrument in the experiment, (3) participants in the experimental group utilized technology for translation, and (4) means, standard deviations and participant counts were reported for each group. The inclusion process is illustrated in Figure 1. Exclusion criteria consisted of the following: (a) qualitative designs, surveys, or interviews, (b) research on fully automated systems without human subjects, and (c) studies lacking adequate statistical information for analysis. The meta-analysis followed the PRISMA model (Figure 1) for literature compilation, screening, and coding, as outlined by Page et al. (2021).

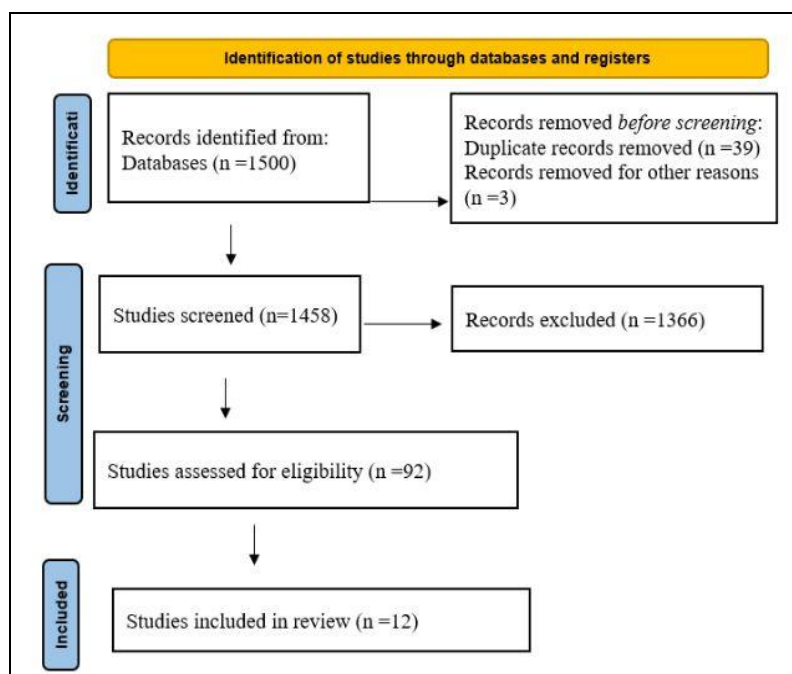


Figure 1. PRISMA Flowchart

Comprehensive searches were performed using Google Scholar, Web of Science, Scopus, and Semantic Scholar databases to identify experimental studies conducted between 2000 and 2023 that examined the performance of human translators with and without translation technologies. Reference harvesting and hand-searches were also undertaken. After screening, moderator variables were coded, including language pair, translator's experience level, and technology type. Effect sizes were calculated using reported statistics to quantify the performance differences between human and technology-assisted translation groups. A random-effects meta-analysis was conducted using Comprehensive Meta-Analysis software to assess overall effect sizes. Heterogeneity was assessed using Q and I^2 values, and publication bias was also evaluated.

D. Coding of Study Characteristics

Investigating the impact of technology on translators' performance within the present meta-analysis required considering three significant factors: translation tool used in the study, translation direction, and translators' levels. These factors were systematically coded as variables for analysis. The first variable encompassed machine translation (MT), Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools, online corpora, and a combination of MT and CAT tools, which were divided into four categories. The second variable focused on the translation direction and was categorized as English to target language (TL) and TL to English. The third variable, related to translators' levels, was classified into three categories: undergraduates, postgraduates, and professional translators. Detailed definitions of these variables can be found in Appendix B.

E. Effect Size Calculation

In determining the effect size of technology on translators' performance, the present meta-analysis utilized Hedge's g to calculate effect sizes. Hedge's g divides the observed mean difference in a study by the combined standard deviation, represented by the formula: Hedge's g : $g = (M1 - M2) / SD_{pooled}$. Here, $M1$ represents the mean of Group 1, $M2$ represents the mean of Group 2, and SD_{pooled} is the combined estimate of the population standard deviation (Borenstein et al., 2009). Following Plonsky and Oswald's (2014) scale, effect sizes are classified based on the benchmarks: 0.40 (small), 0.70 (medium), and 1.0 (large). Unlike traditional classifications by Cohen (1988) where effect sizes are categorized as large (0.80 or above), medium (0.51–0.79), small (0.20–0.49), or negligible (less than 0.20), this study assumes the random-effects model to account for variability in effect sizes across studies (Borenstein, 2012; Borenstein & Rothstein, 1999). Oswald and Plonsky (Oswald & Plonsky, 2010; Plonsky & Oswald, 2011, 2014) differentiated between the fixed effects and random effects models, the latter is preferred due to its explicit testing for heterogeneity, providing a more robust conceptual foundation.

As a result, any observed distinction in effects across studies is attributed to variations in sampling error variance or other statistical artefacts, such as disparities in measurement reliability. Contrarily, the random effects model suggests a direct assessment of heterogeneity by quantifying it as a variance estimate, accounting for sampling error variance. If the confidence interval of the variance estimate excludes zero and is deemed practically significant, it indicates heterogeneity in the effects within the study population, demonstrating a lack of uniformity in fixed values. When determining between the fixed effects and random effects models, the random effects model holds stronger conceptual justification as it explicitly tests for heterogeneity rather than presuming homogeneity.

The I^2 statistic, as recommended by Huedo-Medina et al. (2006), serves as a valuable indicator of heterogeneity. In this study, I^2 values are interpreted as follows: approximately 25% suggesting low heterogeneity, 50% indicating medium heterogeneity, and 75% signifying high heterogeneity. This understanding of heterogeneity is important for drawing meaningful conclusions from the diverse range of studies contained in the meta-analysis.

To conduct this comprehensive analysis, the Comprehensive Meta-Analysis (CMA) software designed by Borenstein (2012) was employed. CMA serves as a specialized statistical tool particularly tailored for meta-analyses, providing necessary features like effect size calculations, forest plots, subgroup analyses, and assessments for publication bias. This software ensures a rigorous and systematic approach to synthesizing results from multiple studies related to the impact of technology on translation within the scope of this research.

F. Publication Bias

The evaluation of publication bias is an essential aspect of any meta-analysis, and in this study, it was performed using a funnel plot, the graphical representation of the distribution of effect sizes across primary studies. Figure 2 demonstrates the nuances of this analysis, which unfolds into two distinctive components. Firstly, upon examining most black patches and data points on the funnel plot, a notable pattern emerged, a symmetrical spread around the mean effect size along the 95% CI line. This symmetry is denoting of a balanced distribution, suggesting that the population of primary studies did not reveal any noticeable publication bias. The funnel plot's depiction of the study outcomes symmetrically aligned on both sides of the mean effect size proposes confidence in the unbiased representation of the research landscape. Secondly, a closer investigation of the funnel plot's lower section disclosed a few black areas, implying potential areas of concern. These areas hinted at studies with smaller sample sizes that may have understated their results, a phenomenon often associated with asymmetry in funnel plots. Nonetheless, it's critical to note that these localized irregularities do not necessarily translate to a systemic issue of publication bias or outliers across the entire meta-analysis. The intriguing aspect of studies showing both positive and negative impacts points up the balanced

distribution of effect sizes on either side of the average. This balance is crucial because the absence of solely positive impact sizes alleviates worries commonly associated with the detection of publication bias. In essence, the diversity in study outcomes, containing both favourable and unfavourable impacts, contributes to the robustness of the meta-analysis.

The funnel plot not only determines whether publication bias exists but also shows how close the observed mean is to the actual population mean. The standard error is predicted to decrease with sample size, eliciting a more precise measurement of the treatment effect (Plonsky & Oswald, 2011). Yet, the complexity of funnel plot anomalies urges a comprehensive approach to validate findings. In this context, the Fail-safe N test and Egger's regression test are used as instrumental tools. Egger's test, designed to identify asymmetry in the funnel plot, a graphical representation of the relationship between the effect size (typically the standardized effect size) and a measure of study precision (usually the inverse of the standard error). In a balanced set of studies, the points on the funnel plot should be approximately symmetrical around the estimated effect size. The p-value associated with the regression intercept is employed to evaluate the statistical significance of any funnel plot asymmetry. A low p-value (typically below a chosen significance level, such as 0.05) implies the presence of publication bias. In this meta-analysis, the intercept was 11.79 and a corresponding p-value of 0.00. The p-value associated with the regression intercept is used to assess the statistical significance of any funnel plot asymmetry. A low p-value (typically below a chosen significance level, such as 0.05) denotes the presence of publication bias. The intercept significantly deviating from zero suggests the presence of funnel plot asymmetry, a potential indicator of publication bias.

