

Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 14, Number 9, September 2024

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Formation of Students' Personal Culture in English Classes

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Abstract—Students' personal culture must be paid special attention at university, as the formation of a highly professional specialist means not only the acquisition of knowledge, but also the manner of behavior and ability to communicate with other people. This article reveals the approaches to the formation of personal culture of students of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University. We assumed that English classes may not be restricted only to linguistic issues and grammar revision, but these classes might have a high educational potential. In our experiment we researched how English classes can develop students' personal culture. At the beginning of the academic year a survey to understand students' awareness and interest in this issue was conducted. The analyses of the answers showed that their understanding of this notion was narrow enough. The author developed a number of activities aimed at increasing the awareness about personal culture. Such activities as mini lectures, discussions of different aspects of personal culture, role plays etc. have changed the attitude of students to their personal culture. At the end of academic year the author conducted a survey again. It showed that the understanding of personal culture was developed; the students understood the need to improve their personal culture. The components that were not discussed during the classes almost did not change in percentage terms. After taking part in the experiment, almost all students mentioned tolerance and culture of behavior in the definition of personal culture, which we also consider a positive result.

Index Terms—culture, personal culture, students, English classes, activities

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the modern young generation is in the spotlight in many aspects: education, youth culture, youth policy, youth and sports, youth and science, youth and subcultures etc., but it is often forgotten that in addition to all this, the youth needs to advance their personal culture. It is impossible for a person to succeed in life if they are not cultured. The youth is the most mobile and active part of our society. These are young people who, in a few years, will become the moving force of our economics – they will take their places from the sphere of production to the sphere of management. If today we educate young people with a highly moral level of culture, we will care about the future of our country as well.

We are convinced that it is necessary to pay special attention to the development of personal culture especially in higher education institutions, because the active formation of personality takes place at this age. Taking part in public organizations, associations, and creative teams, students acquire solid life guidelines, organizer skills, personal qualities necessary for full-fledged social interaction in various fields of activity, develop their personal culture as a universal basis for the formation of an individual way of existence in modern world.

That is why, along with providing professional training, the university is to create conditions for the development of the students' personality, the mastery of culture as the basis for their full self-realization in society.

In the context of the modernization of the education system, it is necessary to put forward the problem of developing an individual who can adapt to modern conditions of socio-economic reform of society. Modern trends in changing the general situation of education coincide with the following general principles of its reform in the world: 1) the integration of all the educational and social tools (the organic cohesion of education and other social institutions in order to educate rising generations); 2) differentiation and individualization in education (creation of conditions for the full manifestation and development of the abilities of each student); 3) democratization (creation of prerequisites for the development of activity, initiative and creativity of all subjects of the educational process, their interaction, broad public participation in education management); 4) humanization (student-centered approach which is based on the statement that every personality must be considered as the highest social value of society) (Butenko, 2012; Vinichenko et al., 2020).

These principles correlate with the problem of cultural development of students in the system of higher professional education, especially in the context of humanization, which aims to develop the personality of the students, their general and personal culture, the formation of value orientations in relation to the world, society, other people, themselves, work, etc. (Hamina & Kratinova, 2012, p. 167).

Moreover, students also understand the need to develop personal culture. Thus, the students of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University were asked whether they needed classes to improve the level of personal

culture. The survey showed that 35% were interested in it, 55% were interested, but not in additional classes, but in the course of integrating this knowledge into the study of other subjects, and only 10% considered it to be the waste of time.

After this survey, the idea of forming personal culture in the process of teaching English arose, which is due to the fact that this discipline has a huge educational potential and allows conducting various activities.

The *purpose of the publication* is to highlight the experience of forming the personal culture among students of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University when teaching English.

For this, we consider it necessary to solve the following tasks:

- generalize approaches how to define culture and personal culture in scientific literature;
- find out data regarding students' attitude towards personal culture;
- highlight activities that are held during English language classes for the formation of the personal culture among students;
- present students' attitude to the personal culture after appropriate activities.

Object of study – students of the Faculty of Physical Education and Sports, the Faculty of Primary Education, the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics of H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University.

The subject of *research* is the level of students' personal culture.

II. METHODS

To achieve the goal and solve the set tasks we considered it necessary to use of a set of research methods: *theoretical* methods – the analysis of the results of scientific research on culture and personal culture, as well as systematization, generalization and comparison of the theoretical and empirical experience of the formation of the specified quality; *empirical* methods – conversations, pedagogic observations, questionnaires, analysis of the experience of students' use of methods of personal culture development.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Let us, first of all, present approaches to the definition of "culture" and "personal culture", because these are the key concepts of our research.

Scientists emphasize that a characteristic feature of culture is the extraordinary ambiguity of its interpretations, in other words, polysemanticity. In the modern theory of culture, there is a significant number of definitions that point out various qualitative characteristics and features of human life. The ambiguity of the understanding of the term culture is due to the variety of real forms of its existence, which were created at different times and among different people (Krupskyy, 2010).

The classical range of meanings of the Latin word *cultura* is conveyed in the modern language by the words "processing", "education", "creation", "formation", "development", and "respect". The proposed versions of the translation define the phenomenon of culture in different ways, emphasizing both the material and spiritual principles in it. Currently, there are more than 400 definitions of culture, which is explained both by the multifacetedness of the culture phenomenon and by the dependence of study results on research guidelines. It is very difficult to give an exhaustive definition of the concept of "culture", since it can take on different meanings depending on the purpose for which it is used (Velykyy tлумachnyy slovnyk, 2009, p. 653).

Unlike other living beings, people adapt to their environment not due to genetic or morphological variability, but through their culture. In this regard, R. Foley noted: "If there is a new evolutionary process that can be detected in humans, it is cultural evolution. Culture is a key concept for anthropology, encompassing much of what we think of as uniquely human. In a broad sense, culture refers to the non-biological aspects of the behavior of the human species, the ability to think symbolically and express oneself with the help of symbols; culture is transmitted not through a system of genetic mechanisms, but through learning and assimilation of knowledge and behavior patterns (Fouli, 1990, p. 18).

Summing up, let us consider culture, first of all, as a set of spiritual values, and therefore the most adequate definition of culture as a qualitative characteristic of human activity and the reality created by it, with priority to spiritual values that it purposefully creates, preserves and develops. The material, objective world is a phenomenon of culture to the extent that it symbolizes the spiritual principle.

Personal culture has a narrower meaning. Scientists define it as a set of actions, beliefs, experiences and ideas about oneself and the surrounding world. Personal culture is developed by the norms and rules that this or that society and individuals adhere to. The concept of personal culture includes all areas of the external and internal personal culture, including certain manners of behavior, accepted ways of communication, which suggest how to behave correctly and nicely in society, to be polite and considerate with elders and with women, and to understand what is proper to do in given environment. Personal culture is an integral part of world civilization and the general culture of mankind. To become a well-developed and literate person, it is necessary to know the main components of personal culture: the culture of communication, the culture of thinking, speech etiquette, mastering the art of self-presentation, etc. (Drach et al., 2003, p. 137).

Let us stick to the definition of personal culture formulated by Ukrainian scientists. According to them, personal culture is the individual's achievement of a certain harmony, which gives him/her a full-fledged social life and work, as well as personal psychological comfort. Conditionally, the following directions of the basic culture of the individual can be distinguished: the culture of vital self-determination; culture of family relations; economic culture; work culture; political, democratic and legal culture; intellectual, moral and communication culture, speech culture, ecological culture; art culture; physical culture, etc. (Kurylo et al., 2019, p. 53).

Based on the analysis of scientific literature, three main aspects of personal culture can be distinguished:

- gnoseological one;
- procedural and operational one;
- subject-personal one.

The gnoseological aspect includes norms, knowledge, values, symbols and meanings. The main direction of the procedural and operational aspect is to solve the issue of the content of that activity, which is the basis of the development of culture, starting from the motivation of the activity through the processes and operations of its implementation to the results of further evaluation. The subject-personal aspect includes the culture of communication, language and speech, the culture of feelings, thinking, behavior, etc.

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND RESULTS

Despite a large number of works related to the students' personal culture, work experience shows that the level of general personal culture of students has been decreasing in recent years. We associate this with the low socialization of young people, which is due to the pandemic and the political situation that has developed in Ukraine since the end of February 2022. The manner of students' communication has become more aggressive and less polite, which we explain with such factors as uncertainty about the future, changes of residence, military actions in the east and south of the country, etc.

The factors mentioned above stimulated the study of nowadays situation and the determination of ways how to improve the personal culture of students when teaching English. 75 students of the aforementioned faculties were involved in the experiment. Their level of English was not less than B1.

At the beginning of the experiment, we gave the students a survey in English, in which they were asked to identify:

1. a person's personal culture and how important this culture is a) in everyday life; b) during professional communication; c) in force majeure circumstances;
2. their own level of personal culture;
3. the level of personal culture of teachers;
4. the level of personal culture of their environment;
5. the level of personal culture of group mates;
6. factors affecting the formation of personal culture.

The results of the survey on the definition of the components of personal culture are presented in Table 1. The components of personal culture are based on the work by Kurylo V. I., Svitlychnyy O. P., and Kurylo L. I. (Kurylo et al., 2019).

TABLE 1
DEFINITION OF THE COMPONENTS OF PERSONAL CULTURE

Components of personal culture	Number of students who mentioned this component	Percentage who mentioned this component
vital self-determination	4	1,3
family relationships	51	68
knowledge on economics	23	31
work style	15	20
tolerance in political points of view	10	13
understanding of democracy and law	5	7
intellectual activities	31	41
moral aspects	62	83
communication style	50	67
speech style	45	60

As we can see from the table, most students have a rather narrow vision of the essence of personal culture. Most of the respondents noted such components of personal culture as family relations (68%), intellectual activities (31 %), moral aspects (62 %), communication style (50%) and speech culture (45 %). A large percentage of respondents did not mention such components as understanding of democracy and law, tolerance in political points of view, work style, and vital self-determination. It is interesting that the majority of students (73%) believe that the level of personal culture in force majeure situations does not matter at all; only 53 % are convinced that personal culture is important for professional communication.

Regarding the self-assessment of the level of personal culture, only 15 % consider their own level of personal culture to be high, 79 % consider their own level of personal culture to be average, and 6 % of students consider their own level of personal culture to be low. To the question "Do you always follow the rules of behavior in public places?", the students answered as it follows: 45% follow and 55% do not follow these rules, which also indicates an insufficient level of personal culture.

It should be noted that such a rather narrow vision of personal culture could not help affecting the students' assessment of the personal culture of teachers, group mates and their own environment, because most students did not take into account all the components of personal culture. The results are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
THE EVALUATION OF THE LEVEL OF PERSONAL CULTURE OF DIFFERENT GROUPS

Groups of people levels	Levels of personal culture		
	High level of personal culture	Medium level of personal culture	Low level of personal culture
	%	%	%
teachers	84	10	6
group mates	54	28	18
close environment	65	30	5

In order to have a complete picture, we also asked students to enumerate the factors that influence the formation of their personal culture. The summarized results are presented in the diagram. Let us note that each student could choose several factors.

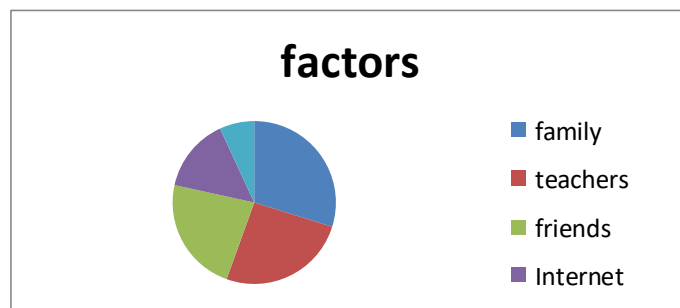


Diagram 1. Main Factors That Influence the Formation of Students' Personal Culture

Having conducted the appropriate survey and summarized the information, we developed a set of tasks aimed at improving the students' personal culture while learning English. However, we did not set ourselves the task of covering all components of students' personal culture due to the lack of a sufficient number of academic hours. Another reason that motivated us to choose only some components of personal culture was that we wanted to see how effective our classes are: that is, to see how much the attitude of students has changed towards the components of personal culture that we discussed during the classes, and the components that we didn't touch upon. So, we focused our attention on the discussion of the concept of personal culture in general and on such its components as vital self-determination, family relations, work style and style of communication.

As the formation of personal culture was during our English classes our aim was to combine it with the development of the skills in foreign language. At the first class, we focused on the discussion of personal culture, attracting attention of students on the components of personal culture that were not mentioned by them in the survey. We also asked them to give examples of appropriate or inappropriate behavior in terms of vital self-determination, work culture, economic culture and other components of personal culture.

For more effective communication, we prepared an active vocabulary, which we worked out with the students before the discussion. In particular, it included such lexical units as *improving personal culture*, *vital self-determination*, *advantages*, *disadvantages*, *attitude*, *opinion*, *formation*, *components*, *reflections*, *behavior in public places*, *self-discovery*, *self-education*, *self-determination*, *aggressiveness*, *politeness*, *neglect* etc.

Let us emphasize that we devoted each subsequent episode of a session (because, unfortunately, we could not devote the entire session to performing only these types of activities) to one of the components of personal culture. Thus, when discussing vital self-determination, first of all we asked students what exactly they understood by this concept. During the conversation, we encouraged students to formulate self-determination as self-discovery, identification of their positive qualities and features, as well as those aptitudes, which later, through self-education, a person might turn into abilities, and talent into a stable character trait. Also, we suggested students to analyze a passage from the book "Alice's Adventures in the Wonderland" by the English writer Lewis Carroll and to reflect on the topic of why it is so difficult to answer the question "who are you?".

The Caterpillar and Alice looked at each other for some time in silence: at last the Caterpillar took the hookah out of its mouth, and addressed her in a languid, sleepy voice.

'Who are YOU?' said the Caterpillar.

This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, 'I—I hardly know, sir, just at present—at least I know who I WAS when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then.'

'What do you mean by that?' said the Caterpillar sternly. 'Explain yourself!'

'I can't explain MYSELF, I'm afraid, sir' said Alice, 'because I'm not myself, you see.'

'I don't see,' said the Caterpillar. (Carroll, 2022; Dubuque, 2023)

In order to make students continue to think about their own self-determination as homework, we offered them to find out more information on the biographies of people who made themselves and determine which character traits helped them achieve their goals (from a linguistic point of view, we encouraged students to revise (study) adjectives that describe character traits (*determined, self-confident, arrogant, smart, self-esteem, affectionate, diplomatic, independent etc.*)).

Also, we performed with students such activities as "Analysis of moments when we waste time" and asked them to identify for themselves moments due to which they wasted goal setting, time, which did not allow them to competently organize their own work and studies. After performing such exercises, we summarized the information, asking students to generalize the main components of self-determination (personal, family, professional and social). From the point of view of language learning, discussions of this topic allowed students to learn verbs that describe everyday activities.

As we could see from the survey, the majority of students understood well that such component of personal culture as family relations is very important. The majority of students identified the family as an important factor influencing the formation of personal culture. At the same time, we were convinced that discussing one's own family was a very personal matter, so we decided to approach this component abstractly. We asked students to comment on each element of the "circle of tolerance" and illustrate it with possible examples: how one can or cannot behave in a particular situation.

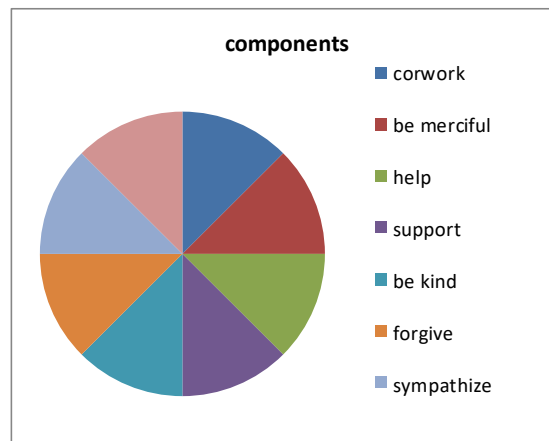


Figure 1. Circle of Tolerance

We consider this type of work to be effective both for the formation of students' personal culture and for the development of oral communication. Experience has shown that the discussion of this aspect of personal culture arouses lively interest among students. In addition, this aspect has become especially important in the country that is in the state of war.

For example, when discussing the topic of forgiveness, we asked students to comment on the following statements and say how much they agree with these statements:

- *Forgiveness does not change the past, but it clarifies the future.*
- *It is easier to forgive an enemy than a friend.*
- *If we want to love, we must forgive.*
- *Know how to forgive and your strength will increase.*
- *To forgive is to release the prisoner and understand that you were the prisoner.*

When discussing the topic of mercy, we discussed what exactly mercy is. Often, in parallel with mercy, we touched on such concepts as sensitivity, altruism, and selfishness.

We began the discussion of the topic of mercy by quoting A. Chekhov. This was a story "Case Study": *The daughter of the factory owner was ill. They called a doctor. The doctor examined the girl and said that everything was fine, she just needed some rest. Her mother was standing next to her. She stood motionless and looked at the doctor with tears in her eyes. Then she asked the doctor not to leave, because last night her daughter scared her with her condition, and she*

was her only child. The doctor wanted to say that he had a lot of work to do, that his family was waiting at home. But he looked at the woman's face and stayed (Chekhov).

Then we encouraged the students to share their ideas why the doctor had agreed to stay with the family (a duty or a manifestation of mercy?). After that, we asked students to provide examples of showing mercy from their lives. From the point of view of language learning, we could either work as a whole group (if there were less than 10 people in it), or students were divided into small groups, and then a summary was made in the whole group.

During the discussion of this topic, we also touched upon the topic of division of responsibilities in the family, respect for older family members and the need to pay attention to the younger members of family. Here are some questions for discussion:

What does the word "family" mean to you?

Which of your family are you proud of? Why?

Does your family have any legend?

Are there any family stories related to the profession of your parents or other relatives?

What is an ideal family for you?

How do the roles of the man and woman differ in the family, if they do?

What should be done to maintain perfect relations in the family? etc.

It should be noted that before discussing each information block, we carefully analyzed lexical units and grammatical constructions that could be used by students. Scientists emphasize that the culture of communication is an extremely relevant modern problem, because language is a rather dynamic category and often changes in connection with the further development of society and processes of globalization that take place in the modern world.

Scientists state that students' culture of communication is one the most productive resource of higher education for the personal development, which stimulates young people to master it as a universal characteristic of a specialist that helps to fulfill social expectations of society and reach a high professional and personal level.

On the one hand, the culture of communication adjoins to the concept of "communicative tolerance", and on the other hand, to the concept of "styles of communication" when interacting with society. The culture of communication is an integrative trait of an individual, which reflects features of a tolerant personality, as well as objective evaluation of people, ability to have a conversation, and establish cooperation, determining an active moral position in interaction with people (Butenko, 2012, p. 290; Chmut, 1999).

According to the definitions of this notion, the culture of communication is one of the components of the fundamental culture of a person, which includes specific values, knowledge, qualities, habits, etc.) that enables people to live in harmony with their inner and outer culture, national values, contribute to the development of the society, etc. The culture of communication is a crucial component of emotional, mental, social, and intellectual, development of a person (Lytvynova, 2020; Sevryugina, 2009).

Thus, we consider the culture of communication as a very important element of personal culture. We started the discussion of this block with a survey of students. To determine the level of knowledge about communication culture as a component of personal culture, we asked the question: "What do you understand by the culture of communication?"

The basis of the correct definition was the statement that the culture of communication, unlike the ethics of communication, is not limited to the behavioral level and the qualitative assessment of behavior, it includes both the culture of etiquette, the culture of behavior, the culture of language, feelings, facial expressions, gestures, and psychological culture subjects of communication, culture of consciousness (Stasyuk, 2009; Smolins'ka O., 2010).

It turned out that 75% of students were able to give only a partially correct answer to the question, they believed that the culture of communication was only a set of personal qualities of a person. The remaining 25% of students gave more or less correct answer according to the chosen definition. The answers to the following questions made it possible to determine the level of communication culture of students in general.

To the question "How do you assess the level of culture of communication among students?" the majority answered that they had a low level of culture of communication: 70% of students believed that their communication often contained obscene language, rude expressions, and offensive words against other people. From this it followed that there was a need for the formation of knowledge and skills in the field of culture of communication. However, answering the question "How do you assess your level of communication culture at the moment?" 80% of students defined it as "average", which meant that the data could be unreliable, i.e. subjective.

It should be noted that the role of communication stands for the formation of the independence of a person, professional self-consciousness and the assimilation of the basis of the future carrier and ability to communicate effectively with the opposite sex.

At this life phase, in the context of the entanglement of the relationship system in which the person is involved, young people often face the problem of their personal choice, which means consciousness of their points of view and responsible decision-making. During the learning process, communication with groupmates plays a crucial role for young people (Sevryugina, 2009, p. 194).

To train the culture of communication as a component of personal culture, we carried out the following activities:

- mini-lectures which were a kind of an interview during which the educator encouraged learners to ask relevant questions on the theme. The activity was conducted as a discussion, during which responses were formulated. After performing it, the teacher analyzed the questions as an observation of the students' concerns and knowledge;

- educational games, for example, "Cultural dialogues" and "Intermediary", which involved the creation of special situations that simulated real cases which might happen in life;

- seminar-discussions, when topical problematic issues were brought up for discussion. First, students individually thought about them, then formed focus groups in which those questions were analyzed and some generalizations were made. At the end of the class focus groups presented their results to the whole group of students and discussed them together;

- cognitive game "Group Photo", the aim of which is to analyze and role play a particular ambiguous situation from a real life and try to find out a solution which would be suitable for all the participants. This game focuses on teaching the students how to act in different life circumstances, assess the situation properly, make contacts with people, and be able to feel themselves in other peoples' shoes;

- intercultural seminars, which were devoted to the discussion of the problems that might happen during the communication with representatives of other cultures or nationalities. The learner's task was to build up a pattern how to behave and come up with the most optimal approaches to communication; Such exercises as "Web of Bias" and "Cultural Transformations" aimed at developing three aspects of communication that appear simultaneously (communication, interaction, perception) were also of great importance;

- conducting non-traditional activities (such as "Private communication", "Elements of oratorical art", "Public presentation" with elements of monologue speech, etc.).

The formation of a culture of communication was also facilitated by the game "Verbal behavior (confident, insecure and rude)". The teacher indicated to the students the goal of the game: to learn to see such features of their behavior as confidence, uncertainty, and rudeness. The rules of the game are:

Three items are selected that conditionally denote confident, insecure and rude behavior, respectively. The teacher offers students a specific situation and distributes objects. A student who gets an object denoting, for example, rude behavior must show how a rude person will behave in this situation. Then, a new situation is offered, and other students receive objects. It is important, and this is stipulated at the beginning, that confident, insecure and rude behavior within the framework of this game should be expressed verbally.

Here are some situations which we offered to our students: 1) the teacher underestimated the score at the seminar; 2) you had to prepare for a colloquium, and friends invited you to go for a walk; 3) you were going to a concert of your favorite band, and your mother asked to look after your younger brother; 4) it is necessary to interrupt a protracted conversation, etc. Each scene took about 3-4 minutes. As a result, the reflection of the game was carried out and the students formulated what confident, insecure, rude behavior meant to them.

Touching upon economic culture our task was to inculcate the skills of budget planning and appropriate allocation of funds, and we suggested students to analyze whether they spent money appropriately and how these expenses could be optimized. Implementing such kinds of activities in our classes we conducted activities on synonymous and paronymic replacements, expansion and paraphrasing of texts, exercises on translation, editing, creation of micro dialogues, etc.).

At the end of the academic year, we again conducted a survey in which we asked students to formulate a definition of personal culture and indicate how it had been changed (if it had been) during the academic year. After processing the data, we concluded that in general the vision of personal culture became broader (in 75% of students), the attitude towards themselves and the environment also had been changed: the students became more self-critical and tolerant, which are important components of personal culture. At the same time, the main components of personal culture were named by students as those that had been discussed during the academic year. 85% of students noted they need to improve the culture of family relations, 98% of students understood the importance of their own culture of communication, the definition of economic culture as a component of personal culture has increased to 45%. Those components that had not been discussed during the classes almost were not changed in percentage terms. It should be noted that almost all students mentioned tolerance and culture of behavior and speech in the definition of personal culture, which we also consider a positive result of the experiment.

As for language training of students, it should be noted that the preparation of active vocabulary and revision of grammar constructions depended on the language level of students, that is why the article does not present detailed information on this aspect, but only gives some examples that illustrate the general approach to solving this task. From work experience, it can also be said that students actively participate in the discussion of these aspects of personal culture, which allows improving their language skills and deepen their vocabulary.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Summing up, it should be noted that personal culture is a necessary element of a worthy citizen, a highly qualified specialist, parents and children of any culture and society. That is why it is necessary to pay great attention to the formation of the personal culture of the young generation. After conducting the experiment, we were convinced that various types of educational activities have a positive effect on the formation of personal culture.

In the future, we are going to work on the formation of other components of students' personal culture in the same groups.

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Gender Issues in Translating Women's Language in Aslan's Novel *Nile Sparrows*

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Abstract—This study investigates the means to translate features of women's language in Ibrahim Aslan's novel *Nile Sparrows* from Arabic into English. Selected Arabic and English excerpts are placed in two questionnaires for native speakers of the two languages to decide whether the excerpts reflect features of women's language. While responses to the Arabic questionnaire showed that the excerpts were brimful with features of women's language, responses to the English questionnaire showed the neutrality of the translations. Eight selected examples were classified into three categories and analyzed using Reiss' (2000) instruction criteria in light of Lakoff's (1973) framework of the features of women's language. The study found that reproducing the features of women's language in another language may require sacrificing the lexical equivalence for stylistic equivalence based on how the translator settles the conflict between formal and functional equivalences. The study maintains that no one solution fits all when translating women's language. Determinants of the translation decision depend on several factors, such as the nature of the target language, language level, ethnicity, geographic area, and topic.

Index Terms—Arabic, Aslan, gender, translation, women's language

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper investigates the means of translating women's language from Arabic into English in Ibrahim Aslan's *Nile Sparrows* (2005). Robin Lakoff started the endeavors in language and gender studies as early as the 1970s. She wrote *Language and Woman's Place* in 1973, laying the foundation for the language studies of gender. Lakoff posited that women have a distinct style of speech, which is widely known as *women's language* and reflects linguistic features that reinforce the idea of women's inferiority to men due to social factors. Coates (2016) also maintained that men and women have different speech behaviors. Although competent language users can identify women's language, it is challenging to translate it because different languages have various features of women's language.

Reading Ibrahim Aslan's Arabic version of *Nile Sparrows* (2005), the discourse of women can be easily identified as women's language uttered in Egyptian colloquial Arabic. Therefore, this paper revolves around how these Arabic utterances are translated into English and how to overcome the challenges of translation in a manner that equivalently reflects the features of women's language.