The Fail-safe N test, another dimension of scrutiny, endeavours to estimate the number of additional non-significant or null studies necessary to nullify the observed statistically significant effect. If the calculated fail-safe N is large, it indicates that a substantial number of unpublished or missing studies with null results would be required to contradict the observed effect. The calculated z-value of observed studies, standing at 21.26, coupled with a p-value of 0.000, reflects the rigour applied in affirming the existence of publication bias. Nevertheless, it's essential to approach the Fail-safe N results with caution, recognizing that it provides an estimate under the assumption that all missing studies are non-significant.

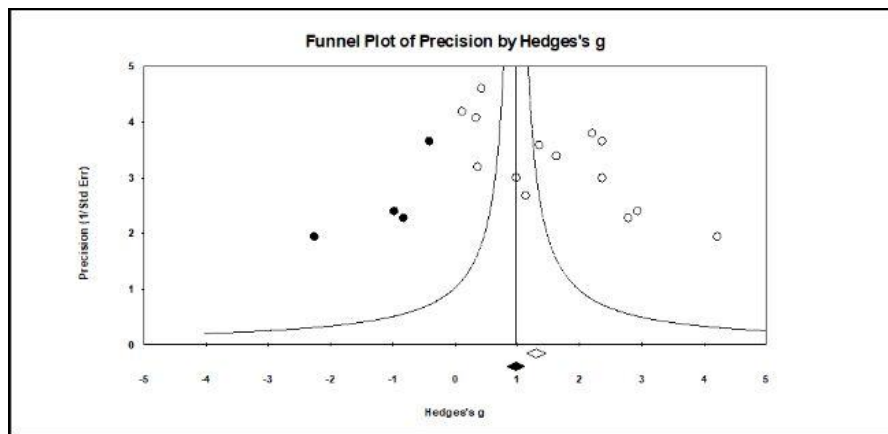


Figure 2. Funnel Plot of Publication Bias

IV. RESULTS

The focus of this meta-analysis is to answer the following research questions: what is the overall effect size of translation technologies on translators' performance? and, how do moderating factors, such as translator's experience, translation direction, and technology used, influence the overall effect size of translation technology? The analysis of the 12 studies was made across diverse categories. The overall impact of translation technology on translators' performance is discussed. Then, variables that may affect the use of technology on translators' performance are analyzed.

A. The Overall Effect Size

The current meta-analysis included 12 studies and produced 14 effect sizes. The overall result of these studies is shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1
OVERALL EFFECT SIZE

k*	G	SE	Confidence intervals		p-value	Q-value	df	I-squared
14		0.28	Lower limit	Upper limit	.000	163.42	13	92.04
	1.61		1.052	2.17				

*k= number of effect sizes calculated

The analysis was carried out using the standardized mean difference as the outcome measure, which is represented in Table 1 with (g). A random-effects model was fitted to the data. Table 1 shows that the overall effect size of translation technology had a large effect size ($g=1.61$). In addition, the Q-test for heterogeneity and the I statistic were reported. The confidence intervals ranged from 1.05 to 2.17. Therefore, the average outcome differed significantly from zero. According to the Q-test, the true outcomes appear to be heterogeneous ($Q =163.42, p= .000$). This indicates that translation technologies are more effective than traditional methods of translating. The forest plot, as shown in Figure 3, provides context for the analysis.

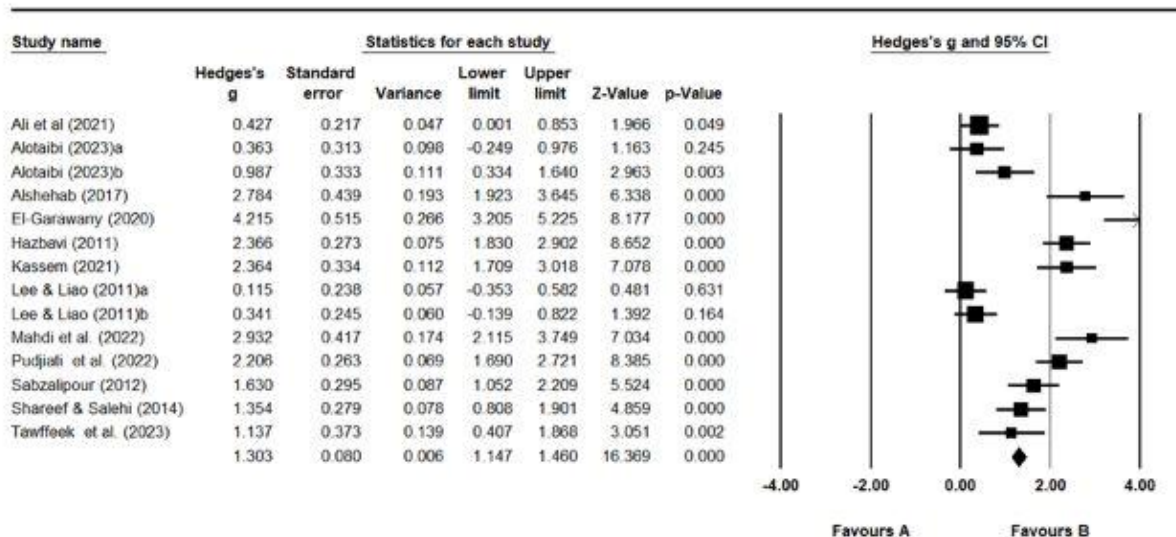


Figure 3. Forest Plot of Overall Effect Size

The forest plot graphs illustrate the effect sizes and accuracy of the individual studies, providing a visual display of the heterogeneity. The diamond represents the overall effect size, with the width indicating the 95% confidence interval. The squares depict the effect sizes for each study, with sizes directly proportional to their precision based on sample sizes. The varied locations of the squares visually demonstrate the heterogeneity in effects between studies, centred around the overall effect. As studies range from negative effects on the left to strongly positive effects on the right, this reinforces that translation technology appears to have large positive effects on average, but true impacts likely differ depending on other factors in each study context. The forest plot complements the overall analysis by illustrating the distribution of heterogeneous study effects contributing to the overall estimate.

B. Translation Tool

The selection of the translation tool used in the study stands as a prominent factor with potential moderating effects on outcomes. The tools moderator analysis, outlined in Table 2, systematically explores the impact of various translation tools. In the initial analysis, TM systems indicated a medium effect size. The other tools revealed a large effect size. Notably, CAT tools alone exhibited a large effect size of 1.64, emphasizing their significant impact. Online corpora demonstrated a large effect size of 1.95, conveying its notable influence and emphasizing the key role these supplementary linguistic databases play in improving terminology and phrasing. Contrariwise, standalone MT exhibited a medium effect size of 0.59, suggesting that solely relying on fully automated MT, without human post-editing, may fall short of achieving quality translation.

TABLE 2
THE OVERALL EFFECT SIZE

	k*	d	Confidence intervals		P-value	Q-value	df
			Lower limit	Upper limit			
MT	5	0.59	0.336	0.848	0.000	163.423	13
CAT	7	1.64	1.415	1.874			
Online corpora	2	1.95	1.566	2.336			

*k= number of effect sizes calculated

C. Translation Direction

Table 3 presents findings from the moderator analysis examining the impact of translation direction on the effects of technology on translators' performance. Translation direction refers to whether translators were working from their native language into a foreign language or vice versa when employing the technologies. The results reveal translation from English into the native language showed a larger effect size ($g=1.91$) compared to translation from the native

language into English ($g=0.83$) which was deemed a medium effect size. This suggests technologies present greater performance benefits when translators are working in their native tongue rather than from a foreign language. The enhanced effects for native language translation could be attributed to higher fluency and proficiency in the target language. In contrast, translating from a foreign language into the native language appears to derive less advantage from technologies.

TABLE 3
TRANSLATION DIRECTION

	k*	g	Confidence intervals		P-value	Q-value	df
			Lower limit	Upper limit			
English to native language	8	1.91	1.675	2.14	0.00	163.423	13
Native language to English	6	0.83	0.625	1.041			

*k= number of effect sizes calculated

D. Translator's Experience

Table 4 presents the moderator findings for the translators' experience level. The initial variables analysis illustrated professionals derive more advantages from technologies than students. Here, professional translators had the highest effect size of 2.93, affirming that experienced subjects maximize technologies' benefits. Both Postgraduates and undergraduates revealed a large effect size of 1.20 and 1.26 respectively.

TABLE 4
TRANSLATOR'S EXPERIENCE

	k*	g	Confidence intervals		P-value	Q-value	df
			Lower limit	Upper limit			
Undergraduates	10	1.26	1.067	1.453	0.00	163.423	13
postgraduates	3	1.20	0.921	1.484			
Professional translators	1	2.93	2.115	3.749			

*k= number of effect sizes calculated

V. DISCUSSION

This meta-analysis aimed to investigate the overall impact of translation technologies, including computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, translation memory (TM) systems, machine translation (MT), and corpora, on translators' performance. By synthesizing data from 12 experimental studies, the quantitative analysis provided insights into the effectiveness of technology-assisted translation compared to traditional translation methods.

The quantitative findings revealed a large effect size ($g=1.61$), indicating that translation technology can greatly enhance translators' performance. This result aligns with previous research that has reported performance benefits associated with the use of translation technologies. For instance, Alotaibi and Salamah (2023) demonstrated that translation apps can improve productivity and quality, suggesting that mobile translation apps are valuable resources that can be successfully integrated into translator training environments. Similarly, Hazbavi (2011) found that Translation Memory Systems had a positive effect on English into Persian translation, highlighting the potential of carefully integrating technologies to enhance the capabilities of human translators.

However, it is important to note that significant heterogeneity was observed among the included studies. To gain further insights into the factors contributing to this variability, moderator analyses were conducted. These analyses provided crucial information on the elements that influence the outcomes of technology-assisted translation. Factors such as the specific technology used, the experience level of translators, and the direction of translation were identified as potential moderators affecting the successful integration of translation technology.

The findings of this study highlight the significant impact that different translation tools have on translators' performance. It was observed that advanced interactive computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools yielded the most substantial improvements in productivity and quality (Guerberof, 2013; Garcia, 2010). These tools, which incorporate features such as TM match retrieval, terminology management, and quality checks, optimize workflows and enhance translators' capabilities. This finding is consistent with previous research of Moorkens et al. (2015), which suggests that well-designed interfaces can reduce extraneous cognitive load and facilitate translators' efficiency.

In contrast, the study found that basic TM match retrieval alone had inadequate effects, supporting the findings of O'Brien [8], who demonstrated that relying solely on this feature could have detrimental impacts on productivity and quality. Furthermore, the use of corpus-based translation tools was found to enhance performance, aligning with the findings of Sabzalipour and Rahimy (2012). The incorporation of corpus tools improved the quality of translation by providing translators with valuable resources and references.

However, the study also revealed that raw, uncontrolled machine translation (MT) output exhibited weaker effects, consistent with the findings of Lee and Liao (2011) and this highlights the importance of human intervention, such as post-editing, in ensuring translation quality. Fully automated systems that rely solely on MT without human involvement demonstrated limitations in achieving high-quality translations. These findings support the notion that

advanced translation tools, which reinforce human expertise and involve human intervention, tend to yield the most significant benefits.

Additionally, the study found that the combination of MT and human intervention at the back-end of the automated process can be particularly beneficial for students or individuals with limited language proficiency. This approach allows them to produce more accurate translations compared to starting from scratch with the source text. These findings emphasize the value of leveraging technology to support and enhance the translation process, especially for individuals who may face language proficiency challenges.

The results of this meta-analysis underscore the importance of selecting appropriate translation tools and considering their impact on translators' performance. Advanced interactive CAT tools, incorporating features such as TM match retrieval, terminology management, and quality checks, have the potential to significantly improve productivity and quality. Similarly, the use of corpus-based translation tools can enhance the quality of translation. However, it is crucial to recognize that human intervention, such as post-editing, remains necessary when working with raw machine translation output. By leveraging advanced tools that reinforce human expertise and integrating technology with human intervention, translators can maximize their performance and produce high-quality translations. These findings have significant implications for translator training, highlighting the importance of equipping translators with the necessary tools and skills to effectively utilize technology in their practice.

The direction of translation language emerged as a significant moderator of the outcomes in this study. It was found that technologies had a greater impact on performance when translators were translating from foreign languages into their native language. This finding is consistent with previous research Lee and Liao (2011) Kassem (2021), which suggests that native language fluency plays a crucial role in effectively leveraging translation tools. The use of technologies appears to enhance, rather than replace, the specialized linguistic expertise developed through native language immersion. Translating from the native language to foreign languages, on the other hand, showed reduced effects, indicating that human judgment and the application of target language knowledge remain essential in these translation scenarios.

Furthermore, the findings align with research demonstrating that professional translators derive more significant benefits from technologies compared to students (Carl et al., 2011; Dehbashi & Salehi, 2015). According to the findings of Dehbashi and Salehi (2015), translation technologies had a positive effect on critical thinking and translation performance of Translation Studies students. The accumulated experience of experts allows for the seamless integration of tools with human competencies. In contrast, students may require comprehensive training to effectively utilize technologies without experiencing extraneous cognitive load. These findings emphasize the importance of considering the level of expertise and training when implementing translation technologies, as professionals may have a better understanding of how to strategically utilize these tools compared to students.

The overall findings of this meta-analysis support the notion that thoughtfully implemented translation technologies can enhance translator performance and complement their strengths. However, it is important to note that certain studies have reported contrasting results, highlighting the need for careful consideration and assessment of the specific tools utilized. For example, O'Brien (2017) demonstrated reduced productivity and quality when students used basic TM tools compared to traditional teaching methods without technology. This finding likely reflects the inadequacies of the specific tools used and the students' lack of training. Similarly, Wang et al. (2024) indicated that CAT tools may have negative effects on productivity, naturalness, and fluency for translators. Gaspari and Hutchins (2017) also found increased errors and cognitive effort when post-editing raw MT output compared to human translation alone. These studies align with the current meta-analysis, which suggests that uncontrolled automation has limited performance benefits. These findings underscore the importance of assessing the design and integration of technologies to avoid detrimental consequences.

Furthermore, the presence of publication bias suggests that studies reporting positive effects of technologies on performance may be overrepresented compared to research showing impartial or negative effects. The asymmetry observed in the funnel plot indicates that smaller studies with results contrary to the overall effects may be under-published. This highlights the need for a balanced research agenda that considers the complexities of translation technologies.

This meta-analysis is hoped to provide evidence that thoughtfully implemented translation technologies have the potential to improve translator performance and complement their expertise. However, it is crucial to recognize that technologies are not a universal remedy. Factors such as the design of the tools, their real-world integration, the specific language pairs involved, and the experience levels of the users critically shape the outcomes. A comprehensive, evidence-based approach that takes into account these complex and interacting factors is essential. By leveraging the advantages of human translators and informed technology implementation, these tools can empower professionals to provide high-value linguistic and cultural expertise. However, relying solely on uncontrolled automation carries the risk of negative consequences. Ultimately, this meta-analysis emphasizes that technologies should remain human-centric tools rather than autonomous solutions. Moreover, there is an ongoing need for the continued development and improvement of translation technologies, with a particular focus on enhancing their usability. As translators increasingly rely on these tools, it is essential to refine their design, user interfaces, and functionalities to ensure they are intuitive, efficient, and seamlessly integrated into the translation process. By addressing usability issues and

continually innovating in this field, the potential benefits of translation technologies can be maximized, leading to further advancements in translator performance and productivity (Alotaibi, 2020; Wang et al., 2024).

VI. CONCLUSION

The objective of this meta-analysis was to examine the overall influence of translation technologies, such as computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, translation memory (TM) systems, machine translation (MT), and corpora, on the performance of translators. By analyzing data from 12 experimental studies published between 2000 and 2023, this quantitative analysis yielded valuable insights into the effectiveness of technology-assisted translation in comparison to conventional translation approaches. The findings of this study demonstrated a significant positive effect size, suggesting that translation technologies can enhance translator performance compared to solely relying on human translation. This indicates that the strategic integration of translation technology such as CAT and MT has the potential to increase productivity, improve quality and accuracy, and alleviate the cognitive load on translators.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge that there was substantial variability among the studies, influenced by several moderating factors. Specifically, the direction of translation had a significant impact on the results, with more significant improvements observed when translators translated into their native language compared to translating from a foreign language into their native language. This highlights the considerable advantages of utilizing technologies that reinforce the translators' fluency and proficiency in the target language.

Moreover, the specific technology employed also had an impact on the outcomes. Advanced interactive CAT systems and post-editing machine translation (MT) yielded greater improvements compared to basic translation memory (TM) match retrieval, which offers more limited assistance in generating translations.