The study scans the relevant literature and discusses the process of data collection and classification before setting the methodology of analysis. The collected data from the Arabic novel and its English translation are categorized and analyzed. The study employs the instruction criteria suggested by Reiss (2000), probing into the strategies used in translating women's language. As suggested solutions are offered, the analysis is followed by a discussion and conclusion.

This study is intended for translators, translation studies readers, linguists, and gender specialists. It seeks to answer the following research question: What techniques should be used while translating women's language to reproduce equivalent language features and effects in the target language?

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Studies conducted on the features of women's language in English are multiple, unlike Arabic. However, scarce studies have been conducted on the translation of women's language. The literature on the language of women is rich, as Lakoff (1973) highlighted the discrimination against women in several cultures in general and linguistic discrimination in particular, hence the idea of her deficit theory. Thorne and Henley (1975) suggested in their dominance theory that differences exist between men's and women's language. They assumed the difference is based on social factors, like power inequality, since their theory is based on the dominance of men who form the norms of society, including the language domain. In this context, Freed (2003) argued that the media critically imposes ideas about gender differences.

Although most studies on gender-based linguistic differences have focused on phonological features, others have focused on different elements of gender-based linguistic differences. For example, Pan (2011) attempted to address the features of female language in English from different perspectives, including lexicon, grammar, themes, and styles, in addition to phonology. The study found that women's language differs from men's due to several factors, giving paramount significance to social and cultural elements. Oktapiani et al. (2017) probed the features of women's language

as portrayed in the movie “The Devil Wears Prada.” The study found that intensifiers were the most frequent features of women’s language in the movie, while hypercorrect grammar was absent as informal language was primarily used. However, the study also found that women’s language serves different language functions, such as expressive, directive, and metalinguistic functions.

Moreover, Bäck and Debus (2019) hypothesized that women talk less in parliament than men due to gender stereotyping that controls party representatives in seven European countries. The study found that women’s participation increases when discussing topics viewed as feminine, while women are less represented in legislative debates in topics viewed as masculine. Meanwhile, Zhu (2019) discussed the distinctive features of women’s language, attributing them to physiological, psychological, historical, social, and cultural factors. Pebrianti (2013) discussed features of the language of Indonesian female bloggers, who tend to use intensifiers most frequently while avoiding strong swear words. This finding reflects the social status of stereotyped women as inferior, resulting in uncertainty and lack of confidence.

Scholars worldwide have discussed women’s language from different perspectives (i.e., reasons that may lead women to talk differently). Arabic is no exception. However, unlike English, Arabic gender studies are fewer. For instance, Rosenhouse (1998) and Sadiqi (2006) argued that despite the significant development of Arabic sociolinguistics, gender studies in Arabic still lag behind other languages. Rosenhouse (1998) studied the speech habits of Arab women and found that when Arab women’s language is compared to men’s, differences exist on all linguistic levels, such as phonology, syntax, and lexicon, including the level of discourse topics. The study concluded that when a language offers more than one structural solution, differences between the language of males and females can be found.

Researchers have also investigated the language of women in the Quran. For example, Al-Ulaimat and Al-Muheilan (2011) investigated women’s discourse in Surat Yusuf, considering phonological, morphological, structural, stylistic, and connotative aspects. The study found that the verses addressing women’s discourse have different levels of phonological, morphological, and syntactical structures that show repetition and consistency with the context, among other features.

Furthermore, studies have been conducted on gender language based on the country. For example, Sadiqi (2003) explored the language of women in Morocco and found that Arabic in Morocco is a male language, so men may be more competent given their opportunities. In Saudi Arabia, Ismail (2012) studied the differences between young male and female languages in formal interviews and found that women tend to use more vernacular pronunciations and dialectal words than men. The study also determined that social and cultural norms explain each gender’s choices. Probing language differences between men and women in Jordanian-spoken Arabic, Al-Harabsheh (2014) investigated gendered conversational styles by focusing on phonological differences and found linguistic differences because women are more linguistically conservative than men. In an empirical study, Muslah (2019) compared how Iraqi women and men use Arabic and body language in class and everyday communication and found that the language scene in Iraqi society is male-dominated, even in academic institutions.

Although little literature exists in Arabic, it is even more scarce in terms of translating features of women’s language. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, the paper by Inoue (2003) is the only study on translating women’s language. It probes the means to translate from Japanese into English metalinguistic devices (i.e., reported speech and quotations) in two novels as features of women’s language by investigating the process of reproducing women’s language in the target text. Inoue argued that when women’s language is dislocated into another language, a regime is required to reproduce it successfully. Other studies have focused on the translation process in the era of feminism, translating the works of women writers or problems of translating grammatical gender. However, they have not investigated translating women’s language. Hence, the significance of this present study is that it attempts to fill this research gap.

III. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In 1999, Aslan wrote his second novel, *Nile Sparrows*, a chronicle of the daily life events of a four-generation rural family that migrated to Cairo. The events mainly occurred in Al-Warraq, the author’s poor neighborhood on the Nile. The novel starts with a question about the sudden disappearance of the grandmother and ends with a question by the grandmother, which asks people about the way to her home village. The two main characters in the novel are Abd al-Reheem and Nargis, a brother and sister. While Abd al-Reheem pursues his wild desires, Nargis is quite the opposite: she dies without fulfilling her simplest dream. In the novel, Aslan narrates the lives and sufferings of ordinary Egyptians through spontaneous events, combining eloquent and simple language as he code-switches between Modern Standard Arabic and colloquial Egyptian.

Mona El-Gobashy, an associate professor of history and sociology of politics in Egypt and the MENA region at New York University, translated the novel. Her note concerning the translation says that she retained the stylistic features of the Arabic novel to “let the imagination wander in the eloquent silences and nuances of what is left unsaid” (2004, p. vii). Mona adds that when she talked to Aslan, he stressed that the novel had an Egyptian spirit, as reflected in several themes and scenes. The language used in the dialogues was no exception.

This study assumes the universality of the phenomenon known as women’s language to investigate how utterances of women’s language are translated from Arabic into English in Aslan’s *Nile Sparrows* by focusing on the discourse of Nargis. Throughout the novel, Nargis talks in women’s language. Therefore, following the intuition of a reader of

Arabic literature, translator, and researcher, 13 excerpts by Nargis that do not show the identity of the speaker were selected and placed in a questionnaire that asked Arabic native speakers of both sexes and different ages whether the speaker is male, female, or neutral (i.e., may be a male or female). No context was given to the questionnaire respondents to strengthen the idea of a woman uttering the excerpts. This step aimed to verify that the selected excerpts honestly reflected features of women's language.

Meanwhile, the English translations of the same utterances were collected in another questionnaire for native English speakers. The English questionnaire sought to determine whether the same features were reflected in the English translation to help determine how successful the translator rendered the features of women's language. The targeted number of respondents for each questionnaire was 25. However, the English questionnaire received 26 responses, while the Arabic one received 62.

Arabic native speakers from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Jordan, Canada, and France participated in the questionnaire: 64.5% were females, while 35.5% were males. The percentage of participants younger than 20 years old was 14.5%, while 46.8% were between 20 and 40, and 38.7% were over 40. When asking the respondents to select who was more likely to say each of these utterances, most indicated that the utterance was more likely said by a woman in eight of 13 excerpts. Therefore, these eight utterances offered clear examples of the features of women's language, especially when they were shown to the respondents without reference to their contexts.

On the other hand, English native speakers living in the United States, Canada, Britain, India, Pakistan, Egypt, and Eastern Europe responded to the questionnaire: 53.8% were females, while 46.2% were males. Moreover, 19.2% of the participants were younger than 20 years old, another 19.2% were between 20 and 40, and 61.5% were older than 40. The respondents were prompted to answer whether a man, a woman, or a neutral party was likelier to say the utterances. Most responses suggested that most utterances were neutral, with very few examples suggesting that a man or a woman said them.

The following table depicts the eight utterances in Arabic and their English translations:

TABLE 1
LIST OF EXAMPLES OF WOMEN'S LANGUAGE AND THEIR ENGLISH TRANSLATION

	Arabic Example	English Translation
1	طيب يا خويا اخلعه (...) والا انت يعني عليك ذنب تقضل طول عمرك وانت تعبان منه؟ (ص. 18)	Then, have it pulled. (...) Or are you atoning for some sin and having to spend your whole life in pain? (p. 9)
2	يادي الخبية على حكاية النور دي يا ولاد. (ص. 32)	What's going on with this power? (p. 10)
3	كده برضه تعملها يا بو عبد الله؟ (ص. 45)	So you've gone and done it, Abu Abdalla? (p. 27)
4	يا مصيبيتي (ص. 68)	Oh my God! (p. 43)
5	سلم على أمك وخالك عبد العزيز وستك عزيزة يا وله. (ص. 71)	Say hello to Mother and Uncle Abd al-Aziz, and don't forget grandmother Aziza, boy! (p. 45)
6	تقول لها؟ طب انتيل على خبيتك السوداء. (ص. 79)	Tell her? Oh shut up, you idiot. (P. 51)
7	يخبيك يا عبد الرحيم. (ص. 83)	You've really done it this time, Abd al-Reheem. (p. 54)
8	عواف يا دلال. (...) أقشر لك واحدة (برتقال) يا عبد الرحيم؟ (ص. 137)	How are you, Dalal? (...) You want me to peel you one (orange), Abd al-Reheem? (p. 81)

Three categories emerged when classifying these eight utterances from a functional perspective:

Category 1: Arabic examples with terms of endearment and expletives (Examples 1, 2, 5, and 8)

Category 2: Arabic examples reflecting women's helplessness (Examples 2, 3, and 4)

Category 3: Arabic examples denoting the avoidance of using strong words (Examples 6 and 7)

The analysis also adopted Reiss' (2000) instruction criteria to assess the adequacy of the target text. The criteria provided a checklist for the analysis, with linguistic components and extralinguistic determinants. For the purposes of this study, the criteria were condensed to the following:

Linguistic components:

- Semantic/lexical equivalence
- Grammatical/stylistic features

Extralinguistic determinants:

- Place (features of the country and culture)
- Affective implications (irony, emotions, and humor)

The following section offers suggested translations as needed to explore adequate strategies for translating women's language.

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses examples from each category. The English translation is assessed in light of the features of women's language that Lakoff (1973) suggested, using Reiss' (2000) instruction criteria. However, women's language

features have changed. Bassiouney (2009, p. 130) argued that since the 1970s, the position of women has changed significantly worldwide, resulting in a change in women's language. Xia (2013) also argued that women's language features change over time, while Mills (2005) indicated that Lakoff's list of features in the 1970s seems anecdotal today. Nevertheless, the following is an alphabetical list of Lakoff's (1973) suggested features of women's language:

1. Avoidance of strong swear words (e.g., *shit* and *the f-word*);
2. Emphatic stress (e.g., *brilliant* and *marvelous*);
3. Empty adjectives (e.g., *charming* and *cute*) and empty boosters (e.g., *I am happy you are here*);
4. Hypercorrect grammar;
5. Intensifiers (e.g., *just*, *so*, *absolutely*, *highly*, and *completely*);
6. Lexical hedges or fillers (e.g., *It may rain tonight*);
7. Precise color terms;
8. Rising intonation on declarative,
9. Super polite forms (e.g., *euphemisms* and *indirect requests*);
10. Tag questions.

A. Category 1: Endearment and Expletives

Terms of endearment and solidarity indicate how well people know each other. According to Holmes (1998), women tend to focus on the feelings of the person they talk to. According to Lakoff (1973), women also tend to use expletives, which may seem "meaningless" but are not, as they define the social context of an utterance. The following table is a reading of the responses from the two questionnaires:

TABLE 2
RESPONSES EXTRACTED FROM THE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES FOR ENDEARMENT AND EXPLETIVE EXAMPLES

No.	Arabic Example			English Translation		
1	طيب يا خويا اخلعه (...) والا انت يعني عليك ذنب تفضل طول عمرك وانت تعبان منه؟ (ص. 18)			Then, have it pulled. (...) Or are you atoning for some sin and having to spend your whole life in pain? (p. 9)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	14.5	69.4	16.1	11.5	26.9	61.5
2	يادي الخيبة على حكاية النور دي يا ولاد. (ص. 32)			What's going on with this power? (p. 10)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	4.8	85.5	9.7	15.4	7.7	76.9
5	سلم على أمك وخالك عبد العزيز وستك عزيزة يا وله. (ص. 71)			Say hello to Mother and Uncle Abd al-Aziz, and don't forget grandmother Aziza, boy! (p. 45)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	21	53.2	25.8	26.9	42.3	30.8
8	عواف يا دلال. (...) أقشر لك واحدة (برتقال) يا عبد الرحيم؟ (ص. 137)			How are you, Dalal? (...) You want me to peel you one (orange), Abd al-Reheem? (P. 81)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	4.8	82.3	12.9	7.7	76.9	15.4

The disparity in the percentages between responses, as evident in the four excerpts, shows that the Arabic excerpts reflect features of women's language, while the English ones do not. Changing or deleting the terms of endearment and expletives in the Arabic excerpts with other "neutral" terms gives the utterances a different sense, which may not reflect the sense of feminine language. Consider the following:

TABLE 3
MODIFIED EXCERPTS AND THEIR LITERAL TRANSLATION FOR ENDEARMENT AND EXPLETIVE EXAMPLES

Excerpt 1 (Modified)	Literal Translation
طيب اخلعه (...) والا انت يعني عليك ذنب تفضل طول عمرك وانت تعبان منه؟	Then, have it pulled. (...) Or are you atoning for some sin and having to spend your whole life in pain?
Excerpt 2 (Modified)	Literal Translation
يادي الخيبة على حكاية النور دي	What a disappointment about this issue of power!
Excerpt 5 (Modified)	Literal Translation
سلم على أمك وخالك عبد العزيز وستك عزيزة.	Say hello to Mother, Uncle Abd al-Aziz, and grandmother Aziza.
Excerpt 8 (Modified)	Literal Translation
مساء الخير يا دلال. (...) أقشر لك واحدة (برتقال) يا عبد الرحيم؟	Good evening, Dalal. (...) You want me to peel you one (orange), Abd al-Reheem?

After deleting/changing the terms of endearment/expletives, the Arabic excerpts sounded neutral, except for Excerpt 8, which included an action culturally linked to women (i.e., peeling an orange for someone). This finding agrees with Ochs (1992), who saw that gender differences in language are due to the different roles played by men and women in each community, stating that the link between power and language is context-sensitive and variable, depending on the culture and interlocutors.

Responses to the English translations, except for Excerpt 8, showed that they fell short of conveying the features of women's language. Instead, the translator translated the meaning neutrally, which Boase-Beier (2012) saw as a problem,

arguing that linguistic choices in the source text reflect the desired effects the writer wants to have on readers, such as providing the readers with clues to attitude, viewpoint, or ideology. Yousef (2012, p. 56) argued that when translating literature, the translator “has to be aware of the cultural norms, beliefs, morals and the ideologies of the cultures into or out of which he is translating.” Therefore, suggested translations for the four utterances may include some of Lakoff’s (1973) features of women’s language to faithfully reflect the Arabic source text.

In Excerpt 1, after the application of the instruction criteria on linguistic components, semantic equivalence was found, as the meaning was transferred successfully. However, lexical equivalence was not fully achieved as the translator ignored translating the utterance (يا خويا). There was also grammatical/stylistic equivalence failure since women’s language was not successfully transferred. Regarding extralinguistic determinants, no problem occurred in the place (e.g., the country and the culture), but a problem existed in achieving equivalence in the affective implications. The sense in the Arabic utterance is care, so the endearment expression (يا خويا) should be translated to reflect an emotional sense that the translator ignored. Therefore, the utterance (طيب يا خويا اخلعه) can be translated using an English term of endearment, reinforced by an exclamation device to replicate the effect created in the source text. The target text should reflect features of women’s language, which in this case could be the use of expletives, such as (*well*). A suggested translation for this excerpt is (*Oh dear! Well, have it pulled*).

Excerpt 2 has two instances that need intervention. The first is the expression (يادي الخيبة) that denotes helplessness, which is covered in more detail in Category 2. Therefore, no suggestion is made for this expression here. The second is the expletive expression (يا ولاد), which in several instances is translated literally as (*boys*), which is neutral and does not reflect women’s language. The instruction criteria for this excerpt are saved concerning the same utterance when discussed again in Category 2. A suggested translation for this part of the utterance can be (*dearies*). In this context, Xia (2013) argued that women tend to use diminutives (i.e., sweetie and dearie) more than men.

The same also applies to the expression (يا ولله) in Excerpt 5, which can be translated as (*cutie*). No issues were found when applying the instruction criteria to the extralinguistic determinants. However, the linguistic components showed otherwise, with semantic/lexical equivalence without stylistic equivalence. Notably, the English translation of the whole utterance is somewhat archaic. It does not reflect the smoothness nor the spontaneity of the utterance in Arabic or the features of women’s language. As a result, a suggested translation for Excerpt 5 can be (*Cutie, say hello to your mom, Uncle Abd al-Aziz, and Granny Aziza*).

In Excerpt 8, the Egyptian colloquial Arabic expression (عواف) is problematic in translation, as the expression is widely associated with women in certain social classes and geographical areas. This word does not have a one-to-one equivalent word in English regarding meaning, language level, or a link to one gender. It is a greeting wishing that God bestows on the addressee good health. Therefore, the translator may opt to translate the greeting function of the utterance or supplement it with lexical additions to reflect the sense of the source text utterance and use other stylistic devices to reproduce the features of women’s language.

Apparently, the translator resorted to the first option, using the utterance (*How are you, Dalal?*). Translating this expression depends on the translator’s decision as gender practices, according to Eckert (1989), differ from one culture to another and even within the same culture from one group to another. Therefore, a suggested translation for (عواف يا لول) is (*Hi Dalal. Be blessed with good health*), but this translation looks archaic and long and does not qualify to fit in the target culture.

The second part of the utterance, offering to peel an orange for Abd al-Reheem, can be rephrased to include some features of women’s language, such as lexical hedges or fillers, like modals or adverbs, to be equivalent to the source text. The translator may also use a question tag in the utterance, as women frequently use question tags for several reasons, including securing agreement, avoiding direct disagreement (Al-Harabsheh, 2014), and keeping the conversation going (Xia, 2013). Semantic, grammatical, and stylistic equivalence results from applying the instruction criteria, but the utterance has a lexical inequivalence that can be overlooked for the sake of the smoothness of the translated text so that it appears like the original. In the extralinguistic determinants, it would seem weird in the target culture that a casual greeting would turn into prayers for good health. Therefore, the suggested translation for this utterance is (*How are you, Dalal? (...) Abd al-Reheem, you want me to peel you one (orange), right?*)

B. Category 2: Women’s Helplessness

Lakoff (1987, p. 380) stated that emotions are usually seen as feelings alone, which is wrong since emotions have conceptual contents. He added that emotions have “an extremely complex structure, which gives rise to a wide variety of non-trivial inferences.” Therefore, emotions generally carry meanings that require translation. According to Freed (2003), women’s language reflects their feelings of powerlessness, helplessness, and insecurity in society. In this context, the helplessness is reflected in women’s discourse in Arabic, but the English translation shows otherwise. The following table is a reading of the responses from the two questionnaires:

TABLE 4
RESPONSES EXTRACTED FROM THE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES FOR WOMEN'S HELPLESSNESS EXAMPLES

No.	Arabic Example			English Translation		
2	(يادي الخيبة على حكاية النور دي يا ولاد. (ص. 32))			What's going on with this power? (p. 10)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	4.8	85.5	9.7	15.4	7.7	76.9
3	كده برضه تعملها يا بو عبد الله؟ (ص. 45)			So you've gone and done it, Abu Abdalla? (p. 27)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	21	64.5	14.5	26.9	26.9	46.2
4	يا مصيبيتي (ص. 68)			Oh my God! (p. 43)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	0	98.4	1.6	0	30.8	69.2

The wide gap between responses in the two questionnaires shows that the above three Arabic excerpts reflect features of women's language. In contrast, most respondents to the English questionnaire saw the translations as neutral.

In Excerpt 2, the utterance (يادي الخيبة) is an Egyptian colloquial expression of helplessness that women widely use, hence the 85.5% in the Arabic questionnaire. However, issues arise at the lexical and stylistic levels when applying the instruction criteria to the English translation. The translator omitted the vocative (يا ولاد), resulting in a neutral utterance that does not reflect the air of powerlessness and helplessness in the discourse of Nargis. This feature is maintained by Lakoff (1973) and Hall et al. (2021). Furthermore, Ochs (1992) posited that gender and language work together to generate socially organized pragmatic meanings. Therefore, to have an equivalent translation, suggestions include (*Well, I think this issue of power bursts my bubble, dearies*) or (*Well, I think this issue of power is a real bummer, dearies*). Although the suggested translations employ fillers, hedges, and diminutives, such as "well, I think" and "dearies," slang words are not preferable because of their masculinity. Xia (2013) said men prefer slang to appear more masculine, while women use more euphemisms. Therefore, the suggested translation for this excerpt is (*Oh my! I think this power outage is a disappointment, dearies, isn't it?*) since it employs an exclamation, fillers, a hedge, a diminutive, and a question tag, aligning with women's language.

In Excerpt 3, Nargis is in the graveyard, sitting on the ground and crying for the death of her husband. When the wooden coffin passes her, she cries in reproach and says the utterance in Excerpt 3. Although Nargis is talking to her dead husband, this utterance is a short monologue, so no response is expected. However, it functions to show Nargis' helplessness and fragility at this moment. The translation transfers the lexical and semantic meanings of the utterance when applying the instruction criteria but fails to achieve the stylistic equivalence to reflect the feature of helplessness. The translation of this utterance should have received extra attention at the end of Chapter 2, which symbolizes the end of a chapter in the life of Nargis. According to Al-Harashsheh (2014, p. 872), it is "implausible to divorce language from society, as language can be only understood in its social context." He added that linguistic choices are influenced by the participants, social context, topic, and discourse function. Thus, the translator can add some of Lakoff's features (e.g., hedges and question tags) to solve this issue. A suggested translation that shows the helplessness of Nargis is (*Dear me! You've really gone, Abu Abdalla, haven't you?*).

In Excerpt 4, Abd al-Reheem visits Nargis and tells her that he divorced his wife, so she replies (يا مصيبيتي), which literally means (*O, my woe/misfortune*). Although she is not supportive of this marriage, it does not stop her spontaneous reaction, perhaps because divorce in the Egyptian culture is a serious issue, and women show solidarity with other women. The instruction criteria application shows lexical inequivalence, though all other parameters are achieved. However, this lexical inequivalence is acceptable due to cultural considerations.

The utterance in Arabic indicates women's tentativeness and powerlessness, a language feature that exists heavily in women's language, according to Lakoff (1973) and Svendsen (2019). The translation of the utterance as (*Oh my God!*) is generally acceptable, but it has a high percentage of responses as a neutral expression. A possible translation for this excerpt is (*Oh, fudge!*), which is an attempt to avoid stronger words, as discussed in the next category. However, the expression is still strong, although it reflects upset, surprise, and discontent. Nonetheless, it does not match the language level used in the source text. Therefore, a suggested translation is (*Oh my goodness!*) as a modified version of the translated excerpt. The suggested expression is an interjection that functions as a mild alarm and expresses surprise, which fits in the context of this utterance.

C. Category 3: Avoidance of Strong Words

Al-Harashsheh (2014, p. 881) posited that "women are more conservative than men in conversations, as they employ more politeness strategies than men do." Therefore, women do not use strong or swear words. Lakoff (1973) argued that this conservative nature starts from early childhood. Thus, if a little girl talks tough like a boy, she is scolded. This cultural paradigm is reflected in the repeated use of euphemistic expressions by women, especially in conservative societies. The following table is a reading of the responses from the two questionnaires:

TABLE 5
RESPONSES EXTRACTED FROM THE TWO QUESTIONNAIRES FOR AVOIDANCE OF STRONG WORD EXAMPLES

No.	Arabic Example			English Translation		
6	تقول لها؟ طب انتنيل على خبيتك السوداء. (ص. 79)			Tell her? Oh, shut up, you idiot. (p. 51)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	16.1	59.7	24.2	50	19.2	30.8
7	بخبيك يا عبد الرحيم. (ص. 83)			You've really done it this time, Abd al-Reheem. (p. 54)		
	Male %	Female %	Neutral %	Male %	Female %	Neutral %
	14.5	61.3	24.2	19.2	30.8	50

According to the responses to the English translation of the two excerpts, the features of women's language are overlooked. Although the translations of the two utterances are not literal, they fail to achieve stylistic equivalence.

In Excerpt 6, Nargis and her husband advise Abd al-Reheem to report to the authorities that he has married so that his wife's monthly pension as a widow is suspended. Otherwise, he may be imprisoned. Reluctantly, he says he will tell her later. Surprised by the reaction of her brother, who happens to be the cashier who used to deliver the pension money to his wife, Nargis responds with the utterance in Excerpt 6, which includes a rhetorical question in response to Abd al-Reheem's surprising and reluctant reaction. She euphemizes the insults she wants to direct at her brother due to his carelessness. The instruction criteria reveal that the English translation transfers the literal meaning but fails to achieve the stylistic equivalence, which reflects the features of women's language. A suggested translation for this utterance is (*Tell her? That's just disappointing, smartie.*). In this suggested translation, several features of women's language are used to express the functions in the Arabic text, including the rhetorical question as an informal replacement of a question tag in (*Tell her?*), the adverb (*just*) as an intensifier, the empty booster in (*that's just disappointing*), a diminutive in (*smartie*), and, above all, avoiding strong words. Xia (2013) stated that women usually avoid strong swear words and dirty utterances, so they rarely say strong words like damn or hell but use utterances like "Oh, dear!" and "My god!" In the suggested translation, the use of (*smartie*) is a euphemism to denote the opposite, a feature of women's language.

Excerpt 7 is Nargis' first utterance when she sees Abd al-Reheem as a groom. The Arabic utterance is a colloquial cliché expression, which literally means (*May God disappoint/fail you*). Sometimes, it is considered a euphemistic expression of surprise addressed to close people as a compliment, so it is not an insult in this context. The instruction criteria application shows that the English translation is functional and successfully renders the meaning, not the stylistic features. A suggested translation to express the air of surprise could start with (*Kidding me?*). However, it sounds more masculine and does not achieve the stylistic feature. Therefore, a suggested translation is (*No way! You've really done it this time, Abd al-Reheem, haven't you?*). In the suggested translation, a colloquial expression is used to denote surprise (*No way!*), and a question tag is used as a feature of women's language while avoiding strong words that a literal translation may generate.

Before proceeding to the discussion, the following table portrays the 8 Arabic excerpts analyzed above and their suggested English translations.