Furthermore, experienced professional translators derived more significant benefits from integrating technologies compared to student translators. This difference in outcomes is likely attributed to the professionals' adeptness at effectively combining automation capabilities with their own expertise, employing exceptional strategies to complement the use of technology. While this meta-analysis aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the impacts of translation technologies on performance, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. Firstly, the limited number of studies available for certain technologies and language pairs may have influenced the findings related to moderating factors. Further research with larger sample sizes and controlled variables is necessary to validate these effects. Secondly, the majority of studies focused on English and major European languages, indicating a need for research on diverse language pairs. Thirdly, there was a lack of studies analyzing interactive CAT tools or exploring the active generation of subtitles, presenting avenues for future investigation. Fourthly, the relatively short duration of many included studies may restrict the generalizability of long-term effects. Lastly, addressing potential publication bias requires the inclusion of unpublished research to ensure representative findings.

To validate the results of this meta-analysis, further experimental studies with robust designs are warranted. Specifically, research focusing on interactive CAT tools, online corpora, and understudied language pairs could enhance our understanding of how technologies can augment human cognitive processes in translation. Additionally, qualitative research that explores translators' perceptions and experiences when incorporating technologies into their practice could complement the quantitative synthesis. By addressing these limitations through multifaceted research approaches, we can gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies of human-computer collaboration in translation.

APPENDIX A LIST OF STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE CURRENT META-ANALYSIS

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BACK

APPENDIX B DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

Machine translation (MT)	Machine Translation refers to the automated process of translating text or speech from one language to another using computer algorithms. This involves computational linguistics and artificial intelligence techniques.
Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT)	Computer-Assisted Translation involves the use of computer tools to aid human translators in their work. It includes tools for translation memory, terminology management, and other aids to improve efficiency and consistency.
Online Corpora	Online corpora are large collections of texts or linguistic data that are available on the internet. These corpora serve as valuable resources for linguistic research, language analysis, and development of language technologies.
Professional translators	Professional translators are individuals who engage in translation as a career, providing translation services for various clients or organizations. They typically possess expertise in specific subject matters and linguistic domains.

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Comparison of Authorial Stance Between Professional and Amateur Writers in Scientific Correspondence Writing

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Abstract—Writing argumentative correspondences is an art requiring linguistic and rhetorical skills to bring forth the ultimate effect of persuading the audience. However, instruction of this critical language art has been underrepresented in Thai tertiary educational contexts. This study is based on an interventional experiment of teaching an ESP-Science course to 40 students majoring in science, with a strong emphasis on linguistic devices for academic interaction, consisting of stance and engagement marking, as elaborated in Hyland (2005a, 2005b). The interventional experiment made use of the 240 correspondences taken from the scientific journal *Nature* with the duration of 30 hours over a 10-week period. This study reports the findings from a comparison of the students' writing before and after the intervention and a comparison of the students' post-experiment writing and the experts' writing. The analysis is based on content analysis, inter-rater assessment, and descriptive statistics, and shows that a meaningful level of progress has been obtained as a result of the intervention. The progress is evident in not only that students' post-experiment writing exceeds in quality their pre-experiment writing, but also that students' post-experiment writing has become similar to the expert writing to a great extent, with respect, in particular, to the strategic patterns of stance and engagement marking. The success of a relatively short intervention, i.e., 10 weeks, calls for implementation of courses using authentic correspondences in ESP-Science classes, or more broadly, in ESP courses in diverse disciplines (237/250).

Index Terms—stance, engagement, scientific correspondences, expert and student writers

I. INTRODUCTION

Argumentative writing can be viewed as a communication channel between writers and readers (Liu, 2013). It allows people to record, examine, and evaluate representations of reasoning as objects of reflection (Ferretti & Graham, 2019). It not only presents and confirms any particular claims by using a justification from evidence and warrant that represent the writer's verification and validity of their perceptions, theories, or assumptions, but also attempts to persuade and convince readers directly and straightforwardly in order to agree and accept the writer's viewpoints (Azizi & Ghonsooly, 2015). For its strategic nature, writing an argumentative text is a challenging task, especially for English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) students, despite the fact that their writing and critical thinking skills are essential for academic achievement at the university level (Hasani, 2016; Zhu, 2001). Acquiring the crucial skills needed in composing an argument with claims, justifications, and evidence logically and critically can determine students' academic achievement (Hillocks, 2010).

The critical importance of argumentative writing notwithstanding, there are elements that impede the students' argumentative writing success, such as the inadequacy of genre familiarity and knowledge, low language proficiency levels, and lack of cultural background (Zhang, 2018). Ferretti and Graham (2019) assert that written argumentation is a process that develops gradually, and thus advanced writing skills are required to achieve high quality writing outcomes through appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment. In a study on evaluative language use in Chinese university EFL students' argumentative writing, Liu (2013) points out the paucity of linguistic studies that focus on interpersonal meanings in their academic writing. Writing correspondences can be a foundational practice to master the skills in longer genres because one of the practices used for teaching this genre is to use shorter texts first (Derewianka, 2003). Furthermore, successful argumentation critically depends on effective deployment of linguistic devices for stance and engagement, which are more complicated than a general scheme (Hyland, 2005a, 2005b). Therefore, for novice writers, writing an argumentation about controversial issues can be a perplexing task. It involves the writer's comprehension of the topics and requires reasonable arguments and counterarguments from different sources to support their final position for a formal, well-structured piece of argumentative writing (Luna et al., 2020). Therefore, it is

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imperative that an adequate program and instruction be implemented for successful correspondence writing, incorporating instruction of writing skills and rhetorical features for stance and engagement marking.

Despite the significance of argumentative writing, its instruction has been largely ignored in higher education in Thailand. Studies on instruction of argumentative writing are also underrepresented in the fields of EFL/ESP in Thailand. Furthermore, publishing correspondences is not a common practice for Thai academic journals. Therefore, Thai educational contexts present a deeply adverse situation for teaching and learning about argumentative writing. This study intends to fill this unfortunate gap by conducting an interventional experiment of an argumentative writing course and examining its effect on the participating students.

Given the background, the objectives of this study are threefold. First, it examines if the students participating in the intervention show progress in developing argumentative writing skills as a result of intervention. Second, it investigates the interactional features in argumentative correspondences in scientific contexts by exploring stance and engagement markers in scientific correspondences written by experts. Third, it compares the usage patterns of stance and engagement markers between those of experts and students. Thus, this study aims to answer these three research questions:

1. To what extent have the students attained improvement after attending the interventional ESP course?
2. How do expert writers express their stance and engagement with their readers in scientific correspondences?
3. How are scientific correspondences written by expert writers (dis)similar to those written by student writers in terms of strategic uses of interactional features?

Scientific argumentative correspondences involve three obligatory moves: claim, premises, and conclusion. The claim is the main constituent part of a contentious assertion needing additional supports. The premise establishes the efficacy and strength of the claim. The conclusion restates the main idea, makes predictions, and offers suggestions or opinions. This study involves ESP-Science students, but it bears implications that are immediately relevant to academic writing pedagogy for other disciplines in higher education in Thailand and beyond.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

A. *Stance and Engagement*

The theoretical framework of this study is the model of interaction proposed by Hyland (2005a, 2005b), in which the two pivotal notions ‘stance’ and ‘engagement’ play the key role. These two notions are derived from his earlier theory of *Matadiscourse* (Hyland, 1998), addressing the interactional and interactive means that writers and speakers employ to achieve their goals. Since powerful argument illustrates attentive consideration of one’s associates as writers, positioning themselves and their work to reflect and frame a crucial specialty ideology, authors must explicate their evaluations and endeavor to establish understanding with readers in academic writing (Hyland, 2005b). Stance markers comprise hedges, attitude markers, boosters, and self-mentions, while engagement markers are reader pronouns, directives, shared knowledge references, questions, and personal asides (Hyland, 2005b).

Stance is the way in which writers designate themselves into their authorial argument or hide their engagement with the text. It also indicates the textual voice, including the features that convey the writers’ presentation and their opinions, judgements, and commitment (Hyland, 2005b), and can be exhibited to varying degrees in grammatical devices, personal opinion word choice, and paralinguistic features (Biber, 2006). Engagement is the alignment dimension between writers and readers regarding the positions where writers accept and associate with others, being aware of their readers’ existence, persuading them, attending their focus, comprehending their skepticism, adding them as discourse members, and leading them to evaluation (Hyland, 2001, 2005b).

There is a body of studies addressing stance and engagement and the notions closely related to them. Research on stance and engagement in various dimensions has become popular in various genres, both written and spoken, such as research articles in different areas of study, research abstracts, article summaries, etc. For instance, Gillaerts and Van de Velde (2010) performed a quantitative investigation on interpersonality features in research article abstracts, e.g., hedges, boosters and attitude markers. In cross-disciplinary research, McGrath and Kuteeva (2012) found that hedges and attitude markers were used less frequently in pure mathematics research articles than in other hard and soft disciplines, whereas shared knowledge and reader references were more frequently used in them. Biber (2006) asserts that, while stance expression is essential in all university registers, the expressed stance meanings, grammatical features, and circumstances vary according to register.