TABLE 6
THE EIGHT ARABIC EXCERPTS AND THEIR SUGGESTED ENGLISH TRANSLATION

No.	Arabic Excerpt	Suggested English Translation
1	طيب يا خويا اخلعه (ص. 18)	<i>Oh dear! Well, have it pulled.</i>
2	يادي الخيبة على حكاية النور دي يا ولاد. (ص. 32)	<i>Oh my! I think this power outage is a disappointment, dearies, isn't it?</i>
3	كده يرضه تعملها يا بو عبد الله؟ (ص. 45)	<i>Dear me! You've really gone, Abu Abdalla, haven't you?</i>
4	يا مصيبيتي (ص. 68)	<i>Oh, my goodness!</i>
5	سلم على أمك وخالك عبد العزيز وستك عزيزة يا وله. (ص. 71)	<i>Cutie, say hello to your mom, Uncle Abd al-Aziz and granny Aziza.</i>
6	تقول لها؟ طب انتنيل على خبيتك السوداء. (ص. 79)	<i>Tell her? That's just disappointing. You are such a smartie.</i>
7	بخبيك يا عبد الرحيم. (ص. 83)	<i>No way! You've really done it this time, Abd al-Reheem, haven't you?</i>
8	عواف يا دلال. (... أقشر لك واحدة (برتقال) يا عبد الرحيم؟ (ص. 137)	<i>How are you, Dalal? (...) Abd al-Reheem, you want me to peel you one (orange), right?</i>

To verify the suggested translations, a third questionnaire with the suggested answers was dispatched to ten native English speakers who worked as linguists, editors, writers, and language specialists in the US, UK, Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands. Their invaluable responses helped refine the suggested translations.

Nevertheless, interpreting the findings of this paper must be taken cautiously because this study is the first step in a long road to explore the challenges and solutions to translating features of women's language in Arabic literature in general and Egyptian colloquial in particular.

Women have different ways of talking in different languages, so the transfer of the features of women's language requires the translator to be bilingual and bicultural. Coates (2016) maintained that men and women have different speech behaviors in different languages, of which Arabic is not an exception. Features of women's language have hidden semantic and pragmatic functions. While some people may see that some women's language features are meaningless, they reflect important elements in defining meaning, such as how well people know one another, attitudes, education levels, and social context.

Although women's language is a universal linguistic phenomenon, different languages, cultures, societies, and communities use various devices to express the features of women's language. In this context, Inoue (2003) argued that when women's language is dislocated into another language, a regime is necessary to reproduce it successfully. This dislocation is a linguistic and cultural issue. Eckert (1989) saw gender as a complicated social structure, while Xia (2013) indicated that social factors may be the reason for the differences in men's and women's discourses. Moreover, Svendsen (2019) argued that the speech of individuals and groups varies according to gender, ethnicity, class, age, socioeconomic status, and education level. Ochs (1992) posited that gender and language work together to generate socially organized pragmatic meanings. Therefore, to have an equivalent translation, translators must employ fillers, hedges, and diminutives (e.g., "Well, I think," and "dearies") since the use of slang words is not preferable, as it is more masculine. Xia (2013) explained that men prefer slang to appear more masculine, while women use more euphemisms.

Most of the problems in the translated excerpts are stylistic-oriented, as the translator tends to sacrifice the smoothness and originality of the target text to preserve the lexical equivalence. One of the first lessons taught in Translation 101 is that translation entails loss (and gain), and therefore, the translator may sacrifice an element for the sake of another; it is up to the translator to decide which element is more significant. In this context, Youssef and Albarakati (2023, p. 1410) stated that the solution can be achieved through "settling the conflict between finding formal equivalents to preserve the context-free semantics on the one hand and finding functional equivalents to preserve the context-sensitive communicative value on the other hand".

Therefore, this study finds that reproducing the features of women's language in another language may require sacrificing the lexical equivalence for stylistic equivalence based on how the translator settles the conflict between formal and functional equivalences. El-Ghobashy (2004) said that when she translated the novel, the stylistic features of the Arabic novel were maintained. This goal was generally achieved throughout the novel. However, it was not transparent in her translation of women's language.

The analysis shows that the translator of literary works needs to translate freely, without the restrictions of literal translation, to generate the equivalent sense of the source text. Therefore, as evident in the analysis, devices like expletives or terms of endearment may need more than a literal translation to generate an equivalent effect on the text level.

The collated findings of the analysis of the eight excerpts answer the research question on the techniques needed to translate the features of women's language to generate an equivalent effect in the target language. The suggested solutions to transfer the features of women's language from Arabic into English vary from one excerpt to another based on the context, language level used, the participants, and the topic. Suggestions vary from using tag questions, intensifiers, empty boosters, hedges, diminutives, and polite forms to avoiding strong swear words. Therefore, translation has no "one solution fits all" in the current study and across different domains and language pairs. Hence, generalization is not recommended when offering solutions to these gender-related issues, according to Hall et al. (2021).

V. CONCLUSION

This study revolved around the means to translate the universal phenomenon known as women's language, especially between languages reflecting different cultures with unique perceptions of women's status in society. Therefore, this paper investigated the means of translating women's language in Ibrahim Aslan's (2005) second novel, *Nile Sparrows*. The study reviewed the relevant literature on women's language in English and Arabic by focusing on its general features. The study found scarce literature relevant to translating women's language, hence the significance of this study. After data collection and classification, the selected Arabic and English excerpts were placed in two questionnaires and sent to native speakers of the two languages to decide whether the excerpts reflected features of women's language. While responses to the Arabic questionnaire showed that the excerpts were brimful with features of women's language, responses to the English questionnaire showed the neutrality of the translations. The eight selected examples were classified into three categories and analyzed using Reiss' (2000) instruction criteria while considering Lakoff's (1973) framework of the features of women's language. Suggested translations were offered when needed.

The study finds that successfully reproducing the features of women's language in another language may require sacrificing the lexical equivalence for the sake of the smoothness of the target text, based on how the translator settles the conflict between formal and functional equivalences. Despite the heavy existence of semantic equivalence in the translations of the excerpts, clear inequivalence exists at the stylistic level. Hence, the translator should select appropriate devices in the target language to achieve equivalence and consider that features of women's language vary from one culture to the next, even within the same culture from one group to another. Thus, no solution fits all in translating women's language, which depends on the nature of the target language, the language level, and social factors like ethnicity, geographic area, and topic. Therefore, generalizations in suggesting solutions are not recommended.

The findings of this study must be interpreted cautiously as the first step in investigating the English translation of features of women's language in Arabic literature. This step requires scholars and translators to explore possible challenges and solutions using other theoretical frameworks. It is also recommended that researchers and translators working on different language pairs produce similar studies to verify the findings of this paper.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research received grant no. (3/2023) from the Arab Observatory for Translation (an affiliate of ALESCO), which is supported by the Literature, Publishing & Translation Commission in Saudi Arabia.

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An Empirical Study on Enhancing Interview Skills Through Activity Based Learning at Graduation Level

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Abstract—This paper focuses on ‘Activity Based Learning’ (ABL) that helps students acquire the interview skills at graduation level. The main aim of this quantitative study was to see how Activity Based Learning (ABL) helped low and high achievers in Bachelors of Technology (B. Tech.) course to improve their interview skills. For the research, 40 students were chosen at random from III B. Tech. classes and were divided into experimental and control groups (20 students + 20 students). To measure the extent of interview performance among the participants an achievement test was devised and was given twice, once as a pre-test and once as a post-test. Primarily, the pre-test was used to show that with respect to previous knowledge of interview skills, both the groups were similar. Later, Activity Based Language Teaching method of instruction to the experimental group and traditional language teaching method of instruction to the controlled group were adopted. The post-test was given at the conclusion to assess the students’ progress. The researchers employed the independent sample t-test to see if mean scores’ difference between the groups was significant at the 0.05 level. In the post test, the experimental group outscored the control group demonstrating that ABL is an effective approach in improving students’ interview skills. The results suggest that the ABL method significantly develops and improves the interview skills of students when used in the classroom.

Index Terms—Activity Based Learning, control group, experimental group, enhancing, interview skills

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is the prime tool for communication. Having attained the status of *lingua franca*, English became a tool to access information, share knowledge and communicate across the world. In academic context, the way a student learns a second language and uses it with certain proficiency mainly depends on the teaching methodology. In this competitive world, the interviewers are in search of candidates who can communicate well besides being able to interpret what others say with their creative mindset. Activity Based Learning plays a key role in developing communication and critical and creative thinking skills in the students. Kolb (1984), in his research stated that activity based teaching is

more suitable to promote learning when compared to traditional ways of teaching. Later Nunan (1995) proposed that the process of facilitating language learning from simple or brief to more complex or lengthy activities through a range of work plans is known as Activity Based Learning. Any pedagogical method that involves students in the process of learning in the classroom is known as activity-based learning (Prince, 2004, p. 223). Harfield et al. (2007) in their research state that during ABL students actively participate in learning experiences by merely not being passive recipients of knowledge. Powell and Kalina (2009, p. 242) say that ABL depends on the constructivist theory of learning according to which information cannot be given to humans which can be understood and used immediately, instead, by collaborating with others and based on the previous experiences, humans must develop their own understanding and they reinforce Churchill's (2003) research which states that ABL also enhances higher-level thinking ability in students. Domin's (2007) research proves that successful learning experiences could be experienced by learners by participating in various activities. According to Zahoor-ul-Haq et al. (2015), while using the Activity Based Learning technique in the language classroom, students are more likely to participate in the process of learning. This is because students are given multiple opportunities to develop their learning skills. Learning to speak is always a challenging task where the teachers carefully select a task for the pupils to practice speaking and lead them through the process (Mercer, 1998). Baker and Westrup (2000) opine that a teacher, besides being encouraging should realize that learners learn through mistakes while participating in a task. In order to be efficient and effective, activity-based learning takes up more room than traditional lecture-based approaches and necessitates additional and flexible physical resources (Breen, 1987). There are many activities which a language teacher could exploit in the classroom, which could create a free, frank and interactive atmosphere and therefore the teaching and learning of language will become very easy and spontaneous. Providing students with "real-world" contexts with various activities to practice effective interviewing skills can mean the difference between their achieving desired outcomes versus missing opportunities in interviews. Activity Based Learning also enables the students to analyse, assess, improve, and apply listening skills in the process of an interview.

II. THE STUDY'S RATIONALE

This study looks into the impact of Activity Based Learning on the development of interview skills in low and high achievers in the III B. Tech. class. More specifically, the study tests the following hypotheses:

Ho1: In the pre-test conducted there is no significant difference between the a) mean scores of experimental and control groups b) mean scores of low achievers of experimental and control groups c) mean scores of high achievers of experimental and control groups with respect to achievement in interview skills.

Ho2: In the post-test conducted there is no significant difference between the a) mean scores of experimental and control groups b) mean scores of low achievers of experimental and control groups c) mean scores of high achievers of experimental and control groups with respect to achievement in interview skills.

III. METHOD

A. Research Design

The present research has employed a quantitative approach and used an experimental design with pre-test and post-test equivalent group. The experiment was carried out in a controlled atmosphere in a language classroom that is seen as a real-life laboratory with the goal of better understanding language learners' characteristics (Phakiti, 2014, p. 2).

B. Sample of Research

The sample of research consisted of 40 students who were selected at random from III B. Tech classes. To this sample a pre-test made by the teacher was used. Two equal groups (20 students in each group) named as experimental group and control group were formed based on the pre-test scores. Low achieving and high achieving students in both the groups were also identified in the next level. High achievers were those whose scores were above the mean in both the control and experimental groups, while low achievers were those whose scores were below the mean.

C. Research Instrument

An achievement test (mock interview with 10 test items (Appendix A) was developed to measure the extent of interview performance among the participants. The participants were given the test twice, once as a pre-test and once as a post-test. Primarily, the pre-test was used to show that with respect to previous knowledge of interview skills, both the groups were similar. On completion of the study, the post-test was given to the students.

For the purpose of test development, a specification table was prepared. Keeping the specifications table in mind 10 test items that measure the performance of students in interview skills were devised. The parameters were the same for both the tests (the test items were not revealed to the students).

Along with the researcher who was trained in applying Activity Based Learning to teach English, another teacher was involved for the study. Teaching experience and teaching competencies were relatively equal in both the teachers. Since the researcher was already trained in the area, the task of instructing the experimental group was taken up.

D. Data Collection Procedures

The job I would like to do is _____		
For this job I need the following skills:	At the moment I have these skills:	The skills I still need to develop are:

Plan execution (Teacher's handbook)

Module 1.

Lesson: Employability skills

Stage 1. (0-5 mins) Introducing the Topic

1 [T-Whole Class] Tell SS they are going to get a better understanding of what employability skills are in today's lesson. Briefly explain hard skills vs. soft skills. Ask SS to explain what they think employability skills are to their partner.

2 [Pair Work] SS very quickly share their understanding of employability skills. Allow 1-2 minutes for this.

3 [T-Whole Class] Feedback and ensure SS have a basic understanding of what employability skills are. Elicit (ask for) examples and write these on the board.

Stage 2. (5-15 mins) Defining Employability Skills

1 [T] Write the following on the board: 1. You learn these at school, online or from books 2. These skills will change in different situations 3. These skills are to do with emotional intelligence. Check SS understand emotional intelligence.

2 [T-Whole Class] Tell SS to discuss their answers to the mini quiz with their partners and decide which statements refer to hard skills and which to soft skills. Check SS have a basic understanding of the difference of hard and soft skills and explain what emotional intelligence is. (this is the ability to understand your emotions and other people's emotions).

3 [Pair Work] Allow enough time for this. Monitor. (Observe and guide if needed)

4 [T-Whole Class] Elicit SS answers. Clarify any areas of confusion. (1. Hard skills. 2. Soft skills e.g. good communication skills may be different depending on who you are talking to. Hard skills are the same and are measured in the same way. 3. Soft skills as you are learning how to respond to people). Hard skills are more about your knowledge of factual information.)

5 [T-Whole Class] Ask SS to look at >HO1 in Module 1 Lesson 3 in the Learner Booklet appendix. Tell SS to tick which employability skills are required for the different jobs.

6 [I] Ask SS complete the tables on their own. Monitor. (observe and guide if needed)

7 [Pair Work] Ask SS to compare their answers in pairs.

8 [T-Whole Class] Feedback. (Drivers – machine operating (car) and language skills. Packers – machine operating (forklift) and numeracy skills. Receptionists – language and digital skills)

[Information] Tell SS that they will see Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is often the measurement used for hard skills and Emotional Quotient (EQ) for soft skills.

Stage 3. (15-25 mins) Identifying Employability Skills for Different Jobs

1 [T] Put students in groups.

2 [Group work] Tell SS to decide what employability skills would help the three people in >HO2. Monitor.

3 [T-Whole Class] Feedback. Elicit answers and check SS agree. Encourage SS to explain their answers. (Daya= numeracy is essential for accountants and digital as accountants use computer software packages when doing accounts. Charita – language to speak to customers and numeracy to make many calculations. Suresh – digital and numeracy Ajay – machine operating skills language as he would be dealing with tourists. Ikshana- numeracy digital.

Stage 4. (25-40) Identifying Skill sets and Areas for Development

1 [T-Whole Class] Ask SS to look at >HO3 to identify the skills needed for the job they would like to do, the employability skills they need for it and the skills they need to improve on. These can be hard or soft skills.

2 [I] SS do the activity. Monitor.

3 [Pair Work] Put SS in pairs and tell them to tell their partner about what they have noted down in their table.

4 [T-Whole Class] Ask one or two SS to lead feedback by talking about what their partners said.

The topic was dealt for 6 sessions with one session for each week. The duration of each session was 120 minutes. Conventional teaching method was adopted for the control group for the same duration. For the control group, teaching material from the assigned course book was used by the teacher. During the sessions, the learning experiences of students were also sought.

E. Data Analysis

Analysis of the relevant data was done to test the hypothesis. Each group's standard deviation, mean and means' difference were calculated. The experimental and control groups' means' difference was determined using an

independent sample t-test. At the level of 0.05, the significant mean scores' difference of the two groups was investigated with the help of pre-test and post-test scores.

IV. RESULTS

The difference between the control and experimental groups' mean scores were calculated on the pre-test and post-test by conducting the t-test. The following are the results, analysis and interpretation of available data:

A. Pre Test

TABLE 1
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE MEAN SCORE VALUES ON THE PRE-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	20	11.05	3.91	1.684	0.818*
Control	20	11.35	4.07		

*Not Significant

d. f. = 38

Level of significance= 0. 05

0.818 was the calculated value of t while 1.684 was the table value of t as per Table 1. The degree of freedom was 38 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. The calculation of t -value showed that the table value (1.684) was greater than the obtained value (0.818). As there was no significant difference between the mean scores of both the groups, H_0 1 (a) was accepted. The pre-test findings revealed that both the experimental group and control group had equivalent prior knowledge of interview skills.

(a). Low Achievers

TABLE 2
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE LOW ACHIEVERS' MEAN SCORE VALUES ON PRE-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	09	7.4	2.11	1.746	0.651*
Control	09	7.8	1.72		

*Not Significant

d. f. = 16

Level of significance = 0.05

0.651 was the obtained value of t and 1.746 was the table value of t according to Table 2. The degree of freedom was 16 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. As a result, the table value of t (1.746) was higher than the obtained value of t (0.651). H_0 1 (b) was approved due to the non-significant difference between both the groups' mean scores. The findings of the pre-test revealed that in both the experimental and control groups, the low achievers had equivalent prior knowledge of interview skills.

(b). High Achievers

TABLE 3
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE HIGH ACHIEVERS' MEAN SCORE VALUES ON PRE-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	11	14	2.215	1.725	0.883*
Control	11	14.181	3.157		

*Not Significant

d. f. = 20

Level of significance = 0.05

0.883 was the obtained value of t while 1.725 was the table value of t as reflected in Table 3. The degree of freedom was 20 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. The calculation of t -value showed that the table value (1.725) was higher than the calculated value (0.883). H_0 1(c) was approved due to the non-significant difference between both the groups' mean scores. As a result, in the experimental and control groups, the high achievers were identical on the pre-test in terms of their abilities with regard to interview skills.

B. Post Test

TABLE 4
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE MEAN SCORE VALUES ON THE POST-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	20	20.75	4.16	1.684	2.328*
Control	20	17.6	4.04		

* Significant

d. f. = 38

Level of significance = 0.05

2.328 was the obtained value of t while 1.684 was the table value of t as per Table 4. The degree of freedom was 38 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. The calculation of t -value showed that table value (1.684) was less

than the obtained value (2.328). Ho2 (a) was discarded due to the significant difference in the mean scores between the experiment and control groups. The group taught using Activity Based Learning outperformed the other group in the interview skills, according to post-test results.

(a). *Low Achievers*

TABLE 5
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE LOW ACHIEVERS' MEAN SCORE VALUES ON POST-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	07	16.285	3.238	1.746	21.934*
Control	11	13.375	1.871		

* Significant d. f. = 16 Level of significance = 0.05

1.746 was the table value of t while 21.934 was the obtained value of t as shown in Table 5. The degree of freedom was 16 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. The calculation of t -value showed that the table value (1.746) was less than the obtained value (21.934). Ho2 (b) was discarded due to the significant difference between the low achievers' mean score values in both the groups. Post-test results revealed that Activity Based Learning improved the performance of low achievers in experimental group than the low achievers in control group.

(b). *High Achievers*

TABLE 6
THE DIFFERENCE IN THE HIGH ACHIEVERS' MEAN SCORE VALUES ON PRE-TEST BETWEEN THE GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value	
				Table Value	Calculated Value
Experimental	13	23.153	2.142	1.725	9.594*
Control	09	21.555	1.89		

* Significant d. f. = 20 Level of significance = 0.05

9.594 was the obtained value of t while 1.725 was the table value of t as shown in Table 6. The degree of freedom was 20 with the results being tested at 0.05 significant level. The calculation of t -value showed that table value (1.725) was less than the obtained value (9.594). Ho2(c) was discarded due to the significant difference in high achievers' mean score values in both the groups. The post-test showed that Activity Based Learning improved the performance of the high achievers in the experimental group than the high achievers in the control group.

V. DISCUSSION

Significant variations weren't found in pre-test interview skills ratings between the control and experimental groups, according to the findings. However, post-test findings revealed that in terms of interview skills the performance of the experimental group fared much better than the performance of the control group. At the (0.05) level, the difference of post-test mean scores between both groups was significant. Similarly, the experimental group's low achievers and high achievers fared much better than those of the control group on the post-test in terms of acquiring interview skills. This resulted in abandoning the null hypothesis. After the experiment was done, on campus and off campus recruitment drives were conducted and 14 students in the experimental group got placed in reputed MNCs and the remaining students who didn't get through the interviews were able to clear all the rounds except the technical round which demands technical knowledge. Only 2 students from the control group got placed in MNCs and the students who didn't get placed were not able to get through the HR and other rounds also (the experiment and control group students are now in IV B. Tech.). Based on the results obtained, a decision was taken to implement activity based learning for enhancing the interview skills in students.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that ABL has enhanced students' participation and made learning and teaching more enjoyable. It increased the proficiency levels of both low and high achieving students in interview skills. According to the findings, students' ability to talk, self-confidence, spontaneity in speaking, and quick response to any scenario when engaging in interviews will all improve from a comprehensive training program that includes appropriate activities, teaching techniques, and resources. This study also showed that Activity Based Learning improved the performance of the low achievers in the experimental group. So there is a need for in-built flexibility in designing activities according to the topic and the teachers should be trained in doing so.

It is suggested that teachers use activity-based language education strategies to enable pupils to improve their interview abilities. Necessary training should be provided for the teachers so that they impart the skills to their subjects.

APPENDIX

10 test items used for assessment

The test items were prepared based on the suggestions given by professors of EFLU, Hyderabad, India.

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Communication (verbal and non-verbal)
- 3) Soft skills
- 4) Spontaneity in speaking
- 5) Quick response to any situation
- 6) Elevator pitch
- 7) Listening
- 8) Job analysis
- 9) Connecting with the interviewer
- 10) Knowledge on CV

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The Cheating Practices of Kuwaiti EFL College Students: Attitudes and Opinions

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Abstract—This study is designed to inspect the attitudes of Kuwaiti college students of English as a foreign language (EFL) towards cheating on English exams and their opinions about the factors underlying their cheating behaviour. A mixed-method approach was used to collect and analyse the data. The participants were 182 Kuwaiti EFL students who answered a survey that collected quantitative and qualitative data. Microsoft Excel Software was used to analyse the quantitative data. Thematic analysis was conducted to analyse the qualitative data. It was found that although the participants held a negative attitude towards cheating, they showed a lax stance towards some cheating methods, namely, using leaked exams and learning them from other students. This lax stance raises ethical concerns and highlights the need for intervention. Analysis of participants' opinions revealed various personal and contextual factors affecting students' cheating practices: language instructors' corrupt practices, societal pressure, and students' poor language proficiency levels. Our findings largely echo the literature on college students' cheating practices, precisely research on EFL students' cheating behaviour. They also reflect the Kuwaiti EFL context in which they were identified. Practical implications and recommendations for future research are indicated.

Index Terms—academic corruption, academic integrity, exam cheating, EFL college students, English language proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic dishonesty, a long-standing concern in higher education, refers to unethical acts or misbehaviours that breach fairness and honesty principles and can manifest in various forms, including plagiarism, falsifying documents, and exam cheating (Holden et al., 2021). Cheating on exams, which is the focus of this study, is the most common type of academic dishonesty among college students (Jenkins et al., 2023). According to King et al. (2009), cheating is a transgression against academic integrity by which students take an unfair advantage that misrepresents their ability and grasp of knowledge. Academic institutions usually provide students with a code of conduct that outlines academic integrity with examples of academic misbehaviours. However, the fact that many students do not adhere to these established standards of behavioural conduct raises serious ethical concerns.

Because academic integrity is crucial in education and cheating is pervasive among college students, researchers have shown interest in investigating such misbehaviour. Studies have shown that students use various methods to cheat (e.g., Choi, 2019; Odongo et al., 2021). Cheating has also been shown to be associated with multiple factors, which can be classified into two major categories: personal and contextual (Noorbehbahani et al., 2022). Personal factors are related to individual characteristics, including academic performance, age, gender, moral attitudes, and learning motivation. Contextual factors are related to the student's social and learning environments, including college cheating policies, teaching methods, parental pressure, and the behaviours and attitudes of teachers and peers towards cheating. Much of the research on this topic has been conducted worldwide, whereby scholars have delved into students' perspectives and opinions to understand this phenomenon. However, relatively little is known about it from a Kuwaiti perspective, precisely the Kuwaiti context of EFL. Against this background, the present study aims to provide a broad insight into the cheating behaviour of Kuwaiti EFL college students. It seeks to identify the methods they use to cheat and the factors contributing to their cheating behaviour by investigating their attitudes and opinions of cheating.

A. Research Aims and Questions

The present study is centred on the cheating practices of Kuwaiti EFL college students. It aims to explore their attitudes towards cheating on English exams and their opinions about the factors underlying their cheating behaviour. Following the aims, our research questions are as follows:

1. What are the attitudes of Kuwaiti EFL students towards cheating on English exams?
2. What are the opinions of Kuwaiti EFL students about the factors influencing students' cheating behaviour on English exams?

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B. Significance of the Study

The study was motivated by Kuwaiti students' cheating behaviour. In 2023, local newspapers referred to leaked exams distributed among students. The Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, arrested several networks that had created WhatsApp cheating groups to which hundreds of students subscribed for a fee. Students obtained the questions and answers of several exams, including, but not limited to, English tests. The students were also offered hidden earpieces through which they were fed the answers.

It is well established that cheating negatively affects the quality of education and reduces the validity and trust of students' assessments. However, research on such academic misbehaviour in the Kuwaiti educational context is scarce. Much of the existing body of research investigating cheating includes a wide range of worldwide educational contexts, for example, North America (e.g., Jenkins et al., 2023; King et al., 2009), Europe (e.g., Bacon et al., 2020; Chudzicka-Czupala et al., 2013), and some parts of Asia (e.g., Arab & Ofran, 2023; Costley, 2019). These studies have shed light on the cheating practices of college students and the drivers of academic dishonesty. However, their findings cannot necessarily be generalised to other socio-cultural and educational contexts. Research points to socio-cultural factors affecting students' academic behaviour (Noorbehbahani et al., 2022). Nevertheless, different cultures have different social expectancies and attitudes towards academic performance, leading students to various behaviours. In some cultures, cheating is socially acceptable and not ethically wrong. For example, Chudzicka-Czupala et al. (2013) show that Swiss students attach a significantly higher standard of honesty to academic behaviour, given that social consent to academic cheating is low. On the other hand, Ukrainian and Polish students have a positive attitude towards cheating due to the social acceptance of such misbehaviour. Research presented by Maeda (2021) also demonstrates that Cambodian parents consider cheating a fair practice for success. They are actively involved in their children's cheating, putting them under stress and expecting them to obtain good grades. Therefore, given the influence of socio-cultural factors on ethical behaviour, it could be assumed that Kuwaiti students may differ in their attitudes towards cheating and their justifications for committing academic misconduct because of their different social and cultural heritage.