In second language writing contexts, it has been observed that rhetorical identity is influenced by the writer’s background. For instance, Hyland (2004) notes that, while Anglo-American scholarly traditions support a deliberate exploitation of authorship identity to attract readers’ attention to the writer’s portrayal and perspective, second language authors from different cultures, e.g., Asians, may be less confident in revealing their authorial identity.

The notion of ‘voice’ is often used in the context of stance marking, as well. One of the notable manifestations of authorial voice that has attracted scholarly interests is employing first-person pronouns (Nunn, 2014; White, 2018). Self-mention is a key pragmatic attribute of academic discourse by virtue of its contribution to the creation of the author’s rhetorical self. Furthermore, the authorial pronoun is an important device for illuminating an intellectually qualified character and achieving approval for a person’s particular idea (Hyland, 2004). However, while some EFL undergraduate students were aware of its rhetorical effects, they were reluctant to make use of them for its association

with the connotation of authority. Consequently, they considerably underapplied authorial pronouns, minimized their position, and avoided using overt stance markers, unlike professional writers (Hyland, 2002). For these reasons, it is important for theorists and practitioners alike to study authorial voice in the model texts and raise the students' voice awareness in EFL writing.

B. Argumentative Correspondences in Scientific Fields

Argumentative correspondences have the same rhetorical structure as the agreed rhetorical structure of argumentative essays, i.e., thesis, argument, and conclusion (Oshima & Hogue, 2014). In scientific journals, a correspondence generally takes one of the following forms: a substantial re-analysis of a previously published article in the same or another journal, an article that may not cover standard research but may be of general interest to the broad readership of a journal, or a brief report of research findings adequate for the journal's scope and of particular interest to the community. In some journals, correspondences are represented as letters to the editor, which are comments on previously-published articles (Peh & Ng, 2010). In general, correspondences are typically a short communicative form, addressing any subject matter within the scope of readers' interest (S ier & Yaman, 2013).

A correspondence is one kind of response texts. It provides a chance to communicate in writing a personal viewpoint and personal learning as it relates specifically to the book, essay, paper, article, etc. in question and the ideas and values contained therein. Promoting or criticizing the rationale, investigation, or results of a study is the major function of a correspondence composed in response to a formerly published report. Clear evaluation and straightforward commentaries are needed if the writer's intention is to criticize. However, this assumes that a prejudiced point of view should be avoided, and recommendations should be based on well-documented empirical evidence (Peh & Ng, 2010; S ier & Yaman, 2013).

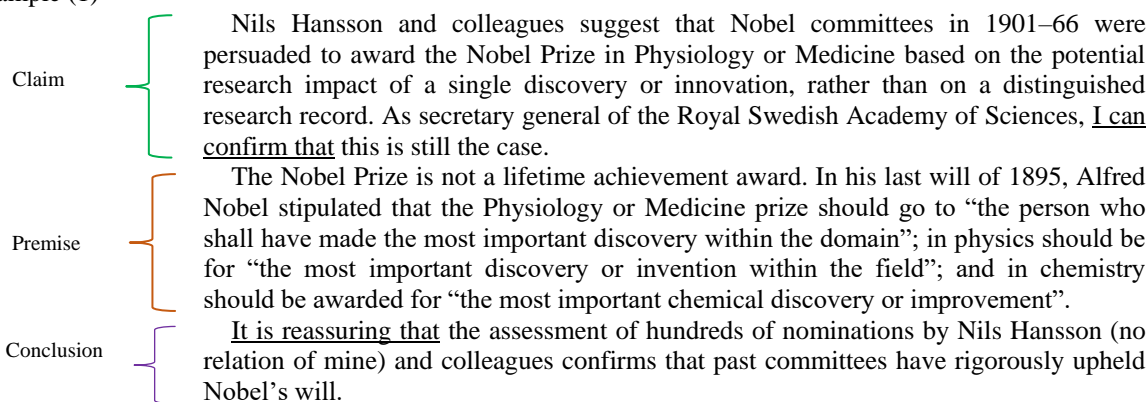
In terms of internal structure, argumentative correspondences consist of three moves: claim, premise, and conclusion, each with further steps, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
MOVE AND STEPS OF CORRESPONDENCES

Move 1: Claim (obligatory)	Step: express agreement or disagreement toward the previously published text
Or	express attitudes concerning a topic
Move 2: Premise (obligatory)	Step: support by raising evidence / warrants / opinions
Move 3: Conclusion (obligatory)	Step: restate the main idea
Or	make predictions
Or	give suggestions
Or	give opinions

Claim is the main constituent of an argumentative correspondence. It is a contentious assertion which requires additional support. Premise establishes the efficacy and strength of the claim. Finally, conclusion restates the main idea, makes predictions, gives suggestions, or gives opinions. Claim, premise, and conclusion are exemplified in (1), taken from the scientific journal *Nature*:

Example (1)



(#11 *Nature* 556, 31 [2018], emphasis added)

In example (1), claim, the first move, acts as a topic paragraph where the author presents their strong stance (cf. *I can confirm that...*). Premise, the second move, supports the author's claims by providing one or more pieces of evidence, references, as well as their opinions. Conclusion, the last move, restates the main idea with a booster for its emphatic effect (cf. *It is reassuring that ...*).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Data and Functional Classification

A crucial preparatory process for data collection was the identification and functional classification of linguistic and rhetorical devices used in argumentative writing. The instruments for data collection comprised coder manual and data record sheet, and the instruments for data analysis consisted of an analysis manual, two raters, one inter-rater, and AntCont program (version 3.4.4). The analysis manual contains stance and engagement markers from Hyland's (2005b) interactional model, as shown in Table 2 (note that certain forms are polyfunctional and are cross-classified).

TABLE 2
FUNCTIONS AND FORMS OF STANCE AND ENGAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC INTERACTION

Category	Function	Examples
<i>Stance</i>		
Hedges	Conceal author's full commitment to statements	<i>could, would, might, may, likely, assume</i>
Boosters	Affirm force or author's confidence in message	<i>will, can, most, also, only</i>
Attitude markers	Reveal author's attitude to propositional matter	<i>should, need, must, agree, disagree</i>
Self-mentions	Obvious mention of writer(s)	<i>I, we, our, my</i>
<i>Engagement</i>		
Reader pronouns	Explicit readers/ direct route for importing readers into an interlocution	<i>we, you, our, your</i>
Directives	Direction for readers to respond to and recognize issues as the author imposed	<i>should, need, must, imperative form of verbs</i>
Questions	Strategize dialogic relationship, invite participation, and bring the audience into a sphere where they can be induced to the author's perspective	utterances typically functioning as a request for information and indicated by a question mark
Shared knowledge references	Attempt to locate readers within evidently familiarized borderlines of disciplinary apprehensions	<i>known as..., as emphasized previously by..., we now know that...</i>
Personal asides	Direct audiences by concisely interfering in the argument to propose an assertion on a previously mentioned statement	statements indicated by em dash, parentheses, and comma

B. Data Collection

Two corpora were created for use as the model for students' writing and the target text for expert writing analysis. The main corpus was the dataset consisting of 240 correspondences, selected via stratified random sampling, representing the total population of 612 correspondences, published in *Nature* from 2016 to 2019. The main corpus was used for macro-analysis of linguistic features used in expert writing. The satellite corpus was the dataset consisting of 342 sentences (of 40 correspondences), selected via random sampling, representing 4,896 sentences of the total population of 612 correspondences. The satellite corpus was used for micro-analysis of rhetorical features.

Two pairs of datasets were used for comparative analysis: one set consisting of pre- and post-intervention writing (40 pieces each; see D below), and the other set consisting of the students' and experts' writing. In the latter, the students' writing was the post-intervention correspondence writing (40 pieces) and the correspondences compiled in the satellite corpus (40 pieces by the original, expert authors).

C. Data Analysis

The four sets of the collected correspondences (two sets of corpus data and two sets of student writing) were separated into sentence units and entered on spreadsheets to facilitate identification and classification of language use. In this process, an examination by two raters was performed to ensure the accuracy of the analysis of language use in the sample correspondences. The data were put to an inter-rater reliability test to ascertain agreement. When the language features were all identified, the researchers coded them into a spreadsheet. The researchers identified each feature, hand-counted the frequency of stance and engagement markers, and separated them into groups according to the coding schemes. Frequency and percentage were used in the statistical analysis of the data from the corpus, as well as in the content analysis for qualitative descriptions of the data.

D. Students' Pre- and Post-Intervention Writing

The students' pre-intervention writing was obtained from the 40 participants to assess their entry level proficiency in ESP-Science writing, and the students' post-intervention writing was obtained from the same students after an intervention to examine the extent of progress the students attained. Each time, the student participants were asked to read one of five correspondences from *Nature* and write a correspondence to present facts and provide their opinions about the situation.

The intervention was an ESP-Science writing course for a duration of 10 weeks (3 hours per week, for a total of 30 hours). Due to logistical limitations from the COVID-19 measures, the implementation of the course was carried out online and the subject scheme was based on the single-group, pretest and posttest model, known as 'a quasi-experimental research design' (Johnson & Christensen, 2019), thus without a control group.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Students' Pre- and Post-Intervention Writing

The first research question pertains to the extent of improvement the students attained after attending the interventional ESP course. A comparative analysis reveals a number of issues bearing significance. Among the most noteworthy changes are enriched content, more accurate command of linguistic features, and more appropriate deployment of rhetorical devices.

In terms of enrichment of content, the average length of pre-intervention writing was 50.58 words, whereas that of the post-intervention was 159.4 words, a three-fold increase. This is particularly noteworthy in the light that the average length of expert writing in the correspondences in *Nature* is 170 words (see C below). Similarly, the average number of sentences in the pre-intervention writing was 3.65, whereas that in the posttest was 8.85, indicating improved confidence in writing.

In terms of linguistic features, students' pre-intervention writing revealed numerous infelicities, e.g., informal language use, fragments, typographical and punctuational errors, improper diction, and other types of grammatical errors. As the present study places primary focus on rhetorical features, however, they are not addressed here. An analysis of these errors and inadequacies warrants further research.

Most importantly for our purposes, attitude markers occurred 111 times in the pre-intervention writing, whereas they occurred 290 times in the post-intervention writing, indicating a 161 per cent increase. Similar increases are witnessed with boosters, from 71 to 158 (a 123% increase); self-mentions, from 23 to 95 (a 313% increase); and hedges, from 21 to 59 (a 181% increase). A remarkable increase occurred not only with stance markers but also with engagement markers. For instance, the use of directives increased from 46 times in the pretest writing to 98 times in the posttest writing (a 113% increase); and reader pronouns, from 10 to 33 (a 230% increase), whereas the extent of increase with knowledge references, questions and personal asides is negligible or incalculable since they did not occur in the pre-intervention writing.

B. Experts' Writing

The second research question relates to the ways the expert writers express their stance and engagement. An analysis of the experts' writing reveals a number of noteworthy aspects of argumentative correspondences with respect to the use of stance and engagement markers, as shown in Table 3, with figures in per thousand words (PTW) and percentage.

TABLE 3
STANCE AND ENGAGEMENT FEATURES IN EXPERTS' CORRESPONDENCES

Stance	Token	PTW	Percentage	Engagement	Token	PTW	Percentage
Attitude markers	222	30.31	35.98	Directives	62	8.46	44.93
Boosters	172	23.48	27.88	Personal asides	38	5.19	27.53
Hedges	114	15.56	18.48	Reader pronouns	30	4.10	21.74
Self-mentions	109	14.88	17.66	Shared knowledge refs.	8	1.09	5.80
				Questions	0	0	0
Total	617	84.23	100	Total	138	18.84	100

As Table 3 shows, stance markers were used four times more often than engagement markers (617 vs. 138). Attitude markers, occurring 222 times, were the most frequent among the stance markers (35.98%) and among all the stance and engagement features. On the other hand, directives showed the highest frequency among the engagement markers (44.93%). The attitude marker *should* is exemplified below.

Example (2)

Health-care providers should educate and advise their local residents about vaccines and make the acceptance rate increase. (#S035-03; emphasis added)

In the following we will describe the manifestations of rhetorical features of stance and engagement in more detail.

(a). Attitude Markers

Attitudes are manifested in the form of a few markers, as indicated in Table 4.

TABLE 4
10 MOST FREQUENTLY USED ATTITUDE MARKERS IN EXPERTS' CORRESPONDENCES

Rank	Form	Word class	Token	PTW	Percentage
1	<i>should</i>	modal	21	2.87	24.42
2	<i>need</i>	verb/noun	15	0.25	17.44
3	<i>must</i>	modal	13	1.77	15.12
4	<i>concerned</i>	adjective	8	1.09	9.30
5	<i>agree</i>	verb	7	0.96	8.14
6	<i>disagree</i>	verb	6	0.82	6.98
7	<i>crucial</i>	adjective	5	0.68	5.81
8	<i>important</i>	adjective	4	0.55	4.65
8	<i>better</i>	comparative adjective	4	0.55	4.65
10	<i>welcome</i>	verb	3	0.41	3.49
	Total		86	12.5	100

As shown in Table 4, the three most frequently used attitude markers were *should* (24.42%), followed by *need* (17.44%), and *must* (15.12%), respectively. It is noteworthy that the most frequently used markers of the author's attitude belonged to the grammatical category of (quasi-)modal auxiliaries. The modals *should*, *need*, and *must* were common resources signaling the author's strong attitude of 'necessity'. However, unlike the epistemic or conditional uses of *should* and *must* (e.g. *Should you see him, let him call me; You must be very tired; etc.*), the uses in the corpus were invariably for marking necessity and obligation, i.e., marking the speaker's attitude. Interestingly, the grammatical functions of the word *need* were versatile i.e., auxiliary, main verb, and noun, but their discourse functions as a stance marker are the same, as exemplified in the following:

Example (3)

We therefore also need to consider how such risks might be mitigated and managed. (#016-03; emphasis added)

The next group of attitude markers, i.e. *concerned*, *agree*, *disagree*, *crucial*, *important*, and *better*, was also lexical items. They might indicate a negative attitude (*disagree*, *concerned*), a positive attitude (*agree*) or an evaluative attitude towards a newly presented option (*crucial*, *important*, *better*). Since these lexical items (as well as their synonyms, e.g., *dissent*, *object*, *oppose*, *deny*, *concede*, *acknowledge*, *acquiesce*, *decisive*, *critical*, etc.) were popularly recruited as attitude markers, this inventory needed to be taught to students who are expected to write argumentative texts in the future.

(b). Boosters

Boosters constitute the second most frequent stance markers in the experts' correspondences. The kinds and frequency of the markers in the booster category are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
10 MOST FREQUENTLY USED BOOSTERS IN EXPERTS' CORRESPONDENCES

Rank	Form	Word class	Token	PTW	Percentage
1	<i>will</i>	modal	22	3.00	24.44
2	<i>can/cannot</i>	modal	21	2.87	23.33
3	<i>most</i>	adverb	12	1.64	13.33
4	<i>also</i>	adverb	10	1.36	11.11
5	<i>only</i>	adverb	6	0.82	6.67
6	<i>too</i>	adverb	4	0.55	4.45
6	<i>particularly</i>	adverb	4	0.55	4.45
6	<i>simply</i>	adverb	4	0.55	4.45
6	<i>still</i>	adverb	4	0.55	4.45
10	<i>alone</i>	adverb	3	0.41	3.33
Total			90	12.29	100

As shown in Table 5, the use of modal auxiliaries for a boosting effect is prominent, i.e. *will* and *can(not)* account for 44 per cent (43/90). This contrasts with their counterparts functioning as hedges (see (c) below). The subjunctive forms of modal auxiliaries (*would*, *could*, etc.) are linked to irrealis marking, detaching the proposition from the reality, and thus from the established fact. The indicative forms (*will*, *can*, etc.) are in direct functional opposition in terms of their illocutionary force on the proposition. The modal auxiliaries *will* and *can* may be used for possibility and mere representation of non-conative future (e.g. *I will come of age next year; Accidents can happen; etc.*), but their use in argumentative texts is invariably for marking the author's conviction, enablement, or certainty of a future event. The booster function of *can* is exemplified in the following:

Example (4)

We argue that viewing climate change instead as a risk multiplier, influencer or co-factor can help to inform rather than inflame this important discussion. (#029-02; emphasis added)

The adverbs, *most*, *also* and *only*, constitute the second most important source categories of boosters. Needless to say, *most*, as a superlative determiner, designates the maximum degree of the quantity or quality at issue, and fits the functional profile well. The additive adverb *also* is typically used to present an additional item which warrants an attention. The focusing particle *only* also carries a strong boosting effect for its inherent semantics of exclusion of potential alternatives.