A few publications, however, have investigated the cheating practices of Kuwaiti college students (e.g., Alsuwaileh et al., 2016; Erguvan, 2022). Nevertheless, while these studies have indicated high rates of cheating among students, they were not concerned with the cheating behaviour of EFL students. Students' fields of study have been constructed as potential determinants for cheating. This is related to subject difficulty playing a role in this behaviour. It is shown that where English is learnt as a foreign language, EFL students often face difficulties acquiring it, therefore resorting to cheating on exams (Arab & Ofran, 2023). Given that English is learnt in Kuwait as a foreign language, the question, thus, arises of whether it constitutes a source of difficulty for students, leading them to cheat on exams. This is what the present study aims to explore. Relatedly, in analysing the advantages and drawbacks of online distance teaching in Kuwait, Al-Abdullah and Almutairi (2024) referred to instances of EFL college students' cheating behaviour reported by EFL instructors. The teachers revealed that cheating was difficult to control, referring to some of the cheating methods used by the students. Nevertheless, the researchers did not delve into students' opinions and attitudes towards cheating and the factors behind their cheating behaviour. The results of their study cannot be undermined, and the noticeable cheating behaviour among Kuwaiti EFL college students requires more focused attention. Therefore, this study attempts to inspect cheating from students' perspectives to build a better understanding of this misbehaviour.

We believe our investigation can help understand the cheating practices of Kuwaiti EFL college students and identify the factors underlying their misbehaviour by exploring their attitudes and opinions. Such investigation should help develop strategies to control cheating and manage the factors influencing their propensity to engage in academic misbehaviour, thereby fostering the integrity of the educational system and the quality of education. Thus, given the scarcity of research in the Kuwaiti EFL context and the negative effect of students' cheating on the quality of education, this paper explores the attitudes of Kuwaiti EFL students towards cheating and their opinions about the factors underlying their cheating behaviour. Consequently, this research contributes to the literature on EFL students' cheating behaviour by providing data from the Kuwaiti context. It aims to support Kuwait's educational system in maintaining academic integrity by providing valuable insights to policymakers, academic institutions, and EFL instructors.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Cheating Methods

Students resort to a variety of methods to cheat on exams. Investigating the cheating behaviour of American college students, McCabe (2005) found that they use cheat notes, learn the exam questions from other students who have already taken the exam, and help other students cheat. Similarly, Odongo et al. (2021) found that Ghanaian college students use body language and body parts to cheat during exams. The students were also reported to arrange their seating in a way that they could swap multiple-choice and true-false answers. Choi (2019) also reported that Korean college students take advantage of leaked exams. Other cheating techniques include but are not limited to writing on the arm or hand and hiding a note behind the ruler or clothes.

Students also take advantage of technology that has yielded more innovative cheating methods. According to Curran et al. (2011), the rise of technology has provided students with a broader spectrum of cheating opportunities, making cheating more sophisticated and complex to detect. Holden et al. (2021) also assert that technology has brought about

access to different cheating resources, making it easier, faster, and more convenient. They warn that technology raises new considerations that teachers have not previously considered. They maintain that it is easy for students in online exams to search the internet and communicate with each other through a messaging system to obtain answers. Empirical studies have demonstrated how college students resort to technology to cheat. Tindell and Bohlander (2012) reported that college students at a northeastern university cheated using text messaging. Similarly, Saleh and Meccawy (2021) found that Saudi EFL college students obtained exam answers through WhatsApp groups. Other cheating methods include impersonalising identity, sharing assignment files, and using the web to copy and paste the answers (Razek, 2014).

B. Factors Contributing to Cheating

Academic institutions usually provide students with a code of conduct that outlines academic integrity and provides examples of academic misbehaviours. However, many students do not adhere to the established standards of behavioural conduct. In the search for explanations, researchers have identified various personal and contextual factors that lead students to cheat on exams. According to Holden et al. (2021), there are many reasons why students may choose to depart from academic integrity. In an investigation of the reasons for Afghan EFL students' cheating behaviour, Arab and Orfan (2023) found that the participants cheated in courses they perceived as complex. Some students blamed their instructors for their poor pedagogical style. Other reasons included seeking better grades and insufficient time to prepare for the exams. In another study, Aljurf et al. (2020) cited peer student obligations, family pressure, and the desire to obtain a degree as reasons for Emirati college students' cheating behaviour. Rahimi and Goli (2016) reported that low achievement in EFL courses was a determining factor for Iranian EFL students to cheat. McCrohon and Nyland (2018) also reported poor English language skills as a driving force behind international Chinese students' cheating behaviour in Australian universities. Teachers' unethical and corrupt practices have also been identified as a reason for students' cheating behaviour. Some teachers change exam grades, alter attendance records, provide better treatment to favoured students, take bribes, and give good grades to those students who attend their private tutoring sessions. According to Maeda (2021), teachers' engagement in such practices creates a sense of injustice among students, leading the oppressed ones to cheat to compensate for teachers' unfair treatment.

Attitudes towards cheating have similarly been established as an important factor influencing students to cheat. Bolin (2004) argues that students are more prone to cheat if they harbour positive attitudes towards cheating, a view shared by several researchers (e.g., Chudzicka-Czupala et al., 2013; King et al., 2009; Rahimi & Goli, 2016). He suggests that there is a link between students' actual engagement in cheating and their tolerance for such misbehaviour. Alleyne and Phillips (2011) relatedly propose that if students favourably evaluate a cheating method, they are more likely to have behavioural intentions towards that method and eventually carry it out. The researchers observe that to explain a given behaviour, one should consider intentions shaped by attitudes towards the behaviour. Attitudes, they maintain, are rooted in individuals' beliefs about specific behaviours. Describing his views on the correlation between attitudes and cheating, Curtis (2023) similarly contends that the more cheating is acceptable by students, the more they are involved in it. He further claims that students' positive attitudes towards cheating predict their intentions to engage in such misbehaviours.

Empirical research has provided evidence that attitudes can predict students' cheating behaviour. Whitley (1998) found that American and Canadian college students who favoured cheating were more inclined to cheat than those who perceived it negatively. Similar findings were reported by Storch and Storch (2003), who investigated the attitudes of American college students towards cheating. Employing a self-reported method to explore the frequency of students' cheating and the extent to which they approve of specific acts of academic dishonesty, the researchers found a strong correlation between cheating and endorsement of such misbehaviour. Costley (2019) reported a similar correlation. Looking at the interview responses of a group of South Korean college students to gain insights into their attitudes and motivations for cheating, Costley (2019) observed that the students perceived cheating as a natural aspect of their learning experience. They expressed an accepting and permissive attitude towards cheating, presenting different justifications for their engagement in cheating, for example, insufficient time to study, course difficulties, and widespread cheating among students. The researcher concluded that attitudes were the most powerful predictors of students engaging in cheating. Similarly, Ahmadi (2012) surveyed one hundred thirty-two Iranian EFL students. The results revealed that cheating was quite common among the students who perceived it as normal behaviour. The students indicated that they enjoyed practising it and considered it an achievement. These studies support the argument that students' attitudes towards cheating determine their behaviour.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design to inspect the attitudes and opinions of Kuwaiti EFL students regarding exam cheating. According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), this design combines the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. By integrating these approaches in data collection and analysis, the study design is fortified, the findings are enriched, and the analysis is enhanced. As Creswell and Creswell (2023) highlight, this approach provides a deeper understanding of the research problem. In this study, a quantitative approach was used

to gauge the participants' attitudes towards cheating and to explore their opinions about the reasons behind their cheating behaviour. While a quantitative approach derived findings from statistics, a qualitative approach clarified these findings, allowing the participants to express their views and providing more insights into their opinions about the underlying reasons for their cheating behaviour. A survey containing both closed- and open-ended questions was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from the informants, thereby capturing a comprehensive view of their attitudes and opinions of cheating on exams.

B. Participants

A convenience sampling approach was adopted to select the sample of the students. The researchers sent a link to the survey to academics teaching EFL courses in different colleges in Kuwait, asking them to share it with their students. While this approach may limit the generalisability of our findings, it allowed the participation of a diverse range of EFL students from different colleges with different characteristics, such as different EFL instructors and textbooks, teaching methods and pedagogical styles. A total of 182 Kuwaiti college students answered the survey: 65% were female, and 35% were male. 47.8% of the participants were in social science disciplines, followed by 33% from management disciplines and 19.2% from health and medicine sciences. The participants took an average of two EFL courses during their studies.

C. Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

The survey questions are widely used in the literature (e.g., Noorbehhani et al., 2022). They reflect the most common cheating methods among students and the different personal and contextual factors underlying their cheating behaviour. However, based on the study's aims, some items were modified to fit the EFL context. The survey began with an introductory paragraph outlining the study's purpose, the intended use of the provided data, and the procedures taken to protect the participants' privacy. This procedure ensured that students were making an informed decision to partake in this study. No personal information, such as names and contact details, was collected. However, certain information, such as gender, the field of study, and the number of EFL courses completed, was collected. The name of the academic institution was also collected to ensure that participants studied at different colleges in Kuwait. This, however, was not used in any way that would reveal the identity of the institutions or students.

Two sections followed the introductory part. The first section answered research question 1 and collected quantitative data to explore the informants' attitudes towards cheating. It included eight closed-ended items reflecting various cheating methods. The participants' attitudes were measured according to their approval of these methods, that is, whether they found them appropriate to use. A 5-point Likert semantic scale (Very Inappropriate, Somewhat Inappropriate, Neutral, Somewhat Appropriate, Very Appropriate) was the response format used. High scores indicated accepting attitudes of academic misbehaviour, whereas low scores indicated unaccepting attitudes. It is worth noting that the survey did not directly ask the students about their own experiences or involvement in cheating. Instead, it sought to explore their (dis)approval of the cheating methods. This method avoids demand characteristics whereby participants might feel threatened or uncomfortable conveying their practices. They, therefore, might provide desirable responses instead of honest answers. As Leustek (2017) highlights, demand characteristics can potentially bias the results, invalidating the study's outcomes.

The second section answered research question 2. It explored the informants' opinions regarding the reasons underlying students' cheating behaviour and included two subsections. The first subsection asked them to rate the reasons influencing students' cheating behaviour. It included 11 closed-ended items that collected quantitative data. The informants' responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, Strongly Agree). High scores indicated approval of the suggested reason, while low scores indicated disapproval. The second subsection included one open-ended question that elicited qualitative data. It allowed the informants greater freedom to express their opinions. The question was as follows:

- What other reasons could lead students to cheat on English exams?

To establish its content validity, 20 EFL students (11 females, nine males) were randomly selected to pilot-test the survey. Necessary corrections were made according to their feedback. Content validity ensures that survey items are clear, comprehensive, and relevant to their intended purpose (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The pilot test established confidence in proceeding with the survey regarding whether students would grasp the questions well. Google Forms was used to create the final version. A link to the survey was sent to academics through WhatsApp, asking them to forward it to their EFL students. The Cronbach's alpha for the attitude subscale (8 items) was $\alpha=0.85$, and for the factors subscale (11 items), it was $\alpha=0.89$, which suggests that the internal consistency reliabilities were high.

D. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counting, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Qualitative data were thematically analysed, and recurring patterns and themes were identified. Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step framework guided the themes' identification and analysis process. Their approach is arguably the most delineated method in the social sciences for conducting thematic analysis (Al-Abdullah & Almutairi, 2023). It is flexible and facilitates identifying and analysing themes in qualitative data. Thematic analysis was inductive, i.e., driven by the data itself.

IV. FINDINGS

A. Attitudes Towards Cheating

This section concerns the closed-ended survey questions meant to explore the informants' attitudes towards cheating, thereby answering research question 1. Table 1 demonstrates the results of their attitudes towards using different cheating methods.

TABLE 1
ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHEATING

	Very Inappropriate	Somewhat Inappropriate	Neutral	Somewhat Appropriate	Very Appropriate	Mean	SD
	%	%	%	%	%		
1. Opening the coursebook during exams.	44.5	28.6	18.1	4.9	3.8	1.95	2.22
2. Using cheat sheets.	47.8	34.1	8.2	8.8	1.1	1.81	2.02
3. Writing in the palms of the hands.	52.2	30.2	10.4	4.9	2.2	1.74	1.94
4. Using a hidden earpiece.	57.1	23.1	6.	5.5	8.2	1.84	2.19
5. Using the cell phone (e.g., WhatsApp or text messaging).	46.2	26.9	8.8	10.4	7.7	2.06	2.44
6. Peeking at classmates' exam papers.	35.7	26.9	18.7	12.6	6.	2.26	2.61
7. Learning the exam from other students who previously took it.	24.2	21.4	23.1	13.2	18.1	2.79	3.21
8. Using leaked exams.	34.6	19.8	17.	12.6	15.9	2.55	3.02
Overall Attitude						2.12	

As Table 1 shows, the overall mean score for the participants' attitudes towards cheating is 2.12, which reflects an unfavourable attitude. 73.1% of the participants found it inappropriate to open the coursebook during exams ($M=1.95$, $SD=2.22$), 81.9% expressed a negative attitude towards using cheat sheets ($M=1.81$, $SD=2.02$), and 82.4% had a negative attitude towards writing in the palm ($M=1.74$, $SD=1.94$). Furthermore, 80.2% of the participants found it inappropriate to use a hidden earpiece ($M=1.84$, $SD=2.19$), 73.1% expressed a negative attitude towards using a cell phone ($M=2.06$, $SD=2.44$), and 62.6% had a negative attitude towards peeking at other students' exam papers ($M=2.26$, $SD=2.61$). The participants' negative attitude towards cheating does not provide empirical support to the work of Ahmadi (2012) and Salehi and Gholampour (2021), who found that their Iranian EFL students held a positive attitude towards cheating. This finding also does not support the work of Saleh and Meccawy (2021), whereby Saudi EFL participants demonstrated a favourable attitude towards cheating.

The results also show that nearly half of the participants did not entertain a negative attitude towards some cheating behaviours: 31.3% displayed a positive attitude towards learning the exam from other students, and 23.1% demonstrated a neutral position ($M=2.79$, $SD=3.21$). Furthermore, 28.5% of the participants had a positive attitude towards using leaked exams, and 17% were neutral ($M=2.55$, $SD=3.02$). These rather lax attitudes towards some cheating behaviours raise ethical issues and reflect the stance that some cheating practices are tolerated. Such attitudes could imply that some participants are likely to exhibit the intention to engage in such practices. It could also be that they might have been involved in these practices. The participants' favouring of leaked exams echoes Choi's (2019) findings, in which he also reported that Korean college students take advantage of leaked exams.

B. Students' Opinions About the Factors Influencing Students' Cheating Behaviour

This section concerns the closed- and open-ended survey questions meant to explore the informants' opinions about the reasons underlying students' cheating behaviour, thereby addressing research question 2. Quantitative analysis of the closed-ended items is presented first, followed by qualitative analysis of the open-ended question.

(a). Reasons for Cheating: Quantitative Analysis

Results of the closed-ended items exploring the reasons for students' cheating behaviour are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
REASONS FOR CHEATING

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	SD
	%	%	%	%	%		
1. Insufficient time to study.	22.5	13.7	14.3	22.	27.5	3.18	3.64
2. Desire to get a higher grade.	4.4	3.3	10.4	15.9	65.9	4.35	4.53
3. Frequent absence from English classes.	22.	25.8	17.	17.6	17.6	2.82	3.24
4. Students' low English proficiency level.	13.2	17.6	22.5	14.3	32.4	3.35	3.72
5. Short time of the exam.	15.4	21.4	32.4	14.3	16.5	2.95	3.28
6. English teachers' poor pedagogical style.	15.9	19.8	29.1	20.9	14.3	2.97	3.3
7. Lack of connection between course materials and exam questions.	33.	19.8	19.8	12.1	15.4	2.57	3.02
8. Lack of proctoring.	19.8	23.6	29.1	14.3	13.2	2.77	3.12
9. Rules and policies on cheating are tolerant.	23.1	24.2	26.4	11.	15.4	2.71	3.1
10. Other students are cheating as well.	17.	29.1	25.3	11.	17.6	2.82	3.18
11. Parents demand high grades.	10.4	13.2	23.1	24.7	28.6	3.47	3.78
Overall Mean						3.08	

As Table 2 illustrates, the participants approved all the different personal and contextual factors as reasons that lead students to cheat, with an overall mean approval score of 3.08. However, several factors were rated higher than others. Students' desire to get a higher grade was the highest-rated factor ($M=4.35$, $SD=4.53$), followed by parents demanding high grades ($M=3.47$, $SD=3.78$), students' low English proficiency level ($M=3.35$, $SD=3.72$), and students' lack of exam preparation ($M=3.18$, $SD=3.64$). These findings are consistent with those reported in the academic dishonesty literature (e.g., Ahmadi, 2012; Salehi & Gholampour, 2021), whereby EFL students highly rated those reasons to justify their cheating. The other factors in the survey were less approved by the participants. The lack of connection between course materials and exam questions was the least approved factor ($M=2.57$, $SD=3.02$), followed by tolerance of cheating rules and policies ($M=2.71$, $SD=3.1$), lack of proctoring ($M=2.77$, $SD=3.12$), students' frequent absence ($M=2.82$, $SD=3.24$), and other students cheating ($M=2.82$, $SD=3.18$). However, nearly half of the participants were neutral regarding the short time of the tests ($M=2.95$, $SD=3.28$) and English teachers' poor pedagogical style ($M=2.97$, $SD=3.3$). Thus, according to these results, the most common reasons for students' cheating behaviour from the participants' points of view are students' desire for high grades and parents' demand for high grades. These two factors were approved by 81.8% and 53.3% of the participants, respectively.

(b). *Factors Contributing to Students' Cheating: Thematic Analysis*

Thematic analysis of the open-ended question revealed three major personal and contextual factors: language instructors' corrupt practices, societal pressure, and students' poor language proficiency.

1. *Language Instructors' Corrupt Practices*

Students' motives for cheating are also due to language teachers' unethical and corrupt behaviours, which make students mistrust and disrespect their teachers. Some participants referred to teachers favouring their relatives over the other students, giving them credit and good grades while 'threatening' the other students from the beginning of the semester to provide them with an F grade. Such 'unfair' and 'unethical' treatment affects students' motivation to learn and study. One participant revealed that such mistreatment creates a sense of injustice among the students, encouraging them to cheat because they are afraid to fail the course or have lower grades than those students favoured by the teacher. The participants also referred to language instructors' lack of commitment, insincerity about their profession, and low interest in students' depth of learning. They are regularly absent from their classes and do not give students proper instructions and explanations of course content. One participant referred to some 'irresponsible' teachers who 'tell stories during class time rather than concentrating on course content'. In this case, students will not grasp the course well and lack the acquisition of content knowledge and language skills, thereby resorting to cheating on exams to pass the course. The unethical practices of teachers reported in this study echo some of the findings reported in the literature. This is precisely the case in Cambodia, where Maeda (2021) reported that teachers' unfair treatment of students, absenteeism, and indifference towards student learning influenced students' cheating decisions.

2. *Societal Pressure*

Many participants highlighted that students aspire to have prestigious and high-salary jobs that bestow a superior social status, a value deeply ingrained in society. These jobs often require a college degree with a high GPA. However, some students are not interested in education but are eager to have such jobs. Cheating is the way to achieve a high GPA. The situation was described as follows:

Some students lack interest in higher education but are under immense societal pressure to pursue a college degree with a high GPA. This pressure is not just a mere expectation but a compelling force driven by the belief that such achievements are the key to excellent jobs with high salaries, which, in turn, bestow a superior social status.

A college degree is also considered prestigious and enhances an individual's social image. One participant stated that some students value their social impression more than they attribute to maintaining academic integrity. Therefore, incompetent students rely on cheating to secure their degrees because they desire to portray a sound social image of themselves as 'university graduates'. Another participant pointed out that Kuwait is generally a materialistic society in which individuals are judged according to their social status and how they present themselves to others. A college degree provides such a prestigious image and social position:

Surviving in such a materialistic society without a superior social position is daunting. Social pressure demands that individuals maintain their social status and present a high social image. A college degree and a prestigious job ensure the acquisition of such a social position. Without a college degree, individuals are stigmatised as 'losers' and face social stigma.

Thus, for less academically inclined students, cheating becomes a means to obtain a college degree with a high GPA, perceived as a gateway to social approval. Our findings on societal pressure influencing students' cheating behaviour in our specific context based in Kuwait are consistent with other studies of several different cultures. Aljurf et al. (2020), for example, have demonstrated how the cheating behaviour of Emirate college students is due to social pressure demanding them to meet family expectations for a college degree and high grades, which indicates the academic standing of the student and reflects on the social status of the family. Razek (2014) has also shown that social shame burdens Saudi college students, demanding they be successful and demonstrate a high social status by acquiring a university degree.

3. *Students' Poor Language Proficiency*

Another theme that emerged in our data is students' poor English language proficiency. It is worth noting that this was suggested in the closed-ended question and highly rated by the participants. Nevertheless, many participants referred to it in their response to the open-ended question. They stated that students face difficulties mastering the language due to their poor English background, which presents serious challenges as they try to keep up with college-level coursework. They further blamed the education system for their poor EFL learning outcomes. One participant added:

Kuwaiti students learn the English language for 12 years, from primary school to high school. Nevertheless, they graduate with limited English skills. Their temptation to cheat on college exams would not have emerged if they had been given a strong foundation in the English language at school.

The participants' responses raise concerns regarding EFL teaching and learning in Kuwait. Success in English language learning at the college level relies not only on the college's input to students. Other variables, such as previous educational knowledge, affect their language proficiency. English in Kuwait is a foreign language learnt through classroom instruction at an early age in school, wherein learners have limited exposure to the target language. Their access to the language is restricted to the classroom, and their opportunities to use it outside the classroom are limited because their native language is more dominant than the foreign language. Therefore, the type of classroom learning context contributes to their final attainment and language proficiency, affecting their performance at the college level. As Gotseva (2015) argues, the amount and quality of input in a foreign language learning classroom, where EFL learners start learning the language in school, significantly affects their language proficiency and their academic performance at a later stage. This finding resonates with the work of Arab and Ofran (2021), who reported that Afghan students cheated in their EFL courses because they lacked sufficient English skills.

V. DISCUSSION

Research into students' cheating behaviour provides evidence that students' positive attitudes predict their intention to cheat (e.g., Costley, 2019). Our findings suggest that the students in the sample are less likely to cheat, given their negative attitude towards such behaviour. Their negative attitude implies that they possibly have a sense of moral obligation, which causes them to perceive cheating negatively. However, attention must be devoted to the percentage of students who endorsed some cheating methods, namely, using leaked exams and learning the exam from other students who previously took it. While it can be argued that such a liberal attitude may indicate their intention or involvement in such methods, another look at the data may suggest otherwise. Their lax stance towards specific methods contradicts their negative attitude towards cheating. Notably, these endorsed methods are related to practices committed outside the classroom. Therefore, it can be argued that the students might be unaware that these practices are considered cheating. Waltzer et al. (2023) caution that if students do not realise their actions constitute cheating, they have little reason to avoid those actions. The researchers refer to cases of unintentional cheating whereby students lack deliberate intent to cheat. Barnhardt (2016) similarly warns that some cheating practices are conducted unintentionally when students misunderstand the code of conduct or have insufficient knowledge concerning what constitutes cheating, which could also be the case with the Kuwaiti EFL participants. Therefore, if cheating is committed unintentionally, students cannot

be judged to have acted unethically because, in being ignorant in the first place that their behaviour was wrong, they could not have adequately judged its morality. Nevertheless, ignorance of rules cannot excuse unethical behaviour, and students should be informed by their academic institutions of potential disciplinary actions for violating integrity policies. Barnhardt (2016) argues that while unintentional cheating can be described as an 'honest mistake', students should not be absolved from blame for cheating by claiming ignorance. He emphasises that cheating, intentional or unintentional, harms the educational program, maintaining that the responsibility to conform to the rules includes the responsibility to know them, so even when they are violated due to ignorance, failing to realise them is equally blameworthy.

The participants revealed different reasons that motivate students to cheat. The most significant ones are students' desire to get high grades, parental pressure for high grades, and students' poor English proficiency. We argue that students' poor English proficiency is the main reason for the other reasons. Students with poor English proficiency are expected to have low grades, which is unsatisfactory for themselves or their parents. The participants blamed the education system for students' poor English proficiency. Although the Ministry of Education has made tremendous efforts to improve English teaching and learning in schools, devoting an annual budget to enhancing the education system, students' English proficiency remains unsatisfactory (Mohamed, 2021). Students learn English for 12 years, starting from primary school and continuing until they are admitted to college. One would assume they have reaped the benefits of a younger age for foreign language learning. Nevertheless, they face difficulties coping with their college courses, thereby resorting to cheating to pass these courses. This finding offers a clear implication for policymakers to consider this issue. Research on the Kuwaiti EFL context has referred to some variables that impact the quality of students' classroom education, including the lack of teacher training, limited use of technology in EFL classrooms, and inadequate EFL teaching practicum programme (e.g., Al-Adwani & Al-Shammari, 2022; Mohamed, 2021). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that students' poor English proficiency might not be a simple issue with a single cause. Researchers (e.g., Gotseva, 2015; Tai & Zhao, 2022) have identified a complex web of interrelated factors that set the foundation for successful classroom language learning that contribute to students' English proficiency and enable them to cope with college-level learning. These include institutional aspects (e.g., the language of instruction, the curriculum, teaching methods, and teachers' attitudes and behaviours), learner-related variables (e.g., previous educational attainment, anxiety, and motivation), and sociocultural influences (e.g., society and L1 influence). Kuwaiti learners' poor English proficiency can be a multidimensional problem, and its resolution requires a comprehensive understanding of these factors.

Language instructors' corrupt practices have also been identified as influencing students' cheating behaviour. Studies on learner-related variables show that poor proficiency in foreign language learning results from a complex interaction of external and internal factors. For instance, a corrupt teacher is an external factor negatively impacting students' motivation. The sense of injustice that such teachers instil in their students is an internal factor that negatively impacts their language proficiency. Emphasising teachers' role in stimulating students' motivation to learn, Motevalli et al. (2020) indicate that learners usually attend their classes with enthusiasm and motivation. However, when they face external practices, such as teachers' corrupt practices, learners may come under pressure that can undermine their learning motivation, affecting their language proficiency. Motivation and language proficiency are correlated. Dunn and Iwaniec (2022) highlight that learners with higher learning motivation have higher language proficiency, whereas learners with lower motivation are less proficient. In this study, teachers' corrupt practices can be seen as an external factor contributing to reducing students' motivation, affecting their language proficiency, and eventually leading them to cheat to pass their courses. It is deplorable to find out that teachers, with their irresponsible behaviour, could be the reason for students' cheating behaviour.