(c). Hedges

Hedges, the devices signaling non-accuracy or non-certainty, carry the function of signaling caution or probability. The hedge function is manifested by a number of forms, as listed in Table 6.

TABLE 6
10 MOST FREQUENTLY USED INDICATORS OF HEDGE IN SCIENTIFIC CORRESPONDENCES

Rank	Form	Word class	Token	PTW	Percentage
1	<i>could</i>	modal	27	3.69	29.35
2	<i>would</i>	modal	18	2.46	19.57
3	<i>might</i>	modal	12	1.64	13.04
4	<i>In my view/In our view</i>	phrase	11	1.50	11.96
5	<i>may</i>	modal	5	0.68	5.43
5	<i>suggest</i>	verb	5	0.68	5.43
7	<i>likely/unlikely</i>	adverb	4	0.55	4.35
7	<i>argue</i>	verb	4	0.55	4.35
9	<i>assume</i>	verb	3	0.41	3.26
9	<i>little</i>	adjective/adverb	3	0.41	3.26
Total			92	12.56	100

As shown in Table 6, the three most frequently used were the modals: *could* (29.35%), *would* (18.57%), and *might* (13.04%). Collectively, their usage was 61.96%, accounting for well over half of the preferred hedge indicators. Other hedge indicators are *believe*, *perceive*, *seem*, and *to me*.

Hedges are often employed for politeness. Traditionally, hedges are often discussed with respect to vague language or considered a kind of discourse marker (e.g. *sort of*, *kind of*, etc.) (Fraser, 2010; Lakoff, 1972). However, discourse markers are often stigmatized as disfluency markers (Crible, 2018) and thus not favored in formal language. In the light of stylistic appropriateness, it is expected that in academic writing such as argumentative correspondences, writers are naturally inclined to use modal markers (*could*, *would*, *might*, etc.). Since argumentative texts are about scientific knowledge, the best forms of hedges employed in such genres are epistemic modality markers (cf. Kranich, 2011; Lewin, 2005). It is also noteworthy that the most frequently used epistemic modal markers for the hedging effect were invariably the subjunctive forms of the modal auxiliary, i.e., *could*, *would*, and *might*, largely due to their connection with the irrealis marking function. This state of affairs was in sharp contrast with their non-subjunctive (i.e. indicative) counterparts that were used for boosting effects (see (b) above). The use of the verb *suggest* for the hedging function is exemplified in the following:

Example (5)

I suggest that climate policy could more effectively direct financial investments. (#032-01; emphasis added)

In the example above, the verb *suggest* reveals the writer’s ‘subjectivisation strategy’, by employing a verb denoting the writer’s subjective opinion (*suggest*), which implies that the opinion may be taken in not absolute but relative terms.

(d). *Self-Mentions*

Self-mentions refer to the reference to the writers themselves, thus inseparably associated with ‘authorial voice’ (see II-(A) above). It is exemplified in the following:

Example (6)

But we should not discard 25 years of data and clinical experience simply because I misguidedly coined that term for perivascular cells in 1991. (#001-02; emphasis added)

The excerpt contains two self-mention markers (*we* and *I*). The pronoun *we* is an inclusive first-person plural pronoun, making reference to the readership and/or scientists in general, including the writer, whereas the pronoun *I* is singular, specifically referring to the writer (note that this correspondence is a single-authored article), thus attributing the blame (cf. *misguidedly*) to the writer himself. In the corpus, self-mentions were indicated predominantly by *we* (6.69 PTW, 44.54%) and less frequently by *I* (3.96 PTW, 26.36%). The occurrences of other first-person pronouns were marginal in number.

(e). *Directives*

Directives in simple terms are a device to signal a command. However, the function has a number of different manifestations, as shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7
DIRECTIVE MARKERS IN EXPERTS’ CORRESPONDENCES

Rank	Form	Word class	Token	PTW	Percentage	Remarks
1	<i>should</i>	modal	21	33.88	33.88	
2	<i>need</i>	verb/noun	15	24.19	24.19	
3	<i>must</i>	modal	13	20.97	20.97	
4	imperative form of verbs	verb	5	8.07	8.07	See (2); Consider..., Do not assume..., etc.
5	<i>it is therefore crucial to/for</i>	phrase	2	3.23	3.23	
6	<i>require</i>	verb	1	1.61	1.61	
6	<i>suggest</i>	verb	1	1.61	1.61	
6	<i>recommend</i>	verb	1	1.61	1.61	
6	<i>demand</i>	verb	1	1.61	1.61	
6	<i>have to</i>	verb	1	1.61	1.61	
6	<i>(it is) essential</i>	adjective	1	1.61	1.61	
Total			62	99.95	100	

As shown in Table 7, modals played a crucial role as preferred directive features. The modals *should* and *must* the quasi-modal *need* surfaced as the preferred directive features, collectively accounting for 79.14 per cent. The modals *should* and *must* straightforwardly provide an optimal means of encoding strong deontic obligation. The directive function, in its prototypical form, materializes as imperative sentences, but, as shown in Table 7, the attested patterns of directives in the corpus were special in that such imperative verb forms were infrequent, accounting for 8.06 per cent of all directive tokens. Thus, the use of modals signaling directive is exemplified in the following:

Example (7)

Our intention is that the commission's work will be an important step forward in reaching international consensus on standards that should apply to decisions about germline editing. (#021-08; emphasis added)

Considering the multiplicity of the synonyms of *need* in English, e.g. *necessity*, *requirement*, *want*, *lack*, etc. in the sense of privation, the use of *need* in this context bears pedagogical significance.

(f). *Personal Asides*

Personal asides are useful devices for addressing readers directly to offer a comment by briefly interrupting the argument (Hyland, 1998, 2005b). It is exemplified in the following:

Example (8)

We agree with Michael Mehling and colleagues that applying carbon charges — rather than trade tariffs — to imports could help to address countries' non-compliance with climate policy. (#018-01; emphasis added)

In the excerpt, the personal aside is separated by em dashes, without which following phrase (*to imports*) would be syntactically and conceptually distanced from its host phrase (*carbon charges*). Since most ESL/EFL students are not familiar with the em dash punctuation and, more generally, the use of personal asides in academic writing, instruction of these features needs to be considered in ESP classes.

(g). *Reader Pronouns*

Reader pronouns are used to refer to the readers in the form of inclusive first-person pronouns (*we*, *us*, *our*, etc.) or second-person pronouns (*you*, *your*, etc.), whereby the readers are encouraged, or cognitively forced, to be engaged. In the corpus of the experts' correspondences, *we* surfaced most frequently, accounting for 50 per cent of all reader pronoun occurrences, followed by *your*, accounting for 23.33 per cent. The reader can be the general readership or the author whose earlier work is being referred to. The reader pronoun is exemplified in the following:

Example (9)

As you point out, the PACE trial authors (including two co-authors of Sharpe et al. in Nature) and others promote a form of cognitive behavioural therapy that assumes ME/CFS symptoms can be reversed by teaching people to think differently, and a prescribed form of graded exercise that might be harmful. (# 013-03; emphasis added)

From the example, the writer used *you* as referring to the previously published text's author; thus, the writer of this piece of correspondence specifically identified the author of the previously published text as the source of the following information and further expresses agreement (cf. *as*) by summarily presenting the gist of the previous text. One interesting aspect of this kind of reader pronoun usage is that even though the present author wrote as if the messages were solely directed to the previous author in form (cf. *as you point out*), the text was in fact directed to the entire journal readership, including the previous author. This type of multiple aspects of readership is of particular significance in that the stance-marking did not involve a single party as the audience of the discourse.

(h). *Shared Knowledge References*

Shared knowledge references or appeals to shared knowledge constitute a good rhetorical strategy to strengthen the argument by showing that a feature at issue is a part of general knowledge, though the extent may vary from the knowledge of a small community to that of the public at large. It is exemplified in the following:

Example (10)

Of course, diversity alone is no panacea. (#015-10; emphasis added)

The excerpt above contains the expression *of course* as a shared knowledge reference marker. The writer deployed an explicit signal asking readers to regard something as familiar or accepted. This strategy may involve a simple first-order reference such as nomenclature of an entity (marked by *(also/widely) known as...*, etc.) or a higher-order reference such as a propositional content (marked by *of course*, etc.).

Reference to shared knowledge in the source data, however, was minimal, i.e., only eight tokens in the entire corpus, and that without showing any clear patterns. Furthermore, certain instances are not even clear as to their status as signals of shared knowledge unless their context is carefully examined. Therefore, it can be concluded, at least at the current level of understanding, that shared knowledge references are not a prominent feature of argumentative correspondences.