The professor-student relationship is inherently one of power due to professors' authority, professional skills, knowledge, and students' dependence. Within this relationship, power and position asymmetry could create the opportunity for mistreating students, which could affect the effectiveness of their education. Therefore, teachers should not abuse their power over their students and engage in corrupt practices. Emphasising students' right to quality education, Thornberg et al. (2022) argue that teachers should exhibit ethical principles and virtues built into their professional ethics by fostering a favourable learning environment, showing fairness, commitment, and care, and establishing supportive teacher-student relationships. Students who perceive their teachers as more supportive have better achievement outcomes. The role of language instructors is not merely to pass on knowledge to students or develop their skills; they must also achieve high standards of behaviour and professionalism to avoid ethical infringements by creating a just classroom environment and maintaining professional relationships with all students. Violating ethical standards will affect students' education quality and moral attitudes. Favouring some students, as reported by the participants, is a clear case of language instructors' unprofessional relationship with students.

Kuwaiti society operates according to specific highly appreciated social values. Individuals must adhere to these values to gain social approval. Since childhood, individuals are expected and encouraged to preserve and maintain the family's social status and enhance its image. According to Al-Ghanim (2012), family members in Kuwait are responsible for building and maintaining the family's social status. They, therefore, take great care in presenting themselves in a way that promotes a positive social impression. A college degree and the prestigious job it facilitates reflect positively on the social status of individuals and their families and enhance their social image. Some students

might be incompetent or do not have the desire to attend college. However, the idea of not attending college is not even thinkable, given the shame individuals would bring to the family and the pressure imposed on its members to obtain a college degree. Therefore, the primary aim of attending college for those students is to have a degree that will serve as a gateway to social acceptance. Being under social pressure, such students cheat to meet social requirements. As Holden et al. (2021) highlight, the social pressure students feel to maintain good grades and the need to be viewed as successful can create the motivation to cheat. Kuwaiti EFL students exemplify a case whereby social values burden students, leading them to cheat. However, while society pressures individuals to meet social expectations, this does not necessarily mean it approves of cheating or is socially accepted. Therefore, parents should stress to their children that cheating is unethical and emphasise the importance of education and knowledge-gaining. They should also provide them with emotional and motivational support and reinforcement of discipline and responsibility, which is essential to the success of any educational system. As stated by Jeynes (2024), parents' role in education is crucial for building a collaborative and successful educational system that prepares students for a better future.

Given the different personal and contextual factors underlying students' cheating behaviour identified in this study, we argue that the responsibility for the cheating behaviour of Kuwaiti EFL college students does not primarily lie with the student. When cheating occurs, the responsibility for maintaining and upholding academic integrity is usually placed upon the student. However, this study provides evidence that students' social and educational environment affect their academic behaviour. Therefore, conceptions of cheating as merely a student's responsibility must be reconsidered.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research has uniquely contributed to the literature on the cheating practices of EFL college students by providing data from the Kuwaiti context. The study casts light on the cheating methods used by Kuwaiti EFL students and the perceived factors influencing their cheating behaviour. Our findings regarding the factors accord with the existing literature on college cheating behaviour. However, the contextualised specificities causing these factors were identified, such as social values, corrupt practices of EFL instructors, and students' poor language proficiency, which are related to the Kuwaiti context.

The results imply that comprehensive measures and collaborative efforts must be made to reduce students' temptation to cheat. An educational reform plan is crucial to managing the factors leading students to cheat. Academic institutions should promote a code of ethics clearly defining what constitutes cheating to be readily available to students at the commencement of each semester. Students resorting to leaked exams could be due to insufficient knowledge that such behaviour is considered cheating. Sanctions that have significant educational and deterrence values should be implemented. To curb malpractices, academic institutions must also consider implementing and reinforcing professional codes of conduct, including recognised ethical standards and self-disciplinary guidelines, to enhance the dedication, commitment, and efficiency of teaching among language instructors. Students' poor language proficiency requires policymakers to identify and treat the contributing factors affecting their learning outcomes. Attention must be paid to improving their performance at the school level and before college admission. Academic institutions might also arrange extensive English foundation programs for their first-year students to help them overcome any learning difficulties they might face during their college studies.

Future research can build on the findings demonstrated in this study. It can specifically investigate EFL learning and teaching in Kuwait, exploring institutional, sociocultural, and learner-related factors that contribute to students' poor proficiency in EFL classrooms. Education policymakers should also consider the results of such investigations, make considerable efforts to deal with emerging factors, and lay the groundwork for necessary improvements in the educational system.

This study has some limitations. It involved more females than males (65% females; 35% males). Several studies have found that male students have more positive attitudes towards cheating than females (e.g., Arab & Ofran, 2023; Whitley, 1998). Therefore, the results could be biased by the disproportionate percentage of the female participants. Another limitation is the small sample size (182 participants), which limits the generalizability of the findings.

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Improving the Pronunciation of Voiceless Consonant Sounds in Vietnamese EFL Undergraduates Using the Simplified Verbotonal Approach

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Abstract—In teaching pronunciation, the traditional articulatory approach, commonly used in Vietnamese classrooms, has shown limitations in addressing the phonetic challenges posed by the differences between Vietnamese and English consonant systems. This study investigates the use of an alternative approach, the Simplified Verbotonal Approach (SVA), in improving the pronunciation of voiceless consonants among Vietnamese EFL undergraduates. The SVA, which emphasizes prosodic features through intensive practice with lowpass filtered speech, was hypothesized to aid learners in producing more accurate voiceless consonants. A mixed-methods quasi-experimental design was employed, involving 70 first-year non-English major students. The control group received instruction using standard pronunciation textbooks, while the experimental group utilized an online platform incorporating SVA principles. Pre- and post-tests assessed participants' pronunciation of voiceless consonants in isolation, sentences, and passages. Semi-structured interviews provided qualitative insights into learners' opinions of the SVA. Quantitative results demonstrated significant improvements in the experimental group's pronunciation accuracy, particularly in sentences and passages. Qualitative data revealed positive student feedback on the SVA. These findings suggest that integrating prosodic training through the SVA can significantly enhance the pronunciation of voiceless consonants in Vietnamese learners, offering a viable alternative to traditional articulatory methods in EFL contexts.

Index Terms—verbotonalism, voiceless consonants, pronunciation, prosodic training

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of English communication skills involves teaching pronunciation, lexical resources, grammar, fluency, and accuracy. Of these elements, pronunciation lies at the very heart of building language skills (O'Brien, 2012). Pronunciation includes the articulation and differentiation of phonemes, known as segmentals, and the integration of speech features that form a tonal system, known as suprasegmentals (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). Pronunciation instruction aims to assist learners in recognizing and producing the language's sounds, stress patterns, and intonation, which are crucial for message clarity and idea interpretation. Poor pronunciation can hinder effective communication and the comprehension of messages (Kelly, 2000). Approaches to teaching pronunciation trace back to the 17th century, initially based on the phonics-like principle wherein letters or groups of letters systematically represent the sounds of a language. It is argued that focusing on segmental features, namely vowels and consonants, significantly impacts intelligibility, which therefore is emphasized in pronunciation instruction (Wang, 2022). Indeed, research has shown a direct relationship between accurate pronunciation of minimal pairs and an increase in the level of speakers' intelligibility (Collins & Mees, 2013). Techniques such as repetition of individual sounds, drills, and exercises are used to make it easier for learners to remember, gradually understand, and become fluent in articulating sounds. The prevalence of the articulatory approach can be attributed to a basic assumption that individual phonemes serve as the elemental units of spoken language, with words, sentences, paragraphs, and texts constructed upon this phonemic foundation.

Pronunciation teaching has shifted away from native-speaker norms towards a more relaxed and socially just standard to achieve intelligibility as its ultimate goal (Jenkins & Baker, 2015). However, a standard pronunciation level

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remains essential. Many Vietnamese learners still struggle to achieve even the baseline pronunciation performance. The differences in phonetic structures between Vietnamese and English may lead to a pronounced accent, which often obscures understanding. To be more specific, “the Vietnamese language is different from the English language in that the former is a tone language whereas the latter is intonational. Thus, Vietnamese learners often have trouble with sentence stress and intonation, and so speak English using a relatively flat tone” (Nguyen & Newton, 2021, p. 79). What is more, English differentiates between voiced and voiceless consonants, a distinction crucial for meaning but less emphasized in Vietnamese. Vietnamese learners also tend to mispronounce consonant clusters containing voiceless plosives (Tran & Nguyen, 2022). They have many difficulties in producing English consonants (Bui et al., 2021; Nguyen, 2002; Nguyen, 2021). To make matters worse, in Vietnam, English teachers tend to prioritize teaching grammar and vocabulary for students to prepare for assessments and examinations. Therefore, under these circumstances, it is essential to search for a more effective and practical approach to helping Vietnamese learners improve their pronunciation, especially in producing intelligible voiceless consonants in English.

Furthermore, prior research regarding investigations in improving English consonants among EFL learners has been focused on the implementation of the articulatory approach, which highlights the use of phonemic contrast (Hazan et al., 2005), phonetic transcription (Jantharaviroj, 2019; Harlika et al., 2018), pronunciation drilling techniques (Temirov, 2014; Watanabe & Dinunzio, 2018). For acoustic analysis, Lambacher (1999) utilized electronic visual feedback to facilitate learners in the visualization of their pronunciation and comparison with native patterns. This analysis also included the movements of the articulators. These researchers tend to prioritize the instruction of sound articulation.

Meanwhile, the impacts of prosodic or suprasegmental features in phonetic correction and pronunciation enhancement in the EFL contexts have garnered empirical support (Cai et al., 2021; García, 2018; He, 2014; Ludovic, 2010; Wen, 2019; Yang, 2016; Zhang, 2005). These studies have leveraged the principles of the Verbotonal Approach (VA), a theory of perception (Guberina, 1972), to design instructional activities for learners to strengthen their pronunciation. The foundational mechanism underpinning this theory was implicit prosody training with the integration of kinesthetic cues, which can foster oral fluency in learners. However, in the realm of English consonant developments, scant attention has been devoted to the use of prosodic features, particularly intonation patterns. Therefore, this study aims to fill the void in the literature. Given the positive effects of VA in pronunciation teaching, this study attempted to examine the impact of its simplified version, or the Simplified Verbotonal Approach (SVA) on the production of voiceless consonants among Vietnamese non-English major undergraduates. Hence, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. How effective is the Simplified Verbotonal Approach in enhancing the production of voiceless consonants in English among Vietnamese non-English major undergraduates compared to the articulatory method?
2. What are the opinions of these students on the Simplified Verbotonal Approach?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Verbotonal Approach

The Verbotonal Approach (VA), developed by Petar Guberina in the 1950s, is prominent in speech therapy and designed to enhance speech sounds' perception and production. This approach uses suprasegmental features such as rhythm, intonation, and stress, essential for natural speech production (Guberina, 1972). Unlike traditional phoneme-based approaches, the VA integrates auditory and kinesthetic cues to improve speech perception and articulation (Asp, 2006). One of the notable benefits of the VA is its multisensory learning component, which incorporates body movements and tactile feedback to aid in auditory discrimination and speech production. This is particularly advantageous for individuals with hearing impairments and second language learners, as it promotes the development of accurate and natural speech patterns (Asp, 2006). The effectiveness of the VA has been documented across various populations, demonstrating its utility in both rehabilitative and educational settings (Faulkner, 2009). Its application in language learning and speech therapy underscores its versatility and significant impact on communicative abilities.

A substantial body of literature has explored the application of the principles based on the VA in L2 development. Lian (1980) was among the pioneers who introduced the VA into teaching French pronunciation. He used various techniques such as relaxation exercises, filtered sentence audition, and movement and gesture to reinforce intonation patterns. García (2018) focused on suprasegmental elements like rhythm and intonation before introducing spelling. This method is designed to foster a relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere, facilitating learners' auditory and visual associations and ultimately improving their communicative competencies.

He (2014) combined the VA with computer-assisted language learning to improve the pronunciation skills of Chinese learners. This approach entailed employing low-pass filtered speech to highlight prosodic features, encouraging self-study, and utilizing audio materials to augment learning outcomes. Wen (2019) enhanced the pronunciation of English vowels among Chinese learners through the utilization of filtered audio practice for self-study. The results demonstrated significant improvements in vowel perception and pronunciation. Further empirical investigations, such as that conducted by Cai et al. (2021), have delved into optimizing audio-language input signals for Chinese learners of English, employing dichotic listening principles. This study revealed that specific combinations of filtered and unfiltered audio signals could enhance semantic processing and language learning, significantly improving pronunciation skills. Notably, in Vietnam, the study conducted by Luu et al. (2021) implemented principles derived

from the VT to enhance Vietnamese learners' listening comprehension. The study used low-pass audio filters, combining speech and body movement to re-educate learners' auditory perceptions. Given the positive effects of VA in pronunciation teaching, this study attempted to examine the impact of a simplified version, or the Simplified Verbotonal Approach on the production of voiceless consonants among Vietnamese non-English major undergraduates.

The Simplified Verbotonal Approach

The Simplified Verbotonal Approach (SVA), in essence, is another version of the VA. The SVA mainly focuses on raising learners' awareness of the prosodic features, particularly intonations via intensive practice. To draw learners' attention to the intonational patterns and directly stimulate the right brain (Cai et al., 2021), auditory input was modified using lowpass filtering. In other words, lowpass filtered speech is the audio recording that is filtered to reduce detailed information like specific sounds, meaning, and sentence structure, while keeping elements like pitch, amplitude, and rhythm (Perkins et al., 1996). This manipulation helps make the intonational patterns more salient during listening. In this study, the combination of lowpass filtered speech and unfiltered speech is hypothesized to provide learners with sufficient exposure to intonation patterns for making progress in producing English voiceless consonants.

Intonation patterns, in this study, were developed based on two common ones, which are rising-falling intonation and rising intonation (Chun, 2002). The former is typical of simple declarative sentences, commands, and questions that start with a Wh-word, while the latter is characteristic of yes-or-no questions. As defined by Wells (2006), intonation is the melody of speech, which describes the way a speaker's voice fluctuates to communicate both linguistic and pragmatic meanings. Chun (2002) posits that intonation provides additional cues to convey meanings thanks to its multifunctional facets. These functions consist of signaling grammatical structures, disclosing information organization, conveying emotional nuances, and managing conversational dynamics at the discourse level.

Pronunciation Teaching in Vietnam

There are two major trends in the pedagogy of pronunciation: the bottom-up, phoneme-based segmental orientation, and the top-down or suprasegmental orientation (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). The segmental approach posits that teaching individual phonemes first will naturally lead to the development of suprasegmental. Conversely, the suprasegmental approach assumes that once prosodic features are established, the segmental discrimination will naturally follow. Proponents of the top-down approach argue that there is a direct link between prosody and meaning in both the production and comprehension of language and that inappropriate use of prosodic patterns is likely to cause more frequent communication breakdowns (Gilbert, 2008; Jackson & O'Brien, 2011). Nonetheless, in the context of teaching pronunciation, the bottom-up approach appears to be more favored by educators. Teachers assert that learners benefit most from explicit phonetic instruction, progressing from form-focused to meaning-focused tasks (Nguyen & Bui, 2021). Additional studies indicate a preference among Vietnamese teachers for the articulatory approach in pronunciation instruction (Nguyen, 2023; Nguyen & Newton, 2020; Tran & Nguyen, 2020).

Difficulties in Articulating English Voiceless Consonant Sounds

Vietnamese and English language do have some shared consonants such as /b, d, k, m, n, f, v, s, z, h, l/ though each language has its distinct consonant sounds (Tang, 2007). McMahon (2002) stressed the importance of distinguishing between voiced and voiceless sounds, which can be physically felt by placing fingers on the larynx. For instance, the vibration felt while sustaining a [zzzzzz] sound indicates voicing, as opposed to the absence of vibration with a [ssssss] sound, representing voicelessness. Voiceless consonants, such as /p/, /t/, and /k/, are articulated without vocal cord vibration, typically obstructing airflow in speech production. There are nine voiceless consonant sounds in English: /p/ as in "pen", /t/ as in "top", /k/ as in "cat", /f/ as in "fish", /θ/ as in "thing", /s/ as in "sun", /ʃ/ as in "ship", /tʃ/ as in "chat", /h/ as in "hot". These consonants, along with consonant clusters, present challenges for non-native English speakers, including Vietnamese learners. Vietnamese, being a tonal language with fewer voiceless consonants, may not adequately prepare speakers for the articulatory demands of English. Additionally, the lack of phonemic voicing contrast in Vietnamese complicates the perception and production of voiceless sounds in English. Numerous studies have examined the difficulties Vietnamese speakers encounter in pronouncing English consonants and clusters.

Nguyen (2002) conducted a study on Vietnamese L2 learners of English, identifying final consonant clusters that posed challenges in accurate production. The research revealed that clusters containing a liquid (/rt/, /lθ/) were notably more difficult than those with a nasal. Bui's (2016) findings also revealed that the pronunciation of the consonant /θ/ was often substituted with the Vietnamese sound /tʰ/. Tran (2021) further elucidated that plosive consonants were frequently mispronounced by Vietnamese students. This mispronunciation often involved omitting final sounds such as /t/, /z/, /s/, /k/, and /v/, a habit influenced by the absence of final sounds in Vietnamese pronunciation. Bui et al. (2021) found that Vietnamese sophomores majoring in English frequently erred in pronouncing final consonants, particularly /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /f/, and /v/, with omission and substitution being the main types of mistakes. Tran and Nguyen (2022) identified consonant clusters containing voiceless plosives as leading to the highest rate of mispronunciation among Vietnamese learners. Moreover, Nguyen and Tran (2023) discovered that stop and fricative consonants, including /b/, /k/, /p/, /t/, /d/, /ʃ/, /v/, and /s/, were commonly mispronounced by a majority of students.

These studies demonstrated that Vietnamese learners do have problematic pronunciation in producing voiceless consonant sounds in English. As Duong (2009) expounded, the confusion surrounding consonant sounds can be attributed to the difficulty in differentiating between sounds, influence from the mother tongue, perception of mistakes, and inadequate drilling and practice.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-method approach with a quasi-experimental design. Quasi-experimental research often takes place in natural settings without the artificial constraints of a laboratory, providing insights into how the teaching approach functions in real-world conditions (Cook & Campbell, 1979).

Participants

The target population of this study was first-year non-English first-year students. These students were chosen because they represented a broader range of English learners in Vietnam, have less exposure to pronunciation instructions, and tend to have problematic pronunciations, which allows for more precise measurement of improvement for this study. After recruiting 200 students to join a course to improve their pronunciation, piloting was conducted among 100 students. After that, another cohort of 70 students participated in the experiment as a result of convenience sampling. The participants had an average of 13 years of English learning in public schools and no private English education. They were randomly divided into control and experimental groups, with 35 students for each and a balanced gender ratio. All participants consented to the study, and ethical clearance was obtained from the university.

Pedagogical Procedures

In this study, two textbooks, "Ship or Sheep" by Baker (2006) and "Better English Pronunciation" by O'Connor (1998) were used to teach for the control group. Students studied two sections weekly, each lasting 2.5 hours, plus at least one hour of self-study at home.

For the control group, the students were taught how to pronounce vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants in English sentences, and to correctly place stress and intonation. The coursebook's content is on vowels, consonants, and prosody. The conventional teaching method followed three main steps: presentation, demonstration, and practice. For the experimental group, students were introduced to an online platform for practice in which the contents were embedded. Students practiced intonation patterns with various sentence types such as statements and questions (Appendix A). The online platform comprised two main components. The first is Moodle (v. 4.2), a widely used Learning Management System that manages access to educational materials. The second component is a delivery application created using the Livresq authoring system (<https://livresq.com/en/>), which facilitates the development of advanced user interfaces and controls over audiovisual content, specifically audio recordings. These resources were integrated systematically into a website which consisted of 10 computer-based lessons. All these lessons were constructed using the SCORM (Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative) protocol, which means that they can transmit information regarding the completion of exercises and other relevant data to the LMS. Students' access and performance are tracked to ensure compliance with the experiment's directives.

Overall, the procedure consists of eight main steps.

Step 1: When students log in, they will see a list of contents, comprising ten lessons, each featuring various types of sentences: statements, yes-no questions and information questions. Students are required to follow the lessons sequentially and are permitted to revisit previous lessons.

Step 2: When students select the title of a unit, the system automatically presents the content of each lesson, which comprises five sentences. Students must complete sentence 01 before the content of sentence 02 becomes accessible. They are permitted to return to the previous sentence at any time.

Step 3: When students click on Sentence 01, two buttons "Play" and "Reset" will appear. When the students click the PLAY button, they will hear filtered audio of sentence 01 repeated 15 times. This filtering was designed to raise students' awareness of its prosodic characteristics. The students are encouraged to listen to the filtered sentence and, if they wish, synchronize their bodily movements to the sentence's prosody.

Step 4: The recording stops after the students have heard the filtered pattern 15 times. At this point, students must decide whether the audio they heard is one of the displayed options: a yes-no question, an information question, or a statement.

Step 5: After that, students listen to the filtered audio another ten times.

Step 6: Next, students listen to the unfiltered audio to identify the contrast, including similarities and differences, between the filtered and unfiltered versions. They also have the option to display the text of the sentence. Students are encouraged to hum the sentences, either internally or externally.

Step 7: After that, students can listen to both the filtered and unfiltered versions of the sentence, which allows them to review and compare. This step integrates both prosodic and grammatical information, which will help to create perceptual expectations in both the reception and production of natural language, thus enhancing language processing and production. Although the primary focus of the lesson protocol is on enhancing receptive skills - i.e., listening and refining perceptual mechanisms- students can record their voices, compare their recordings with the original model, and download their recordings if they wish.

Research Instruments

There were two main instruments: the voiceless consonant test and semi-structured interviews.

The voiceless consonant test was used as a pre-test and post-test (Appendix B). It consisted of three parts. Part 1 required students to pronounce 27 single words with voiceless consonants in initial, middle, or final positions. Part 2 included reading 104 sentences of varying intonation patterns containing these consonants. Part 3 involved reading a passage highlighting prosodic features like rhythm, stress, and intonation, with the consonants placed in different

positions. Grading Part 1 and 2 (word and sentence level) involved marking word pronunciation as "Correct" or "Incorrect". For grading Part 3 (passage level), criteria from the IELTS speaking test were utilized. The grading scale assessed pronunciation accuracy and intelligibility, ranging from "Intrusive" (0-20%) with severe comprehension hindrance to "Very Good" (80-100%) with nearly flawless pronunciation. Two Vietnamese English teachers with IELTS Speaking Band 8 rated the pre-tests and post-tests independently. The students' recordings were anonymized and randomized and the ratings were entirely blind with the raters not knowing whether they were listening to the experimental or control group, pre-test or post-test. This blind rating technique minimized or eliminated bias because it ensured that the evaluations were based entirely on criteria rather than the knowledge of the participants. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient measuring the consistency between the two raters was calculated, which demonstrated a high value indicating strong agreement and confirming the assessments' reliability and objectivity.

A semi-structured interview was utilized to gather comprehensive data on students' opinions on the implementation of the SVA (Appendix C). Semi-structured interviews allowed interviewees flexibility in questioning and clarity (Ary et al., 2010). Open-ended questions let participants freely express their views on the approach's effectiveness and usefulness, ensuring authentic and detailed responses. Expert evaluation of the interview stages and questions ensured methodological rigor. Interviewing all 35 participants in the experimental group enhanced data reliability and provided a comprehensive understanding of diverse participant experiences, preventing selection bias.

Data Collection and Analysis

For quantitative data, after all the scores were collected, and coded into the SPSS 23, paired sample and independent sample t-tests were conducted to assess differences in participants' mean scores between the pretest and posttest phases. These analyses aimed to identify statistically significant variations in mean scores, thereby evaluating the impact of pronunciation enhancement using the Simplified Verbotonal Approach and the articulatory approach at the group level. The Shapiro-Wilk test results indicated that, except for one case, the data did not follow a normal distribution. Consequently, it was prudent to move away from conventional t-test analysis. The Mann-Whitney U test mitigated the impact of non-normality, offering a more accurate reflection of central tendencies across different instructional groups. ANCOVA was performed in one instance to evaluate precisely the impact of the intervention. For qualitative analysis, after the interviews were carried out, the recordings were transcribed and analyzed using content analysis. Two raters worked on the data separately and then reached the final agreement on the final categorization of ideas based on raw data.

IV. FINDINGS

Quantitative Data

As displayed in Table 1, differences between the means among pretests and posttests regarding each section between the Control Group (C-GRP) and the Experimental Group (E-GRP). The results provide general observations regarding three aspects. First, for improvement patterns, the E-GRP consistently shows larger improvements in mean scores across all tests compared to the C-GRP, suggesting a more effective intervention or different influencing factors. Second, in terms of variability, the standard deviations generally decrease from pre-test to post-test for both groups, indicating more consistent performance post-intervention. However, the E-GRP often ends up with a lower SD, especially in the post-voiceless sounds and voiceless-sound sentences sections. Finally, concerning the performance trends, the E-GRP's notable improvement in voiceless-sound passage post-test scores, compared to the C-GRP, highlights a particularly strong performance in this area.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Test	C-GRP	C-GRP	E-GRP	E-GRP
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Pre-Voiceless sounds	22.26	3.02	21.80	3.71
Post-Voiceless sounds	23.00	2.91	24.04	1.65
Pre-Voiceless-sound Sentences	74.26	13.51	67.13	20.51
Post-Voiceless-sound Sentences	76.69	10.75	79.64	13.29
Pre-Voiceless-sound Passage	62.76	22.42	65.06	24.73
Post-Voiceless-sound Passage	60.56	19.36	72.96	20.94

Note: C-GRP: Control group; E-GRP: experimental group

At the descriptive level, these observations suggest that the E-GRP outperforms the C-GRP in terms of mean score increases and consistent performance across various tests. These results indicate the effectiveness of the intervention used with the E-GRP, which is the effectiveness of SVA in improving voiceless consonant sounds in English.

Data analyses run by the Mann-Whitney U test, as illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
MANN-WHITNEY U TEST (INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST)

Test	C-GRP Mean	C-GRP SD	E-GRP Mean	E-GRP SD	p-value	Effect Size
Pre-Voiceless sounds	22.26	3.02	21.80	3.71	0.768	0.042
Post-Voiceless sounds	23.00	2.91	24.04	1.65	0.12	0.22
Pre-Voiceless-sound Sentences	74.26	13.51	67.13	20.51	0.19	0.18
Post-Voiceless-sound Sentences	76.69	10.75	79.64	13.29	0.14	0.22
					ANCOVA <0.001	ANCOVA Cohen's d 0.927
Pre-Voiceless-sound Passage	62.76	22.42	65.06	24.73	0.69	0.34
Post-Voiceless-sound Passage	60.56	19.36	72.96	20.94	0.014	0.62

Note: C-GRP: Control group; E-GRP: experimental group

Voiceless Sounds

In the pre-test of voiceless sounds, there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups at the pre-test stage ($p > 0.05$). The very small effect size suggests negligible initial differences. In the post-test of voiceless sounds, there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups at the post-test stage ($p > 0.05$). However, both comparisons of the means C-GRP and E-GRP Post-Voiceless Sounds indicate a small advantage in favour of the experimental group. The small to moderate effect size also indicates some improvement in the experimental group.

Voiceless-Sound Sentences

In the pre-test of voiceless sound sentences, initial calculations suggest that there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups at the pre-test stage ($p > 0.05$). The small effect size indicates minor initial differences. However, in reality, there is a large difference in the pretest scores between C-GRP (Mean = 74.26, SD = 13.51) and E-GRP (Mean = 67.13, SD = 20.51) in favour of the C-GRP. While in the significance calculations, this difference in Mean of 7.13 was computed as non-significant, this very large difference in favour of the C-GRP seemed to flag an anomaly in the calculations worth investigating.

In the post-test of voiceless sound sentences, calculations suggest that there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups at the post-test stage ($p > 0.05$). The C-GRP Mean is 76.69 (SD = 10.75) and the E-GRP Mean is 79.64 (SD = 13.29). In light of the initial large difference in the pretest mean for the C-GRP, this translates into the experimental group making up the very large difference and still overtaking the C-GRP by a moderate margin. Also, the moderate effect size suggests improvement in the E-GRP. This turnaround of 10.98 points prompted an ANCOVA analysis to take account of the large pretest difference in scores in assessing the post-test outcome. An ANCOVA analysis for the post-test of voiceless sound sentences was performed and showed a p-value: $p < 0.001$ with effect size (Cohen's d): 0.927. Thus, after adjusting for the pre-test discrepancy using ANCOVA, the results show a significant difference between the control and experimental groups ($p < 0.001$). The large effect size indicates substantial improvement in the experimental group compared to the control group, thus vindicating the statistical concern. In other words, in this particular test, the E-GRP significantly outperformed the C-GRP in the group analysis.

Voiceless-Sound Passage

In the pre-test of sound passage, there is no significant difference between the control and experimental groups at the pre-test stage ($p > 0.05$). In the post-test of sound passage, there is a significant difference between the control and experimental groups as indicated by the difference between the means: 12.40 in favour of E-GRP at the post-test stage ($p=0.014$) and a moderate to a large effect size of 0.62.

In sum, the E-GRP shows significant improvements over the C-GRP in two of the three sections applied with a moderate to large effect size. ANCOVA results for the voiceless-sound sentences indicate a significant difference favoring the E-GRP after adjusting for pre-test discrepancies ($p < 0.001$, Cohen's d = 0.927). Regarding the effect size, the rank biserial correlation effect size calculation used standardly in conjunction with the Mann-Whitney U test generally yields lower effect sizes compared to Cohen's d. Nevertheless, moderate to large effect sizes in the post-tests for all three tests indicate substantial improvements in the E-GRP. The effect sizes for pre-tests are generally small, suggesting that initial differences between groups were minor. For the adjustments and robustness, the use of ANCOVA to adjust for pre-test discrepancies in the voiceless-sound sentences test provides a robust and well-established procedure for addressing initial imbalances and confirms the significant improvement in the E-GRP.

The above results indicate that the E-GRP shows greater improvements compared to the C-GRP, particularly in the voiceless-sound passage and voiceless-sound sentences sections. The use of ANCOVA highlights the substantial impact of the intervention on the E-GRP, confirming the effectiveness of the experimental approach in improving voiceless consonant production. The effect sizes calculated using rank biserial correlation are lower than Cohen's d but indicate meaningful differences in outcomes between the two groups.

Qualitative Data

Overall, the analysis of the interview data reveals positive opinions regarding the implementation of the SVA. Participants expressed positive sentiments, citing their interest in the SVA, as well as acknowledging its utility and

efficacy in enhancing their pronunciation of voiceless consonant sounds. All 35 participants expressed excitement about the SVA-based activities, finding the approach innovative and engaging. As illustrated by the remarks of Participant 4, who said, "I quite like this approach and can grasp more effective ways to improve pronunciation." Participant 12 remarked, "It helps me feel that it is not boring during the learning process." Most participants (33 out of 35) acknowledged the approach's usefulness in improving scores and understanding the sounds of the target language. They found it more effective than the articulatory approach. Participants noted measurable pronunciation advancements and appreciated the approach's comprehensive nature as demonstrated by some excerpts from the interviewees:

It is a very unique course. It is different and fascinating. After studying the course, I really like this method. I can listen to the intonation part and then pronounce it. I can learn to pronounce many words, realize the sounds and pronounce them better than before. This is a very useful approach. (Participant 22)

Learning by this approach will support learners and naturally develop their speaking skills or pronunciation. I can listen to and grasp the intonations of native speakers and the way they emphasize sentences and pronounce linking sounds. Hence, this is a useful way of learning. (Participant 15)

Participants overwhelmingly praised the approach's effectiveness, with 32 out of 35 noting significant improvements. They reported better voice modulation, pronunciation, rhythm, and enhanced listening skills. As some participants articulated:

This approach will help me adjust my voice better, pronounce better, and have more rhythm when speaking, making my speaking also more rhythmic. Besides, practicing pronunciation like this also helps me listen better and helps me practice listening skills for my upcoming exam preparation. (Participant 23)

After 10 English lessons, I feel that my ability to respond and pronounce vocabulary has improved. It is not about pronouncing each word separately. Moreover, I can combine two new words. My progress is very clear. (Participant 30)

Additionally, Participant 34 observed a significant improvement in articulation, leading to clearer speech: "This approach has made a big difference in how I pronounce the voiceless sounds in English. It is now much easier for me to articulate these sounds accurately, which makes my speech clearer." Participant 19 also reported, "Before taking this course, I struggled with voiceless sounds a lot. Now, I can pronounce them more naturally, which has greatly enhanced my communication ability." She said that a natural ease in producing these sounds greatly enhanced their communication skills.

In brief, the SVA has proven to be a highly effective and engaging approach for enhancing English pronunciation, as evidenced by interviews with 35 students from an experimental cohort. Participants expressed enthusiasm for SVA activities' innovative and interactive nature, noting substantial improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. They found the approach more effective, appreciating its comprehensive nature and practical benefits.

V. DISCUSSION

Both quantitative and qualitative data indicate the effectiveness of using the SVA in enhancing the production of English voiceless consonant sounds among Vietnamese learners compared to the articulatory approach. These findings lend support to previous research that highlighted the efficacy of the top-down approaches to teaching pronunciation (Gilbert, 2008; Jackson & O'Brien, 2011). The results demonstrate that suprasegmental features should be given precedence in pronunciation instructions since they can facilitate the production of segmental components, particularly voiceless consonants. This is consistent with prior studies (e.g., García, 2018; He, 2018; Lian, 1980; Yang, 2016) that underscored the effectiveness of VA in pronunciation development.

These outcomes suggest the direct link between speech perception and sound articulation which indicates that exerting a certain influence on perception may lead to a change in production. Although the current study did not emphasize kinesthetic elements, raising awareness of prosodic patterns proved to be an effective way to enhance learners' pronunciation. The utilization of lowpass filtered speech was again shown to be useful for helping L2 learners internalize prosodic patterns (Cai et al., 2021; Luu et al., 2021). In essence, a combination of filtered and unfiltered audio signals may boost semantic processing and language acquisition, leading to noticeable improvements in pronunciation. Salient progress was observed in the performance of voiceless sounds at both sentence and passage levels. Furthermore, the positive feedback from participants in this study also corroborates the opinions of participants in other research (He, 2018; Luu et al., 2021; Yang, 2016), which showed favor for the VA over traditional teaching. Participants appreciated the novelty, value, and efficiency of this approach, resulting in their increased engagement and commitment to fulfilling all required tasks for better outcomes.

These findings have significant implications for pronunciation pedagogy. First, more attention should be given to the use of suprasegmentals in providing pronunciation instructions in educational institutions. Given the prevalence of the articulatory approach in mainstream teaching (Hazan et al., 2005; Harlika et al., 2018; Nguyen & Bui, 2021; Nguyen, 2023), workshops and training should be organized to disseminate this research-based evidence to language educators and learners. Considering the difficulties Vietnamese learners face when producing consonant sounds (Bui et al., 2021; Nguyen & Tran, 2023; Tran, 2021), the principles of VA or SVA should be incorporated into pronunciation practice tasks. Second, the main principles of the VA or SVA should be widely introduced to both researchers and teachers for

further experimentation to validate the effectiveness of this approach. Notably, the use of lowpass filtered speech to raise learners' awareness of prosodic patterns can be applied both within and outside classrooms.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the implementation of the SVA in improving the pronunciation of English voiceless consonants among 70 Vietnamese non-English major undergraduates. The study adopted a mixed-method quasi-experimental design. The semi-structured interview was used to gather deeper insights into the use of this approach in pronunciation training. The primary finding that emerged from both quantitative and qualitative data analysis was the effectiveness of the SVA in enhancing voiceless consonant sound production in English compared to the articulatory approach. These empirical findings in this study contribute to our understanding of how pronunciation, particularly voiceless consonants can be developed through extensive exposure to prosodic features. The benefits of this exposure are maximized by using a combination of unfiltered and filtered speech. This work also adds to the growing body of research that indicates the connection between perception and production in language acquisition. Notably, the present study is the first empirical investigation into the impact of SVA on improving pronunciation in Vietnam.

Despite these significant contributions, the study has limitations. Since the participants in this study were recruited in a specific area of Vietnam, the generalizability of these results should be approached with caution for other regions with different learner populations. More research can be done for more validation. Another area of valuable investigation involves the calculation of change scores at an individual level, which would be a fruitful area for future work.

APPENDIX A TEACHING CONTENTS FOR TWO GROUPS

Learning contents for the control group

Weeks	Contents
1.	Introduction of The Course - Vowels
2.	Vowels, Diphthongs
3.	Triphthongs, English Consonants- Plosive Consonants
4.	Consonants
5.	Nasal Consonants, Lateral Consonants
6.	Consonant Clusters, Stress
7.	Stress (cont.), Connected Speech
8.	Connected Speech (cont.), Intonation
9.	Intonation (cont.)
10.	Review prosody

Learning contents for the experimental group

The systematic study of intonation patterns		Content
1.	Short statement	– Winter is cold
2.	Medium length statement	– The autumn leaves were gently falling from the trees.
3.	Long statement	– In a rapidly changing world, the most robust and intelligent people will survive, as they can best manage change.
4.	Long statement containing lists	– Her morning routine included meditation, a brisk jog, drinking green tea, writing a journal, and reading the news.
5.	Short yes/no question	– Is the sky blue today?
6.	Medium-length yes/no question	– Have you ever considered adopting a vegetarian lifestyle?
7.	Short information question	– Who painted the Mona Lisa?
8.	Medium-length information question	– Which movie won the Best Picture Oscar in 2020?
9.	Imperative statement	– Put on your seatbelt before starting the car
10.	Exclamation	– That is amazing!

APPENDIX B TEST OF VOICELESS CONSONANT SOUNDS

Part I: Word reading

There are 27 words in this part. Please read them out.

/p/	/t/	/k/	/s/	/f/	/θ/	/ʃ/	/tʃ/	/h/
Pot	Ten	Cat	Sun	Fan	Thin	Ship	Chair	Hat
Apple	Water	Rocket	Castle	Office	Athlete	Fashion	Nature	Ahead
Top	Cat	Back	Grass	Leaf	Bath	Bush	Watch	Na

Part II: Sentence reading

Read the following sentences

1. Fix the flat tire.
2. Sit right here.
3. Finish your dish.
4. The office is off limits.
5. Did you see the match?
6. Who is the president of the business?
7. Is Fiona feeling fine?
8. Cross the street.
9. Is it hotter today?
10. Is this the right bath?
11. Who lives in the white house?
12. Where did you find the sock?
13. The cushion is comfortable.
14. Ken knows the key.
15. Peter probably knows.
16. Who is the official referee?
17. How high is the hill?
18. Did Peter play piano?
19. Who is the cashier in this shop?
20. Where did you place the keys?
21. Is Sally at the seaside?
22. Please use the scissors.
23. He bathes in the bathtub.
24. Where is the cat?
25. Which kite did Karen choose?
26. Push the button.
27. Wait a little longer.
28. Which jacket did Jack pick?
29. Peter, pass the papers.
30. Check the package.
31. Which teacher taught that?
32. Did you close the suitcase?
33. Which patch did you pick?
34. Attach the file.
35. Which theme did they choose?
36. Should Shawn shut the door?
37. Which brush do you use?
38. Is this your dish?
39. Did you wash the dishes?
40. He has a brief.
41. The locker is locked.
42. When did Tom talk?
43. Which chair did Chelsea pick?
44. Kick the ball.
45. Turn the music off.
46. I bought a watch.

47. Has Henry arrived?
48. He wears shoes.
49. Which cloth did you choose?
50. Tom, tie the knot.
51. She likes the book.
52. Hold the handle.
53. Did Tom take the toy?
54. Which shoes did Sheila choose?
55. Walk the path carefully.
56. Why did Peter panic?
57. Is the apple ripe?
58. Is Anthony coming with us?
59. Did you see the duck?
60. Hannah has a hobby.
61. Did Chad choose this?
62. Frank finds it funny.
63. The apple pie is delicious.
64. Wash your hands.
65. Catch the ball.
66. Did you refill the coffee?
67. Offer her a coffee.
68. Which flavor does Fred favor?
69. They are behind the house.
70. Breathe through the straw.
71. Is that your hat?
72. Throw the ball.
73. Is the machine working?
74. Is this your thing?
75. Tom tries to travel.
76. Show me the way.
77. She should shop more.
78. Did you watch the match?
79. Which song did Susan sing?
80. Is this your cap?
81. The water bottle is full.
82. Is the monkey, okay?
83. Is this leaf green?
84. The kitchen is clean.
85. Peel the apples please.
86. Charlie checks the chart.
87. Are these your glasses?
88. She took the path.
89. Which hotel did you book?
90. Which apple type did you pick?
91. The desert has cactuses.
92. Can Kevin keep it?

93.	Send the message.
94.	Theresa thinks thoroughly.
95.	Check the backpack.
96.	He has a brush.
97.	Place it on the rack.
98.	I left the cap on the table.

99.	Put the cap back.
100.	Where did you place the cap?
101.	Which method did Martha use?
102.	She sat on the mat.
103.	Sam sees the sun.
104.	Where did you find the scarf?

Part III: Passage reading.

Read the following passage.

Peter's cat, named Rocket, loved to lay atop the chair near the window, basking in the sun. One day, as Rocket was napping. Peter decided to repot an apple tree sapling. He took a pot and filled it with water, making the soil moist and ready. On his office desk sat a fan decorated with images of the nature reserve he visited last summer. The fan reminded him of the castle they toured and the ship they boarded. Beside it was a framed picture of his wife, an accomplished athlete, looking as thin and fit as ever. Peter, inspired by a fashion magazine? Yes, he decided to wear his favorite hat for the evening walk. He made a mental note to watch out for the bush near the pond; last time, he ended up taking an unplanned bath. Ahead of him? No, the grass glistened, wet from the recent rain, and the leaves from the tall trees, including a leaf from the oak, blanketed the path.

APPENDIX C QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEW

Question 1: What are your thoughts on the SVA after engaging with it?

Question 2: Do you believe the SVA is effective in enhancing the pronunciation of voiceless consonants? If so, in what ways?

Question 3: Has the SVA been beneficial for your pronunciation learning? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?

Question 4: How does the SVA compare to the convention method (the articulatory method) in your opinion?

Question 5: Is there anything else you would like to share about the SVA?

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Translanguaging as Method in Science Fiction

Story of Your Life

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Abstract—This article explores the intersection of translanguaging and science fiction through the case study of "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang. By analyzing the use of translanguaging as a method in science fiction, the article examines how it drives the development of science fiction plots. Through the exploration of the parallel narrative structure, this study highlights the pervasive presence of translanguaging in science fiction as a means to break linguistic and semiotic boundaries. Additionally, it investigates the powerful transformative impact of translanguaging, leading to cognitive changes for the protagonist/narrator and enabling the story-narration with temporal and spatial disruptions. By delving into the interplay between translanguaging and science fiction in "Story of Your Life," this article showcases how translanguaging becomes both the content and form of science fiction, creating a unique and experimental field for communication that utilizes multiple languages, modalities, and symbols.

Index Terms—science fiction, translanguaging, cognition, transformative impact, communication

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 2023 Hugo Award-winning science fiction novelette "The Space-Time Painter", there is a famous line that says the light has predicted the future outcome before it is emitted and then acts on it (Hai, 2022). This sentence may be difficult to understand in everyday life, but it aligns with the rich imagination and extraordinary premise of science fiction. It subverts our understanding of space-time and resonates with the symbolic meaning of the story's title. Interestingly, a few years ago, another novelette, "Story of Your Life" (Chiang, 1998, 2020), winner of the 2020 Nebula Award for Best Novella, organized by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, had a similar plot and provided an explanatory interpretation of this kind of space-time cognition. It used Fermat's principle to explain the refraction of light in water as a way of understanding the subversion of space-time cognition. It is believed that the aforementioned sentence is a tribute from a new author to a classic work through intertextuality.

Cognition, with its emphasis on rational and logical reasoning, pertains to the aspect of science fiction that encourages us to understand and comprehend the unfamiliar, extraterrestrial setting portrayed in a science fiction book, movie, or narrative (Roberts, 2002). Cognition uses reason and logic to facilitate understanding of science fiction and achieve the purpose of communication. In the two examples of subverting space-time, we observe physical phenomena through cognition and interpret symbols to understand the science fiction plots. According to Li Wei, the observation of physical occurrences and the interpretation of symbols, viewed through the lens and approach of translanguaging, involve people utilizing textual, auditory, linguistic, spatial, and visual and other available resources or modes for meaning-making (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2018, 2022), thus achieving communication.

This article aims to explore how translanguaging is employed as method in science fiction, using the case study of the novelette "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang. This story is highly representative as it depicts a linguist's process of deciphering an alien language through translanguaging and how it transforms their understanding of space-time cognition. It exemplifies the concept of "cognitive estrangement" (Suvin, 1972; Spiegel, 2008) in science fiction and is filled with translanguaging, multimodality, multilingualism, and multisemiotic elements that greatly expand the abundance of cognition. The story follows protagonist Louise Banks, a linguist and the narrator, as she attempts to communicate with mysterious alien beings who have arrived on Earth. Through deciphering their written language, Louise's perception of time undergoes a profound transformation and develops an awareness of the future.

This article will explore two dimensions: the use of translanguaging as method to drive the development of science fiction plots and its transformative impact on cognition for the protagonist/narrator, resulting in a parallel narrative structure with temporal and spatial disruptions. As translanguaging is pervasive in science fiction, it serves as a writing method to propel the development of science fiction plots and breaks linguistic and semiotic boundaries in conveying the meaning-making of scientific fiction; furthermore, it is explored that translanguaging has a powerful transformative impact, leading to cognitive changes for the protagonist/narrator, enabling the parallel story narration with temporal and

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spatial disruptions.

In "Story of Your Life," the dynamic interplay between translanguaging and science fiction becomes readily apparent. Translanguaging assumes a central role as the language and communication modality employed by the Heptapods, an extraterrestrial species. Through the practice of translanguaging, the protagonist/narrator undergoes a profound cognitive transformation, leading to a disrupted perception of space and time. Translanguaging functions not only as the substance but also as the very essence of science fiction, creating an innovative and experimental realm for communication that harnesses the power of multiple languages, modalities, and symbols.

II. TRANSLANGUAGING AND SCIENCE FICTION

Translanguaging, a concept that transcends traditional code-switching, encompasses the dynamic and flexible use of multiple languages across various contexts. It involves seamlessly integrating languages to facilitate effective communication and construct meaning, when individuals can bring together their personal history, experiences, environment, attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, cognitive abilities, and physical capacities in a cohesive and meaningful manner (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2018). In this manner, translanguaging serves as a methodology (Li, 2022) that encourages a shift towards meaning-making, embracing multiple semiotic resources and approaching translanguaging as an integrated experience, thus embracing transformative power as it continuously evolves, generating new identities, values, and practices.

On the other hand, science fiction, as a genre that thrives on imagination rather than strict adherence to reality, defies the dichotomy between what is real and what is imagined (Bould et al., 2009). It enthusiastically embraces imaginative and fantastical concepts and narratives, giving rise to what Suvin terms "cognitive estrangement" (1972, p. 88). This concept of cognitive estrangement highlights the shared characteristics of cognition, imagination, and boundary-breaking within the realm of science fiction. In fact, estrangement and cognition form the fundamental pillars of science fiction, shaping its identity and relying on an alternative imaginative framework (Suvin, 1972; Spiegel, 2008).

Through the lens of translanguaging, it becomes evident that human thinking extends far beyond the confines of language and encompasses various cognitive, semiotic, and modal resources that extend beyond conventional speech and writing (Li, 2018; Han, 2022; Han, 2023). This perspective aligns with Suvin's concept of cognition within the realm of science fiction, which emphasizes the intellectual engagement and exploration of new ideas. Moreover, from the translanguaging standpoint, language is viewed as a multisensory and multimodal semiotic system intricately connected with other cognitive systems (Li, 2018). This viewpoint transcends the traditional boundaries between linguistic and non-linguistic cognitive and semiotic systems, resonating with the notion of estrangement in science fiction. Estrangement involves the creation of alternative frameworks and the pushing of boundaries beyond the limits of our empirical reality.

In "Story of Your Life," translanguaging plays a significant role in the exploration of estrangement and cognition within the science fiction narrative. The protagonist and narrator, Louise Banks, engages in translanguaging with the Heptapods, an alien species with a profoundly different language system. Through the method of translanguaging, Louise experiences a departure from her familiar linguistic and cognitive structures, immersing herself in the Heptapods' alternative framework. By engaging with the Heptapods' language, Louise expands her cognitive horizons and gains a non-linear perception of time, a core feature of the Heptapods' language. This transformative experience aligns with the concept of cognition and the estrangement involved in science fiction.

Moreover, the narrative of "Story of Your Life" emphasizes the paramount importance of transcending linguistic and cultural barriers in communication and understanding. Through the act of translanguaging, Louise not only serves as a bridge between the linguistic divide separating humans and Heptapods but also fosters empathy and collaboration among diverse communities. This underscores the transformative power of translanguaging in facilitating cross-cultural communication, aligning with the overarching themes of bridging estrangement and nurturing cognition within the realm of science fiction. In particular, for Louise as the protagonist and narrator, the utilization of translanguaging brings about profound cognitive shifts, enabling her to recount parallel narratives that incorporate temporal and spatial disruptions, further amplifying the transformative impact of language use in her storytelling.

In summary, the relationship between translanguaging and science fiction, in the context of "Story of Your Life," revolves around the concepts of estrangement and cognition. Translanguaging allows for the exploration of alternative linguistic and cognitive frameworks, pushing the boundaries of perception and understanding. It enables characters to engage with estrangement, experiencing a departure from their empirical reality and expanding their cognition. Through this exploration, the novella highlights translanguaging as method and its transformative power in fostering communication, empathy, and cooperation between different linguistic and cultural communities.

III. CASE STUDY OF STORY OF YOUR LIFE

"Story of Your Life" is a captivating science fiction novelette written by Ted Chiang (1998). It explores the life of linguist Dr. Louise Banks, who is tasked with deciphering the complex language of an alien species known as the Heptapods. As Louise delves deeper into their language, she begins to experience a profound cognitive transformation

that allows her to perceive time in a non-linear manner. The story delves into the themes of communication, understanding, and the nature of human perception. In 2016, the story was adapted into a film titled "Arrival," which further expanded on the themes of communication, connection, and the human capacity for understanding.

The forthcoming analysis will be structured into two distinct sections. Firstly, we will delve into the examination of translanguaging as method employed in comprehending the intricate languages of the Heptapods. This will shed light on the role of translanguaging as a powerful tool in bridging the linguistic gap and facilitating understanding between humans and this enigmatic alien species.

Secondly, we will explore the transformative influence of translanguaging practices on the cognition of our protagonist and the story narrator, Louise Banks. Through the immersive experience of translanguaging, Louise undergoes a remarkable cognitive shift, leading to a disrupted perception of time and space and gaining an awareness of the future. This transformation becomes the catalyst for her ability to intricately narrate the entire story, weaving together the complex threads of temporal and spatial disruptions.

By dissecting these two dimensions, we aim to uncover the significance of translanguaging as both a method of communication and a catalyst for cognitive transformation in "Story of Your Life." Through this analysis, we will gain a deeper understanding of how translanguaging shapes the narrative structure and drives the profound concepts of time and space exploration within the science fiction.

A. *Translanguaging as Method*

(a). *Case I – Intricate Nature of the Heptapods' Language*

The language had no written punctuation: its syntax was indicated in the way the semagrams were combined, and there was no need to indicate the cadence of speech. There was certainly no way to slice out subject-predicate pairings neatly to make sentences. A "sentence" seemed to be whatever number of semagrams a heptapod wanted to join together; the only difference between a sentence and a paragraph, or a page, was size. When a Heptapod B sentence grew fairly sizable, its visual impact was remarkable. If I wasn't trying to decipher it, the writing looked like fanciful preying mantis drawn in a cursive style, all clinging to each other to form an Escheresque lattice, each slightly different in its stance. And the biggest sentences had an effect similar to that of psychedelic posters: sometimes eye-watering, sometimes hypnotic. (Chiang, 2020, p. 94)

This is the paragraph that Louise tries to explain the visual syntax and dimensional grammar of the Heptapod B. In this paragraph it highlights the intricate nature of the Heptapod B through the lens of translanguaging by comparing it to "preying mantis" clinging to the "Escheresque lattice", a pattern or design that is reminiscent of the artwork of M.C. Escher, a renowned Dutch artist known for his mathematical and optical illusions. The term "Escheresque lattice" suggests a lattice or grid-like structure that exhibits the same kind of complexity, optical illusions, and mathematical precision and implies the presence of interlocking shapes or figures that create a visually captivating and intriguing pattern, much like the mesmerizing and mind-bending images. The narration reveals that the languages used by the Heptapods are not conventional in the sense of being based on spoken words, but rather utilize a semasiographic writing system. This system conveys meaning without relying on speech and breaks traditional clear-cut boundaries between symbols, icons, and words.