(i). *Questions*

There are no occurrences of questions in the experts' writing (see Table 3 above). It is not immediately clear if the underrepresentation of questions as an engagement marker is a genre-specific feature for scientific argumentative correspondences, but this should constitute a good topic for a cross-genre comparative investigation.

C. Comparison of Students' and Experts' Writing

The third research question pertains to the degree of similarity between the experts' correspondences (original in *Nature*) and the students' correspondences after intervention. We will discuss a few notable aspects in the following.

(a). Similarities

At the global level, the two sets of correspondences show a high level of similarity, as a result of the students having attained noteworthy improvement through intervention, as noted in (A) above. With dramatic increase in richness in content (a three-fold increase of average lengths from 50.58 to 159.4 words), the students' post-intervention writing becomes similar to the experts' writing in *Nature*, i.e., 170 words. The average number of words in a sentence also increased (from 3.65 to 8.85 words), again close to that of experts' writing, i.e., 8.85 words.

A statistical analysis of the two sets of writings for distribution of stance and engagement markers is presented in Table 8, with the figures of raw token frequency and the per-thousand-word frequency (note that since the average text lengths of the two groups are different, the denominators for PTW for the two groups are also different).

TABLE 8
STANCE AND ENGAGEMENT MARKERS IN STUDENTS' AND EXPERTS' WRITING

Interactional features	Students		Experts	
	Token	PTW	Token	PTW
<i>Stance</i>				
Attitude markers	290	44.50	222	30.31
Boosters	158	24.24	172	23.48
Hedges	95	14.58	114	15.56
Self-mentions	59	9.05	109	14.88
Stance total	602	92.37	617	84.23
<i>Engagement</i>				
Directives	98	15.04	62	8.46
Reader pronouns	33	5.06	30	4.10
Shared knowledge references	2	0.31	8	1.09
Questions	1	0.15	0	0.00
Personal asides	0	0.00	38	5.19
Engagement total	134	20.56	138	18.84
Total	736	112.93	755	103.07

There are a few notable commonalities between the two groups shown in Table 8. Both the students and experts employ stance markers at a far greater proportion than engagement markers. In students' writing, stance markers are used more than four times as often as engagement markers (602 vs. 134), and this proportion is similar to the experts' writing (617 vs. 138). Again, in both groups, attitude markers, occurring 290 times in the students' writing and 222 times in the experts' writing, are the most frequently used one among stance markers. Among engagement markers, directives are most frequently used in the students' writing (98 tokens, 15.04 PTW) and the experts' writing (62 tokens, 8.46 PTW). A cursory look at Table 8 shows that, despite minor differences, e.g., personal asides (see (b) below), the overall patterns of the two sets of writing are remarkably similar.

(b). Differences

Behind apparent similarities are some noteworthy differences. Even though we have seen that attitude markers are the most frequently used rhetorical feature among all interactional devices in both groups of writing, a closer look reveals some differences in detail. Individual forms of attitude marking in the two sets of writing are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9
ATTITUDE MARKERS USED IN STUDENTS' AND EXPERTS' WRITING

Rank	Form	Students		Experts		
		Token	PTW	Form	Token	PTW
1	<i>should</i>	50	7.67	<i>should</i>	21	2.87
2	<i>agree</i>	32	4.91	<i>need</i>	15	2.05
3	<i>must</i>	25	3.83	<i>must</i>	13	1.77
4	<i>important</i>	10	1.53	<i>concerned</i>	8	1.09
5	<i>would like/want</i>	8	1.22	<i>agree</i>	60	8.14
	Total	125	19.16		117	15.92

As shown in Table 9, the modal *should* occurs at a relatively high frequency in both groups, but their frequencies show a notable disparity, e.g., 7.67 vs. 2.87 PTW. In other words, the student writers tend to use *should* (and *must* as well) at a far greater frequency than the expert writers. On the other hand, the expert writers tend to use *agree* at the highest frequency, while they use other attitude markers at a considerably lower frequency. Since *should* and *must* are modals of deonticity (obligation), whereas *agree* is a verb with an affiliative and affirmative meaning, a semantically driven analysis within the same interactional functional categories warrants a future study.

Another area of notable differences is the use of hedges. The frequency of individual hedges in both sets of writing is given in Table 10.

TABLE 10
HEDGES USED IN STUDENTS' AND EXPERTS' WRITING

Rank	Form	Students		Form	Experts	
		Token	PTW		Token	PTW
1	<i>In my view/opinion</i>	14	2.18	<i>could</i>	27	3.69
2	<i>some</i>	12	1.77	<i>would</i>	18	2.46
3	<i>I think</i>	6	0.92	<i>might</i>	12	1.63
4	<i>could</i>	5	0.76	<i>In my/our view</i>	11	1.50
5	<i>may</i>	3	0.46	<i>may</i>	5	0.68
	Total	40	6.09		73	9.96

Table 10 shows that student writers in general do not use hedges as productively as the expert writers do (6.09 vs. 9.96 PTW, about 63.5% gap). Furthermore, the expert writers favor subjunctive modals *could*, *would* and *might*, whereas the student writers favor more lexically determined markers, *in my view/opinion* and *some*. Since the hedging function associated with subjunctive modals is much subtler than the lexical markers, this aspect warrants a more fine-grained investigation in the future for pedagogical reasons.

Personal asides as an engagement marking device present a strong contrast between the student writers and expert writers. Personal asides are orthographically indicated by specialized punctuations such as em dashes, parentheses, and commas. Their occurrence patterns in the two groups are shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11
PERSONAL ASIDES USED IN STUDENTS' AND EXPERTS' WRITING

Rank	Form	Students		Experts	
		Token	PTW	Token	PTW
1	em dash	0	0	21	55.26
2	parentheses	0	0	16	42.11
3	comma	0	0	1	2.63
	Total	0	0	38	100

Unlike the expert writers, the student writers did not use personal asides as a rhetorical feature for engagement. As indicated in (B) above, personal asides are the devices Thai EFL students are not familiar, and its inclusion in instruction needs to be considered in the EFL program.

The final category of contrast is the markers of directives. Since directives belong to a pragmatically loaded speech acts, i.e., they are impositional on the addressee, their use needs to be carefully determined. The use of individual forms of directives in the two sets is shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12
DIRECTIVES USED IN STUDENTS' AND EXPERTS' WRITING

Rank	Form	Students		Form	Experts	
		Token	PTW		Token	PTW
1	<i>should</i>	50	7.67	<i>should</i>	21	2.86
2	<i>must</i>	25	3.83	<i>need</i>	15	2.05
3	Imperative	5	0.76	<i>must</i>	13	1.77
4	<i>have to</i>	4	0.61	Imperative	5	0.68
5	<i>require</i>	4	0.61	<i>It is therefore crucial to/for</i>	2	0.27
	Total	88	13.48		56	7.63

As shown in Table 12, *should* is the most frequently used directive marker in both groups. *Need* was the second most frequently used directive marker in experts' writing but did not surface in the top five of the students' directive markers. Overall, students used directives at a far greater frequency than the experts (13.48 vs. 7.63 PTW). This may be due to the fact that the use of directives in general needs discretion for their face-threatening potential. Therefore, students in ESP classes need to be properly instructed to exercise caution in using diverse devices of directives in writing.

V. CONCLUSION

Traditional approaches adopted in Thai ESP-Science classes do not provide sufficient training for students to be conversant with argumentative writing (Songsil et al., 2019). The pedagogical inefficiency, coupled with students' lack of knowledge of grammatical and rhetorical features, poses serious obstacles in learning various strategies necessitated in ESP argumentative writing (cf. Ka-kan-dee & Kaur, 2015). Given the background, this study explored the possibility and efficacy of an interventional writing course developed by means of authentic correspondence texts from the journal *Nature*.

On the whole, the student participants have attained a significant level of progress from a 10-week, 30-hour intervention, as evidenced by the comparison of the pre-intervention and post-intervention writing and further by the comparison of the post-intervention writing and the original authors' writing. The instruction in the intervention, based on the rhetorical features of academic writing as proposed in Hyland's (2005a, 2005b) model of interaction, has proven effective in an ESP course of relatively short duration. Since the present investigation was performed at a macro-level, our analysis of the interactional features, i.e., stance and engagement, does not cover the full range of what can be

involved under interpersonality in academic texts at a micro-level. Such a fine-grained investigation merits future research.

Such limitations notwithstanding, the present study clearly lends support to implementing ESP-Science writing courses based on authentic texts, focusing on interactional features in academic writing. This study calls for further studies on interactional features in other genres and their application to relevant disciplines in ESP writing courses.

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