Translanguaging as method comes into play as the protagonist and narrator, Louise, deciphers the language and categorizes it as Heptapod A (spoken language) and Heptapod B (written language). The visual syntax and two-dimensional grammar of Heptapod B pose cognitive challenges and demonstrate the translanguaging capacity of the Heptapods. The two entirely different languages present dimensional audio, visual, and cognitive complexities that challenge common understanding of languages. Furthermore, the logic behind the Heptapods' language is explored, highlighting the concept of "semagrams" as a means of conceptualization. The visual effect achieved by combining semagrams to indicate syntax, along with the absence of written punctuation, creates a striking resemblance to the intricate patterns found in the works of M.C. Escher. These patterns evoke emotions and psyches, creating a space that encompasses languages, emotions, and perception.

Through the emphasis placed on the two-dimensional nature of Heptapod B, the conveyance of inflections and meanings is achieved by manipulating the curvature, thickness, undulation, and other graphical characteristics of the strokes. Despite bearing resemblance to a calligraphic style, the grammar of these traits remains consistent and free from ambiguity. In summary, the above text showcases the complexities of the Heptapods' language and its understanding through the lens of translanguaging. It highlights the distinct nature of Heptapods' language, their visual and two-dimensional characteristics, and their impact on cognition, perception, and emotional states.

(b). *Case II – Interdisciplinary Understanding of Heptapods' Language*

[...] here's the path a ray of light takes when crossing from air to water. The light ray travels in a straight line until it hits the water; the water has a different index of refraction, so the light changes direction...Any hypothetical path would require more time to traverse than the one actually taken. In other words, the route that the light ray takes is always the fastest possible one. That's Fermat's Principle of Least Time. (Chiang, 2020, p. 97)

To further understand the "semagrams" language and its topsy-turvy logic, physics is employed to decipher the secret. The underlying logic of heptapods is highly equivalent to human's working-out principal by employing the calculus of variations towards refraction of light, the Framat's Principle of Least Time in determining the optimal path.

The metaphorical comparison between the Heptapods' topsy-turvy logic and human mathematical concepts allows for a deeper comprehension of the Heptapods' universe. The text suggests that the Heptapods' mathematical system may be fundamentally different from the human system, potentially even "topsy-turvy" in terms of time and space. By incorporating physics concepts and mathematical principles, such as Fermat's Principle and the calculus of variations, the human scientists aim to bridge the gap in understanding the Heptapods' "topsy-turvy" mathematics. This represents a boundary-breaking process where different disciplinary concepts, in this case, physics and mathematics, are utilized to interpret and navigate the complexities of the Heptapods' language and cognitive framework.

This interdisciplinary approach, involving the integration of seemingly disparate elements, expands our cognition and pushes the boundaries of our understanding. The inclusion of physics concepts and mathematical principles, which may have initially seemed alienated from language, contributes to our ability to grasp the intricacies of the Heptapods' language and its spontaneous actions. In doing so, our cognition extends beyond its previous limitations, enabling us to delve into the realm of the unknown.

By integrating the principles of translanguaging as a methodology, we gain a fresh conceptual framework that facilitates significant shifts in our analytical understanding. This framework encourages us to move beyond viewing language as mere abstract codes, instead focusing on the creation of meaning and sense by inclusion of physics concepts and mathematical principals. It prompts us to acknowledge and explore a wide array of multi-semiotic resources, without favoring any particular modes or methods of meaning-making. Translanguaging is approached as an all-encompassing and integrated experience here in the narration.

Moreover, the topsy-turvy logics reaffirms the value of Moment Analysis (Li, 2018), which emphasizes the significance of spontaneous actions as crucial data points in understanding the rhythm and meaning of social life. This inclusion of spur-of-the-moment actions aligns with the interdisciplinary nature of our exploration, as it expands our cognition and pushes the boundaries of our understanding. By integrating seemingly disparate elements, such as physics concepts and mathematical principles, we enhance our ability to delve into the intricacies of the Heptapods' language and their spontaneous actions. Through this interdisciplinary approach and methodological framework, our cognition extends beyond its previous limitations, enabling us to venture into the realm of the unknown.

B. Transformative Power of Translanguaging on Cognition

(a). Case I – Boundary-Breaking and Cognitive Estrangement

More interesting was the fact that Heptapod B was changing the way I thought. For me, thinking typically meant speaking in an internal voice; as we say in the trade, my thoughts were phonologically coded. My internal voice normally spoke in English, but that wasn't a requirement...With Heptapod B, I was experiencing something just as foreign: my thoughts were becoming graphically coded...I saw semagrams with my mind's eye, sprouting like frost on a windowpane. As I grew more fluent, semagraphic designs would appear fully-formed, articulating even complex ideas all at once. My thought processes weren't moving any faster as a result, though. Instead of racing forward, my mind hung balanced on the symmetry underlying the semagrams. The semagrams seemed to be something more than language; they were almost like mandalas, I found myself in a meditative state, contemplating the way in which premises and conclusions were interchangeable. There was no direction inherent in the way propositions were connected, no "train of thought" moving along a particular route; all the components in an act of reasoning were equally powerful, all having identical precedence. (Chiang, 2020, pp. 103-104)

The text explores the linguist's advancement in understanding Heptapod B and its interconnectivity and pre-defined structure. The linguist, Louise, discovers that in Heptapod B, each stroke in a sentence travels across multiple semagrams and participates in different clauses of the message. This suggests that the Heptapods must know the entire sentence's layout before writing the first stroke, and removing any stroke would require redesigning the entire sentence. This pre-defined design and interconnectivity parallel the findings of Fermat's Principle of Least Time in light refraction, where the light needs to know its destination before beginning its journey.

This observation of how learning Heptapod B influences the linguist's thinking process. She notes that her thoughts usually involve speaking in an internal voice, but due to her practice with Heptapod B, her thoughts start to manifest as written semagrams rather than progressing linearly. She sees complex ideas articulated all at once and this shift in thinking mode, from "phonologically coded" thoughts to graphically coded thoughts, resembles the experience of thinking in a non-phonological mode.

Furthermore, this shift in thinking mode exemplifies the transformative and boundary-breaking nature of translanguaging. Louise's remarkable ability to think in Heptapod B expands her cognitive repertoire and challenges the limitations of traditional language-based thinking. It showcases the immense potential for language to reshape and transcend conventional modes of cognition. Louise's experience with Heptapod B introduces her to a new and unfamiliar linguistic system. This unfamiliarity creates a sense of cognitive estrangement, a state in which one's familiar cognitive frameworks are disrupted and new perspectives emerge. By engaging with Heptapod B, Louise is able to step

outside the confines of her traditional language-based thinking and embrace alternative patterns of thought.

This expanded cognitive capability signifies a departure from the hierarchical nature of conventional thinking, where certain components or modes of meaning-making are given more prominence. In the realm of translanguaging, all elements involved in the process of meaning-making, regardless of their linguistic or semiotic nature, are granted equal importance (Li & Zhu, 2013; Li, 2018). This egalitarian approach to cognition allows for a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding, where diverse components contribute to the overall reasoning process.

The breaking down of conventional boundaries and the elevation of alternative thinking patterns highlight the transformative potential of translanguaging as a powerful force that can reshape our cognitive frameworks and expand the horizons of our understanding.

(b). *Case II – Non-Linearity and Simultaneous Mode of Consciousness*

Looking at a sentence like this one, I understood why the heptapods had evolved a semasiographic writing system like Heptapod B; it was better suited for a species with a simultaneous mode of consciousness. For them, speech was a bottleneck because it required that one word follow another sequentially. With writing, on the other hand, every mark on a page was visible simultaneously. Why constrain writing with a glottographic straitjacket, demanding that it be just as sequential as speech? It would never occur to them. Semasiographic writing naturally took advantage of the page's two-dimensionality; instead of doling out morphemes one at a time, it offered an entire page full of them all at once. And now that Heptapod B had introduced me to a simultaneous mode of consciousness, I understood the rationale behind Heptapod A's grammar: what my sequential mind had perceived as unnecessarily convoluted, I now recognized as an attempt to provide flexibility within the confines of sequential speech. I could use Heptapod A more easily as a result, though it was still a poor substitute for Heptapod B. (Chiang, 2020, pp. 109-110)

The above reflection about the non-linearity of Heptapod B allows linguist Luise to develop a “simultaneous mode of consciousness” and understand the insufficiency of Heptapod A. Luise realizes that Heptapod B's peculiar grammar is a result of the heptapods' attempt to break free from the constraints of sequential speech. This understanding deepens the linguist's comprehension of the semasiographic writing. The linguist's engagement with Heptapod B reshapes her memory and cognition, challenging her sequential thinking patterns. The non-linearity of Heptapod B allows a brandnew rationale that encapsulates the simultaneous mode of consciousness and highlights the limitations of sequential speech. However, the linguist recognizes the influence of her human, sequential mindset on her perception of reality, acknowledging the amalgamation of human's and heptapods' perspectives in her worldview.

By experiencing the writing system of Heptapod B, the linguist embraces a shift in her cognitive approach, as she recognizes a mode of cognition that transcends sequential thinking. This resonates with the very essential idea of translanguaging, where individuals engage in flexible cognitive processes that incorporate multiple languages or linguistic systems.

Moreover, the heptapods' mode of consciousness, characterized by simultaneity, acknowledges the limitations of sequential speech and instead embraces writing as a mode of communication. This preference exemplifies a cognitive flexibility that surpasses the constraints of a single linguistic system, aligning with the principles of the “space of simultaneity” (Phyak, 2023), where coexist and thrive inclusive environments that foster a rich and dynamic translanguaging practices, transformative ideologies, and lived experiences of all the involved beings.

(c). *Case III – Awareness of the Future and Parallel Narration*

Usually, Heptapod B affects just my memory: my consciousness crawls along as it did before, a glowing sliver crawling forward in time, the difference being that the ash of memory lies ahead as well as behind: there is no real combustion. But occasionally I have glimpses when Heptapod B truly reigns, and I experience past and future all at once; my consciousness becomes a half-century-long ember burning outside time. I perceive--during those glimpses--that entire epoch as a simultaneity. It's a period encompassing the rest of my life, and the entirety of yours [daughter¹]. (Chiang, 2020, pp. 113-114)

When the story comes to the end, the linguist, as protagonist and narrator, reveals the story's parallel narration and foresees the birth and death of the linguist's daughter. This text exposes the transformative power of the simultaneity of consciousness and the linguist's awareness of the future that have been exerting impacts on the linguist's cognition.

The linguist's proficiency in Heptapod B allows her to experience past and future simultaneously and perceive an entire epoch as a simultaneity. This fusion of worldviews corresponds to the cognitive estrangement pre-set by science fiction, revealing also the transformative capacity as a natural sequence of long-term translanguaging practices, as argued by Li Wei, “the transformative capacity of the Translanguaging process not only for language systems but also for individuals' cognition and social structures” (2018, p. 27).

The conclusion of the text emphasizes the linguist's awareness of the transformative power of knowing the future and the attention she pays to every detail. She reflects on her chosen route and contemplates whether she is working toward an extreme of joy or pain, seeking a minimum or maximum outcome. This introspection probes into translanguaging in

¹ Luise's future daughter. The narrative is spoken through the voice of Luise, who addresses her words to the daughter she has yet to bring into the world. The child's name is conspicuously absent throughout the entirety of the story.

shaping individuals' lives and choices. The metaphorical representation of memories as "cigarette ash" (Chiang, 2020, p. 113) as the sequential present versus "gigantic blocks" (Chiang, 2020, p. 113) as the dimensional existence vividly presents the abstract understanding of the simultaneity of consciousness. Then the narration concludes with the linguist's contemplation of her chosen route and the transformative power of knowing the future. Finally, the linguist reconciles with herself with the chosen route. No matter minimum or maximum, the future comes at its ease and it explains why there are two lines of story-writing.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present article highlights the significant role of translanguaging in science fiction. As an unexplored theme, translanguaging serves as a method to drive the development of science fiction plots by breaking linguistic and semiotic boundaries and expanding the meaning-making in the genre. Through translanguaging, science fiction narratives can explore the subversion of space-time cognition, as seen in example like "Story of Your Life".

The novelette "Story of Your Life" exemplifies the dynamic interplay between translanguaging and science fiction. The employment of translanguaging as the language and communication modality of the Heptapods, the extraterrestrial species, not only drives the plot but also leads to a cognitive transformation for the protagonist/narrator. Translanguaging becomes the substance and essence of the cognitive estrangement expected in science fiction stories, creating an innovative and experimental realm for communication that harnesses the power of multiple languages, modalities, and symbols.

Moreover, translanguaging enables profound cognitive changes, leading to disrupted perceptions of space and time. This transformative effect allows for the creation of parallel narratives with temporal and spatial disruptions, enhancing the richness and complexity of the science fiction experience. It serves as a powerful tool for conveying complex ideas, subverting traditional understandings of space and time as a method. It adds depth, richness, and multidimensionality to the genre, making science fiction a captivating and thought-provoking literary form.

By integrating translanguaging theory into the study of science fiction, researchers and scholars can uncover new insights into the complexities of language, communication, and cognition within speculative narratives. As a matter of fact, translanguaging theory offers a framework to examine how language and communication practices shape and are shaped by the imaginative worlds of science fiction. It allows for a deeper exploration of the intricate relationship between language, meaning-making, and the construction of alternate realities. Furthermore, the combination of translanguaging theory and science fiction can shed light on the interplay between linguistic and semiotic resources, multimodality, and the representation of diverse linguistic and cultural identities within speculative narratives. It opens up avenues to investigate how the use of multiple languages, modes, and symbols in science fiction texts contributes to the creation of intricate narrative structures.

Additionally, the application of translanguaging theory in the analysis of science fiction can provide a fresh perspective on the genre's potential to challenge and subvert established linguistic and social norms. It allows for the exploration of how science fiction narratives reimagine language and communication practices, pushing the boundaries of what is considered possible or acceptable in our own reality.

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Exploring Lexical Luxury in Scott Fitzgerald's Novels: A Corpus-Based Stylistic Analysis

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Abstract—This study is based on corpus-stylistic techniques and measures the concept of lexical luxury being considered as a stylistic marker in literary work represented by Scott Fitzgerald's novels. This study aims to investigate the feasibility of measuring lexical luxury using corpus-based methodologies and techniques. It looks at how lexical luxury is used as a stylistic marker in literary works. The study hypothesizes that corpus stylistics frames a rather reliable source of verifying the validity of controversial issues about lexical luxury measurements; Type/Token Ratio is a measure that can efficiently determine the size of the lexical luxury when an analyst analyzes a text; the high percentages of lexical luxury are based on the high concentrations of lexical items resulting in a denser lexicality. The corpus in this study is designed and compiled on the principles of corpus linguistics as well as corpus stylistics, then, processed via *WordSmith Tools* (8.0) to get the *tokens*; *types*, and *word frequencies*. The lexical items and function words are analyzed using Ure's method, then percentages of lexical luxury are obtained. The percentages represent lexical luxury profiles for each novel. After that, the whole statistical output is graphically plotted using Microsoft Office Excel. This study found that corpus-based stylistic studies have proven to be effective in exploring specific aspects of style. However, corpus stylistics makes significant use of statistical descriptions offered by trustworthy and authentic measures such as Type/Token Ratio.

Index Terms—lexical luxury, stylistic marker, corpus linguistics, corpus stylistics, Type/Token Ratio

I. INTRODUCTION

Corpus linguistics provides a collection of statistical procedures to determine the number of items. Following that, the numbers must be put into a practical formula to measure the lexical luxury of a given text. The level of lexicality determined by the statistical formula could indicate that lexical luxury is a stylistic marker for determining the lexical regression or progression of a specific writer's style.

Consequently, the present study focuses on adopting corpus-based techniques to measure a feature of lexical diversity. This feature is concerned with the identification of lexical luxury and its graphical representation. It likewise looks at how this feature is used as a stylistic marker in literary works. Consequently, the problem addressed in this work can be stated in the following questions: What role does lexical luxury play as a stylistic marker? What are the indices of measuring lexical luxury in texts? What are the attainable statistical frameworks proposed by corpus?

The present study aims to investigate the usefulness of the Type/Token Ratio (TTR) in measuring lexical luxury in five English novels written by Scott Fitzgerald, and finding their statistical reliability in giving rigorous accounts of lexical luxury measurements; comparing TTR values to figure out the size of the lexical luxury that occurred in the process of writing a text. Doing such a step, the researchers may hopefully give objective and scientific evidence of progression or recess in the linguistic competence of a writer; proving that lexical luxury is a stylistic marker. This study hypothesizes that corpus stylistics frames a rather reliable source of verifying the validity of controversial issues about lexical luxury measurements, and lexical luxury is a well-organized measure for measuring lexicality in literary texts and the lexical progression of a writer's style.

The present study is limited to investigating one specific type of lexical measure which is a lexical luxury, and it is limited to exploring one type of genre: novels represented by five English novels introduced by Scott Fitzgerald: *This Side of Paradise* (1920); *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922); *The Great Gatsby* (1925); *Tender Is the Night* (1934); and *The Last Tycoon* (1941).

II. CORPUS LINGUISTICS, STYLISTICS AND CORPUS STYLISTICS

The present section is an attempt to determine the relationship that regulates three fundamental areas of study: Corpus Linguistics, Stylistics, and Corpus Stylistics.

A. Corpus Linguistics

Corpus Linguistics (henceforth CL) is a field of study that focuses on procedures and methods for studying languages (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). CL is an empirical approach used to conduct investigations of language variability to arrive at scientifically valid conclusions. CL is an application methodology with a well-developed set of rules and theoretical foundations (Biber & Reppen, 2015).

Based on examples of language use in real-life situations, CL is the best way to study languages (McEnery & Wilson, 2001). CL can achieve its goals by using corpus data as a first step toward conducting a scientific and practical investigation (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). It involves a computer-based analysis of massive amounts of data, which means that CL is "multilingual", having various languages and dialects that may be investigated using corpus data (McEnery & Hardie, 2012). Thus, Hunston (2022) defines corpus as a collection of examples of language use that can be spoken or written, and CL is unquestionably a "store of used language" (p. 3).

B. Stylistics

Norgaard et al. (2010) state that stylistics explores how meaning is formed through language in literature and other types of writings or texts. Francis (2017) suggests that stylistics is developed by Russian Formalism via Prague Structuralism, which is followed by the concept of estrangement, or "deviation from normal usages" (p. 44). This shows that style is associated with a deviation from a norm, or the conventional usage of language, in order to achieve literary, persuasive, rhetorical, or other effects (Hickey, 1993). Thus, stylistics might be introduced as a subfield of linguistics that studies distinctive linguistic expressions or the style itself (Verdonk, 2002). It also tries to show critics and linguists the vast possibilities for interpretation (Simpson, 2004).

C. Corpus Stylistics

Corpus Stylistics (CS) is a stylistic offshoot in which corpus techniques are used to support the analysis of stylistic aesthetic function in large texts (McIntyre, 2012). CS is the most recent branch of stylistics that incorporates corpus linguistic tools into the stylistician's toolkit (Shepherd & Sardinha, 2013).

CS is now a major field of study in literary linguistics. It combines a "variety of methods, including the plain use of digitized literary texts, as well as the application of statistical analyses of literary works or contrastive and comparative corpora" (Wynne, 2006, p. 2). CS advancement coincides with the advancement of CL methodologies as they are used in the analysis of bulky amounts of data and literary texts. All of this is possible with computer software programs (Norgaard et al., 2010). Furthermore, CS can be viewed as a study of the language in literature. It is the application of models and theories from corpus linguistics and stylistics to machine-readable databases (McIntyre, 2015).

III. LEXICAL LUXURY AS A STYLISTIC MARKER

Lexical luxury will be illustrated and disputed as a stylistic marker in this Section. This stylistic marker will be discussed in connection to the ideas of lexical frequency, lexical variety, and lexical richness.

A. The Concept of Stylistic Marker

Style in text analysis may be characterized as a "set of measurable patterns which may be unique to an author" (Holmes, 1994, p. 87). It is closely connected to choices that add diversity and depth to the text. The language features that make up those choices are known as stylistic markers. The stylistic markers are linguistic elements or features that are thought to be stylistically significant (Yumin, 1986).

When two texts are compared, one of these linguistic traits may occur in one text but not in the other. It may appear more frequently in one text than in the other, or it may occur at the same frequency in both texts (Enkvist, 1973). The frequencies or densities of these features deviate considerably from those in the norm (i.e., the set of expectations based on previous experiences) (Enkvist, 1973). Thus, stylistic markers are the distinctive features of a writer's style that are primarily utilized to identify stylistic features in a certain text (Yeibo, 2011).

In general, stylistic markers could be identified at any linguistic level. These markers can be found at the morphological, semantic, syntactic, and even text format levels (McMenamin, 2002). Furthermore, these markers cannot be examined with the naked eye (Eder, 2011). The only practical procedure for establishing the significance of such markers is the empirical investigation (Eder, 2011).

As a result, stylistic markers are a set of idiosyncrasies that arise in addition to uncommon linguistic features that may occur (McMenamin, 2002). Word frequencies, word length, sentence length, and so forth might be chosen and investigated as stylistic markers (Eder, 2011).

B. Lexical Luxury

Lexical Luxury (LL) denotes the content words in relation to the overall quantity of words in the text (Singla, 2012). LL refers to a text's "degree of richness in terms of ideas, meanings, and information" (Al-wahy, 2016, p. 5). Several writers demonstrate and discuss LL from various angles. Camiciottoli (2007) presents LL as the ratio of content words in relation to grammatical words. Likewise, Eggins (2004) defines lexical luxury in a sentence or a text by measuring the amount of content terms as a percentage of total words. In other words, LL is the proportion of lexical items to the overall running words in the text (Halliday, 1989).

As a result, LL may be measured by the proportion of lexical terms in a text (Keune, 2012). This percentage shows the frequency with which nouns, verbs, adverbs, and adjectives are used (Keune, 2012). Furthermore, Johansson (2008) notes that a text with a high lexical item ratio is more informative than one with a high function or grammatical word ratio. In this regard, LL is a marker of information weight in a certain text, "a text amount of details and technical vocabulary" (Giannossa, 2012, p. 48). Lastly, LL is calculated by dividing the total number of lexically featured words in a text or corpus by the total number of orthographic or grammatically featured words (Johansson, 2008).

IV. CORPUS DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

After having a thorough examination of lexical luxury as a stylistic marker, the methodology and techniques utilized in this study are now ready to be presented. This section highlights some crucial points about corpus design as well as the main processes that each researcher should follow to construct a satisfactory corpus. Each step is presented as a separate item hoping that readers will understand how a corpus can be constructed and what procedures should be followed when constructing a corpus.

A. Corpus Design

The first step in designing a corpus should be to plan. For Atkins et al. (1992), the design of a corpus must specify *the type* of corpus, *the size* of the corpus, *the period of time* involved, *the language varieties*, and *the mode* of data (written or spoken). Because the corpus is defined as a manifestation of a language, it must be built to meet the purpose it is meant to represent. Furthermore, for a more effective and well-documented corpus-based study, two components are critical: (1) software tools (for data reading); and (2) human intuition (for data interpretation) (Anthony, 2009).

(a). Corpus Data

The corpora (digital texts) have been collected from a website (www.getenberg.org) by downloading material from the World Wide Web. This website is the most trustworthy among others, and it is chosen for its well-known academic reputation. Throughout the study, one computerized corpus has been constructed; this corpus is comprised or compiled of English novels produced by the American novelist Scott Fitzgerald; they (the novels) are all in the same genre: fiction.

To obtain the raw material, certain types of data have been removed from the full texts, such as (websites, personal descriptions, numerals, and footnotes). The corpora are then divided into successive samples. The researchers employed an approximate number of words or tokens (i.e., roughly 5,000 tokens in size) to segment valid and representative text samples, using Biber's (1993) strategy. The data came up with a total of (83) samples after segmenting all of the corpora. As a result, the table below provides a statistical description of the corpora employed in this study.

TABLE 1
CORPORA DESCRIPTION OF THE SOURCE TEXTS TOKENS: "THIS SIDE OF PARADISE" (1920), "THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED" (1922), "THE GREAT GATSBY" (1925), "TENDER IS THE NIGHT" (1934), AND "THE LAST TYCOON" (1941)

Samples No.	<i>This Side of Paradise</i>	<i>The Beautiful and Damned</i>	<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	<i>Tender Is The Night</i>	<i>The Last Tycoon</i>
1	5.006	5.003	5.026	5.003	5.001
2	5.006	5.002	5.020	5.001	5.006
3	5.008	5.005	5.002	5.002	5.000
4	5.002	5.000	5.006	5.006	5.002
5	5.006	5.002	5.008	5.002	5.005
6	5.000	5.007	5.005	5.018	5.008
7	5.004	5.001	5.000	5.017	5.004
8	5.003	5.009	5.011	5.028	5.007
9	5.002	5.006	5.001	5.020	5.003
10	5.005	5.003	2.803	5.006	1.966
11	5.007	5.008		5.047	
12	5.001	5.008		5.000	
13	5.001	5.005		5.012	
14	5.000	5.002		5.029	
15	5.006	5.003		5.009	
16	4.699	5.002		5.005	
17		5.007		5.007	
18		5.003		5.003	
19		5.008		5.008	
20		5.003		5.032	
21		5.004		5.011	
22		5.002		3.107	
23		5.004			
24		5.002			
25		3.380			
Average	79.756	123.479	47.882	108.373	47.002

(b). Selection Features

With the assistance of the World Wide Web, the full texts have been downloaded from the (www.getenberg.org) website. The downloaded texts for this study are five English novels by the American novelist Scott Fitzgerald: "*This Side of Paradise*" (1920), "*The Beautiful and Damned*" (1922), "*The Great Gatsby*" (1925), "*Tender Is the Night*" (1934), and "*The Last Tycoon*" (1941).

The features of selection are important to be mentioned. The five novels are selected for a variety of reasons. First, they are all in the same genre: fiction. Second, they are all written by a native novelist; therefore, they have the same personal linguistic background. This is because lexical luxury value does not adequately describe linguistic features very well if one wishes to compare groups with different linguistic proficiency with one another (Lauren, 2002). This united background poses no difficulty in measuring lexical luxury. Third, they have similar stylistic peculiarities, which reduces the impacts of sampling bias and leads to "concern with a unified authorial effort and consistent style" (Atkins et al., 1992, p. 2).

Biber's (1993) strategy is adopted in segmenting the corpus data to obtain representative and valid text samples. The text samples are approximately (roughly 5,000) tokens in size. The samples of a text should contain (5,000) tokens for each sample since grammatical terms are the most "frequently occurring" linguistic units (Meyer, 2004, p. 39). The grammatical items are considered to be the "top 50-word types in English" (Bloomer et al., 2005, p. 140). However, lexical items are "infrequently occurring" linguistic items (Meyer, 2004, p. 39). Large or long texts that exceed 1000 tokens are thus statistically and linguistically necessary to achieve a reliable analysis.

(c). Tools of Analysis

Many electronic software applications are used to perform linguistic analyses based on corpora, among these applications, (Word Counter Tools) (*see* www.wordcounter.net), (WordSmith Tools), and (Microsoft Office Excel) are employed in the present study.

B. Corpus Analysis Procedures

Following the same methodology applied in Hussein (2014), the corpus data is analyzed in the same way but with slight differences. The differences lie in the uniqueness of the forms, numbers, and contents of the digital texts.

C. Reliability of Data Source

Data reliability is achieved through authentic investigation. The researchers began by downloading text corpora from the most authentic and trustworthy sources. After ensuring that these digital texts are precise copies of the originals, and correspond to the original paper-packed ones, they are divided into (83) samples, with each sample containing around (5,000) tokens, non-authorial materials such as titles, websites, and authorship descriptions are eliminated to minimize any statistical threat and to obtain the basic content of the text. The samples are converted from Portable Document Format (PDF) to Plain Text Format (TXT) so that the easy-to-use tools and programs like (WordCounter Tools) and (WordSmith Tools) can perform their function correctly.

V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis procedures mentioned in Section Four are put into practice in this section. This Section, as a statistical analysis, goes through specific statistical analyses that might be employed as a type of quantitative demonstration developed for the five novels included in the corpus under consideration. Furthermore, the results of such a demonstration are explored and discussed later on.

A. Lexical Luxury Identification

Before conducting a corpus-based analysis, the number of tokens and lexical items used in the corpus must be determined using Ure's method of calculating LL as a percentage. According to Ure's method, the LL is calculated by dividing the amount or the number of lexical words by the number of whole words or tokens multiplied by (100). As an example for this process, the sentence (*This arrangement that the lexical development or regression of a writer's style may be measured in the context of these five novels*) has a total of (22) tokens but only (10) lexical items (arrangement, lexical, development, regression, writer, style, measured, context, novels). As a result, the LL of this sentence is $\left(\frac{10}{22} \times 100 = 45\%\right)$. The novels are chronologically arranged and analyzed according to their publication dates. This arrangement ensures that the lexical development and/or regression of Scott Fitzgerald's style may be measured in the context of these five works. The LL can be simply calculated by bringing out the number of tokens and lexical items using WordSmith Tools (8.0), as indicated in the subsections ahead.

(a). Lexical Luxury Identification of *This Side of Paradise*

When processing the samples separately using WS Tools, the wordlist is used to calculate the number of tokens. After removing all function words from each wordlist, the number of lexical items is manually calculated. The entire textual samples were converted to (plain text type) format (txt), then analyzed using WordSmith Tools to determine the frequency of both lexical and functional items. Following the manual calculation of the number of lexical items from

the Wordlist, the numbers of tokens as well as lexical items are determined using Ure's formula to provide LL percentages. Throughout the five novels, the same techniques are employed. The example in Table 2 comes from sample number (1) from "This Side of Paradise".

TABLE 2
TOKENS, LEXICAL ITEMS, AND LL PERCENTAGES OF (16) TEXTUAL SAMPLES OF "THIS SIDE OF PARADISE"

Sample No.	Tokens	Lexical Items	LL.
1	5.006	1.729	34.54 %
2	5.006	1.648	32.92 %
3	5.008	1.779	35.52 %
4	5.002	1.562	31.23 %
5	5.006	1.627	32.50 %
6	5.000	1.519	30.38 %
7	5.004	1.608	32.13 %
8	5.003	1.514	30.26 %
9	5.002	1.509	30.17 %
10	5.005	1.499	29.95 %
11	5.007	1.266	25.28 %
12	5.001	1.666	33.31 %
13	5.001	1.583	31.65 %
14	5.000	1.533	30.66 %
15	5.006	1.762	35.20 %
16	4.699	1.466	31.20 %
Average	79.756	25.270	31.68 %

In the statistical description in Table 2, the whole novel (*This Side of Paradise*) is segmented sequentially into (16) samples. Approximately, each sample of text holds approximately (5000) tokens. The LL scale for these samples ranges from (25.28%) the low percentage to (35.52 %), the highest percentage. The weight of content or lexical items varies across samples, despite the fact that their frequencies are generally convergent across all samples. Samples with a high frequency of lexical items score high LL percentages, as with the third sample. The third sample scores (35.52 %) LL percentage with (5.008) tokens and (1.779) lexical words. The samples of lower-frequency lexical words score low LL percentages. The eleventh sample has the lowest LL rate (25.28 %) with (5.007) tokens and (1.266) lexical words. Figure 1 shows the percentages of this LL scale.

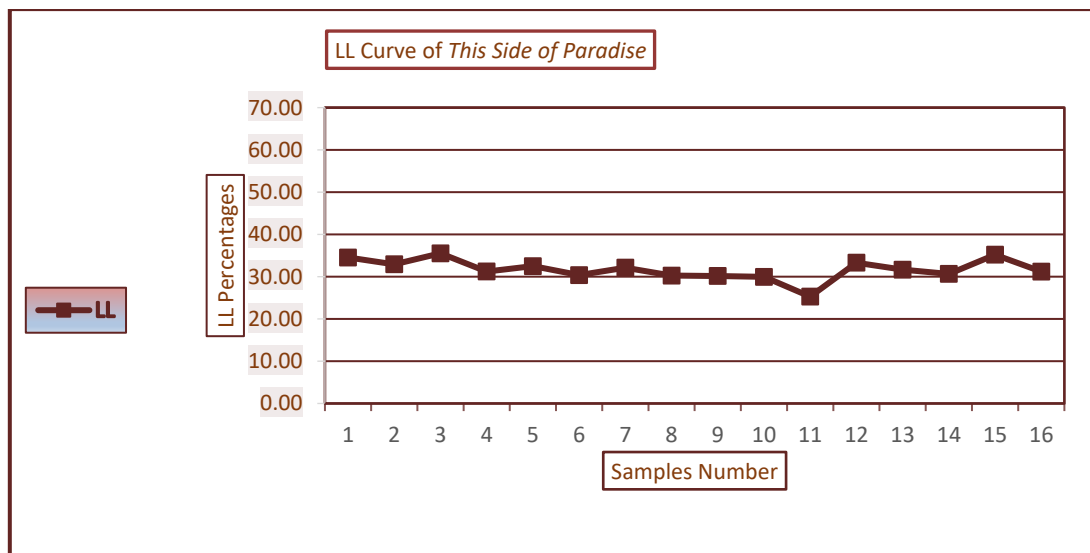


Figure 1. The Order of LL Percentages of (16) Textual Samples of "This Side of Paradise"

The LL curve in Figure 1 visualizes convergent LL percentages. These differences among LL ratios push this curve stretch forward in a rather instable progression. It is noticeable on this curve that its peak occurs at the third sample (35.52 %) with (5.008) tokens and (1.779) lexical items.

(b). *Lexical Luxury Identification of "The Beautiful and Damned"*

The next table introduces the statistical description of lexical items, tokens, and their LL percentages of (25) samples visualizing the whole textual material of "The Beautiful and Damned":

TABLE 3
 TOKENS, LEXICAL ITEMS, AND LL PERCENTAGES OF (25) TEXTUAL SAMPLES OF "THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED"

Sample No.	Tokens	Lexical Items	LL.
1	5.003	1.732	34.62 %
2	5.002	1.625	32.49 %
3	5.005	1.635	32.67 %
4	5.000	1.634	32.68 %
5	5.002	1.563	31.25 %
6	5.007	1.652	32.99 %
7	5.001	1.500	29.99 %
8	5.009	1.631	32.56 %
9	5.006	1.598	31.92 %
10	5.003	1.582	31.62 %
11	5.008	1.668	33.31 %
12	5.008	1.575	31.45 %
13	5.005	1.628	32.53 %
14	5.002	1.535	30.69 %
15	5.003	1.633	32.64 %
16	5.002	1.608	32.15 %
17	5.007	1.678	33.51 %
18	5.003	1.715	34.28 %
19	5.008	1.535	30.65 %
20	5.003	1.653	33.04 %
21	5.004	1.513	30.24 %
22	5.002	1.641	32.81 %
23	5.004	1.555	31.08 %
24	5.002	1.433	28.65 %
25	3.380	1.137	33.64 %
Average	123.479	39.659	32.14 %

As presented in Table 3, the (25) samples of the second novel, "The Beautiful and Damned", present distinct LL percentages. The LL scale starts consisting of (28.65%) as the lowest percentage and ends up with (34.62%) as the highest one. The first sample, on the one hand, scores (34.62%) with (5,003) tokens and (1,732) lexical items. The last sample, on the other hand, scores (33.64%) with (3,380) tokens and (1,137) lexical items. Samples (2, 5, 14, 16, 22, 24) and Samples (1, 10, 15, 18, 20) consist of a similar number of tokens, nonetheless they score different LL percentages. The numbers of the various lexical items make the LL percentages for the samples marked up successively with (32.49%) having (1,625) lexical items, (31.25%) with (1,563) lexical items, (30.69%) with (1,535) and (32.15%) with (1,608) lexical items, (32.81%) with (1,641), (28.65%) with (1,433) lexical items. The curve of this scale is plotted visually in Figure 2:

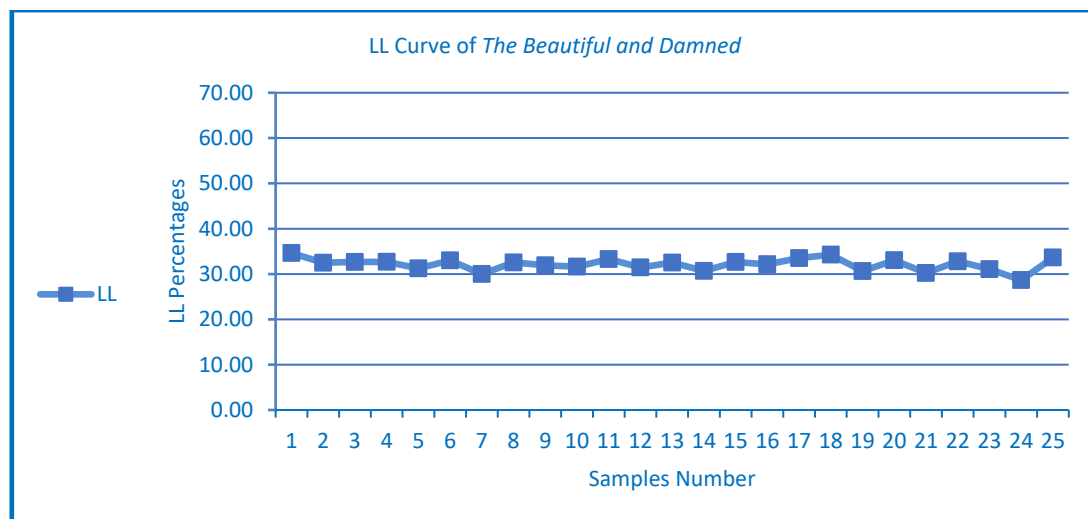


Figure 2. The Order of LL Percentages of (25) Textual Samples of "The Beautiful and Damned"

The curve of the LL scale of "The Beautiful and Damned" starts with (34.58%) LL ratio, and ends with roughly similar LL ratio (33.64%). Furthermore, the lowest point of this curve is found at the twenty-eight-sample scoring (28.41%) LL percentage. This LL percentage is the lowest one among the overall percentages of this novel.

(c). *Lexical Luxury Identification of "The Great Gatsby"*

After the sequential sampling method being applied, the whole textual material of "The Great Gatsby" is divided into (10) samples. The samples hold approximately (5000) tokens for each sample. Then the samples are processed

separately with (WS) Tools. The same procedures and processes followed in processing the samples of the last novels are applied to the (10) samples of *"The Great Gatsby"*.

The table demonstrates the number of tokens with lexical items and LL percentages of the (10) samples of *"The Great Gatsby"*:

TABLE 4
TOKENS, LEXICAL ITEMS, AND LL OF (10) TEXTUAL SAMPLES OF *"THE GREAT GATSBY"*

Sample No.	Tokens	Lexical Items	LL.
1	5.026	1.709	34.00 %
2	5.020	1.876	37.37 %
3	5.002	1.804	36.06 %
4	5.006	1.856	37.07 %
5	5.008	1.598	37.06 %
6	5.005	1.798	35.92 %
7	5.000	1.800	36.00 %
8	5.011	1.776	35.44 %
9	5.001	1.691	33.81 %
10	2.803	1.009	35.99 %
Average	47.882	16.917	35.87 %

As Table 4 presents, the LL scale of the (10) samples of *"The Great Gatsby"* reveals various percentages. Sample (2) holds the highest level of percentage on this scale: (37.37%) with (1.876) lexical items, and (5.020) tokens. However, the sample (8) holds the lowest level of percentage (33.81%) with (1.691) lexical items and (5.001) tokens. The rest of the samples had nearly identical percentages, ranging from (34.00%) in the 1st sample to (37.07%) in the 4th sample. It suggests that lexical items play a significant role in eliciting varying LL percentages. Consequently, the LL percentage is calculated using the amount or the number of lexical items. Thus, a large number of lexical items results in a high LL percentage, whereas a small number of lexical items results in a low LL percentage. The next graph depicts the LL curve of the (10) samples of *"The Great Gatsby"*.

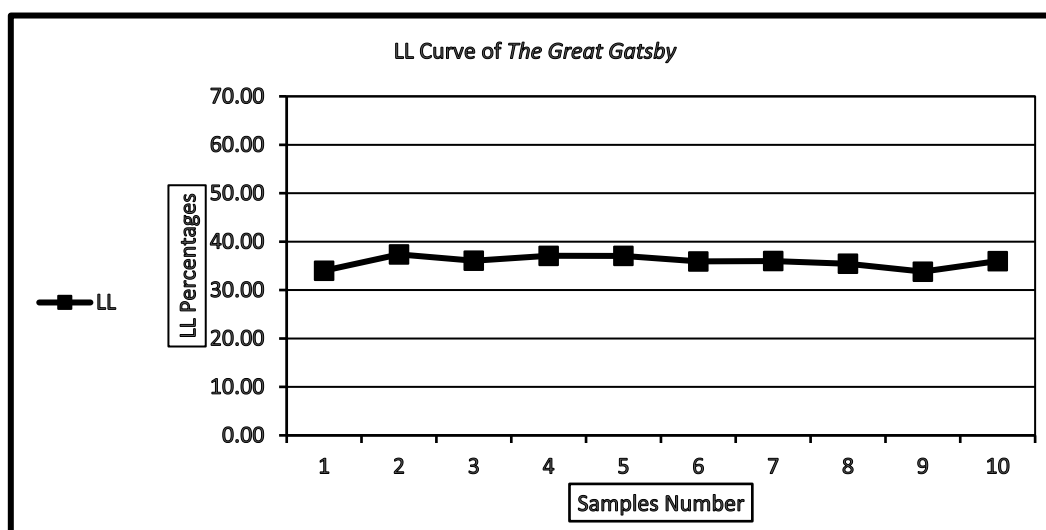


Figure 3. The Order of LL Percentages of (10) Textual Samples of *"The Great Gatsby"*

As clearly shown, the curve in the figure above presents the statistical behavior of LL percentages. The percentage of the highest LL (37.37%) of the second sample marks the peak of this curve, while the ninth sample's lowest LL percentage (33.81%) indicates the low point.

(d). *Lexical Luxury Identification of "Tender Is the Night"*

The *wordlist* is used to calculate the number of tokens while processing the samples using *WS Tools* for *"Tender is The Night"*. The number of lexical items when calculated manually after deleting all function words from each wordlist is (38,995) as the total of (22) samples of *Tender is The Night*, whereas the total number of tokens is (108.373). After manually calculating the lexical words and tokens from the *Wordlist*, the tokens, and lexical item numbers are calculated using Ure's method to provide LL percentages. Similar strategies are used throughout the fourth novel.

Table 5 displays the statistical overview of tokens, lexical items and LL percentages of (22) samples of *"Tender is the Night"*:

TABLE 5
TOKENS, LEXICAL ITEMS AND LL PERCENTAGES OF (22) TEXTUAL SAMPLES OF "TENDER IS THE NIGHT"

Sample No.	Tokens	Lexical Items	LL.
1	5.003	1,786	35.72 %
2	5.001	1,791	35.97 %
3	5.002	1,798	35.93 %
4	5.006	1,801	35.99 %
5	5.002	1,837	36.73 %
6	5.018	1,869	37.35 %
7	5.017	1,852	37.02 %
8	5.028	1,821	36.39 %
9	5.020	1,803	36.03 %
10	5.006	1,789	35.71 %
11	5.047	1,785	35.67 %
12	5.000	1,776	35.51 %
13	5.012	1,759	35.14 %
14	5.029	1,812	36.18 %
15	5.009	1,807	36.12 %
16	5.005	1,731	36.51 %
17	5.007	1,800	33.95 %
18	5.003	1,873	37.42 %
19	5.008	1,798	35.95 %
20	5.032	1,826	36.43 %
21	5.011	1,783	35.60 %
22	3.107	1,098	35.76 %
Average	108.373	38,995	36.05 %

As shown in Table 5, the (22) samples of the fourth novel, "Tender is The Night", depict different LL percentages. The LL value starts with (33.95 %) as the lowest ratio, ending up with (37.42 %) as the highest ratio. Meanwhile, the 1st sample gets (35.72 %) with (5,003) tokens and (1,786) lexical items. However, the last of these sample scores (35.76 %) with (3,107) tokens and (1,098) lexical items. What appears to be fascinating is that the number of lexical items plays a vital role in triggering varied LL percentages. As a result, the LL percentage is heavily influenced by the quantity of lexical items. A high number of lexical items inevitably results in a high LL percentage, whereas a low number of lexical items results in a low LL percentage. The graph below is a graphic depiction of the LL curve of the (22) samples of "Tender is the Night":

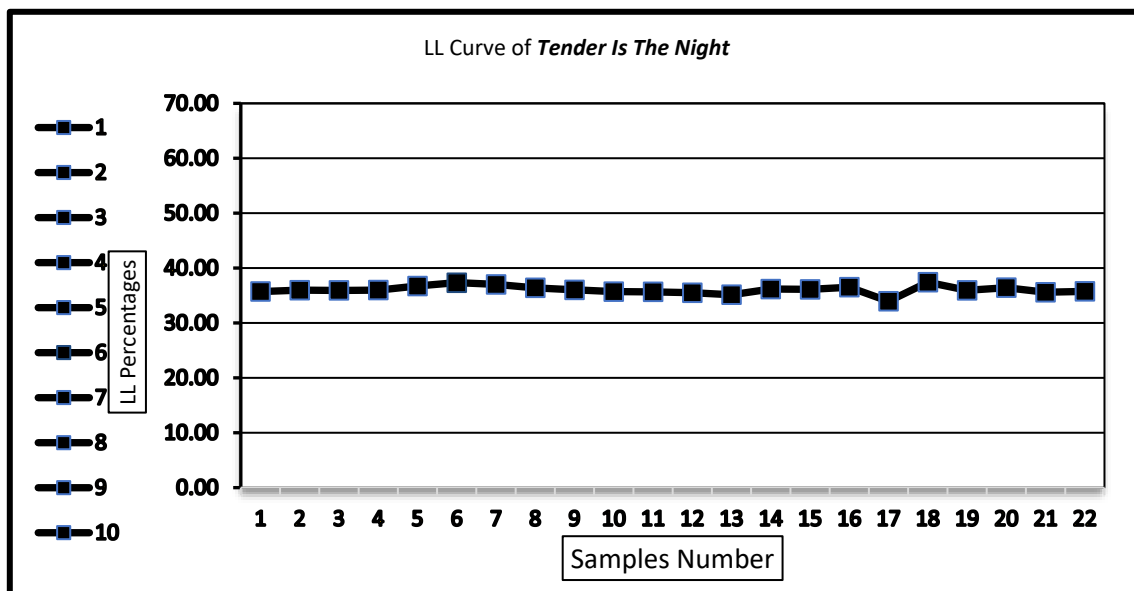


Figure 4. The Order of LL Percentages of (22) Textual Samples of "Tender Is the Night"

The curve depicted in the figure above, as clearly shown, depicts the statistical behavior of LL percentages. The peak of this curve is represented by the highest percentage of LL (37.42 %) of the eighteenth sample, while the falling point is represented by the lowest percentage of LL (33.95 %) of the seventeenth sample.

(e). Lexical Luxury Identification of "The Last Tycoon"

Table 6 visualizes the tokens, lexical items, and LL percentages of the (10) samples of "The Last Tycoon":

TABLE 6
 TOKENS, LEXICAL ITEMS, AND LL OF (10) TEXTUAL SAMPLES OF "THE LAST TYCOON"

Sample No.	Tokens	Lexical Items	LL.
1	5.001	1,801	36.01%
2	5.006	1,798	35.91 %
3	5.000	1,819	36.38 %
4	5.002	1,789	35.76 %
5	5.005	1,793	36.18 %
6	5.008	1,790	35.82 %
7	5.004	1,806	35.09 %
8	5.007	1,822	35.86 %
9	5.003	1,801	36.41 %
10	1.966	786	39.97 %
Average	47.002	17.005	36.34 %

As seen in Table 6, the LL scale of the (10) samples displays surprisingly varied percentages. The tenth sample has the highest ratio (39.97 %) on this scale, with (786) lexical items and (1.966) tokens. The sample (7) has the lowest percentage (35.09 %) with (1,806) lexical items and (5.004) tokens. The rest of the samples had nearly identical percentages, ranging from (35.76 %) in the fourth sample to (36.41 %) in the ninth sample. What appears to be fascinating is that the number of lexical items plays a big role in triggering fluctuated LL percentages. As a result, the LL percentage is heavily influenced by the amount of lexical items.

A high number of lexical words inevitably results in a high LL percentage, whereas a low lexical item number results in a low LL percentage. The LL curve of the (10) samples of "The Last Tycoon" is represented visually in the graph below.

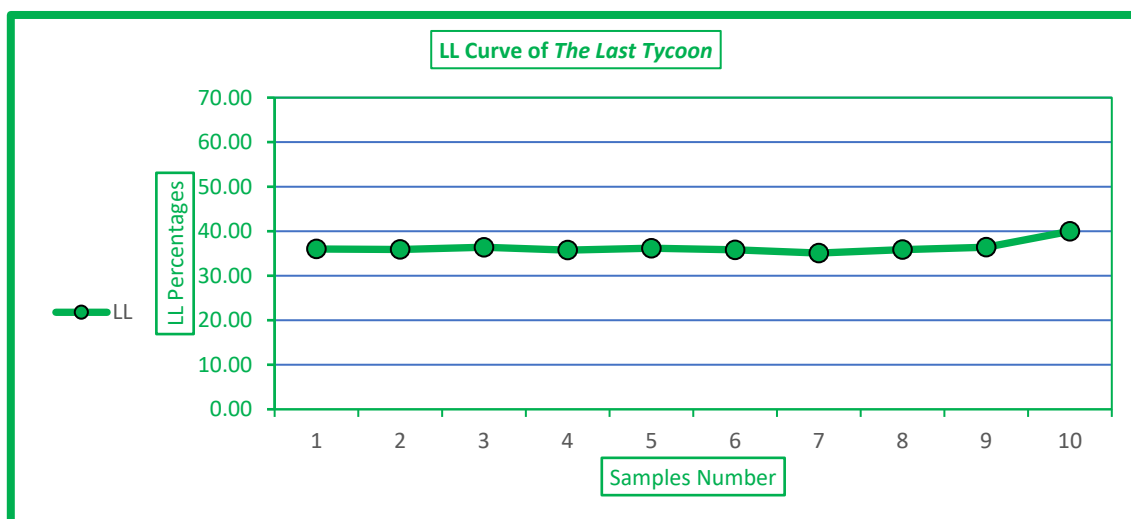


Figure 5. The Order of LL Percentages of (10) Textual Samples of "The Last Tycoon"

"The Last Tycoon's" LL scale curve, as depicted in the graph above, begins with (36.01%) LL percentage and ends with different LL percentages (39.97 %). Furthermore, the curve's lowest point occurs at the seventh sample scoring (35.09 %) LL percentage, this LL percentage is the lowest of the novel's overall percentages.

B. Discussion

The next step is to obtain the results of these statistical outputs after constructing the quantitative description of LL identification of the corpus. The preceding LL identification is the mathematical process of establishing and identifying LL percentages using a statistical formula. This is the first step in creating a lexical luxury analysis. Lexical luxury is a graphical representation that shows how much each novel displays lexical characteristics or features as defined by the LL percentages.

Then, it may be rather useful to compare the LL curves of the five novels in order to make a direct and observable comparison. The LL is reflected in the table below by the LL percentages of the five novels.

TABLE 7
LL OF "THIS SIDE OF PARADISE" (1920), "THE BEAUTIFUL AND DAMNED" (1922), "THE GREAT GATSBY" (1925), "TENDER IS THE NIGHT" (1934), AND "THE LAST TYCOON" (1941)

Samples No.	This Side of Paradise	The Beautiful and Damned	The Great Gatsby	Tender Is The Night	The Last Tycoon
1	34.54 %	34.62 %	34.00 %	35.72 %	36.01%
2	32.92 %	32.49 %	37.37 %	35.97 %	35.91 %
3	35.52 %	32.67 %	36.06 %	35.93 %	36.38 %
4	31.23 %	32.68 %	37.07 %	35.99 %	35.76 %
5	32.50 %	31.25 %	37.06 %	36.73 %	36.18 %
6	30.38 %	32.99 %	35.92 %	37.35 %	35.82 %
7	32.13 %	29.99 %	36.00 %	37.02 %	35.09 %
8	30.26 %	32.56 %	35.44 %	36.39 %	35.86 %
9	30.17 %	31.92 %	33.81 %	36.03 %	36.41 %
10	29.95 %	31.62 %	35.99 %	35.71 %	39.97 %
11	25.28 %	33.31 %		35.67 %	
12	33.31 %	31.45 %		35.51 %	
13	31.65 %	32.53 %		35.14 %	
14	30.66 %	30.69 %		36.18 %	
15	35.20 %	32.64 %		36.12 %	
16	31.20 %	32.15 %		36.51 %	
17		33.51 %		33.95 %	
18		34.28 %		37.42 %	
19		30.65 %		35.95 %	
20		33.04 %		36.43 %	
21		30.24 %		35.60 %	
22		32.81 %		35.76 %	
23		31.08 %			
24		28.65 %			
25		33.64 %			
Average	31.68 %	32.14 %	35.87 %	36.05 %	36.34 %

The LL percentages are quantitatively different, with each profile displaying diverse ratios on its scale. Aside from the differences in LL ratios or percentages, these profiles or columns differ in size, for example, in terms of the number of samples. "The Last Tycoon" has the highest LL average (36.34 %). While the other four novels have profiles that are quite close to the LL average, (31.68%) for "This Side of Paradise", (32.14%) for "The Beautiful and Damned", (35.87) for "The Great Gatsby", and (36.05%) for "Tender Is The Night". The five profiles must be graphically plotted together in one graph for a more accurate and significant visual representation. As a result of this visual representation, the LL of each novel would be clearly noticed and compared.

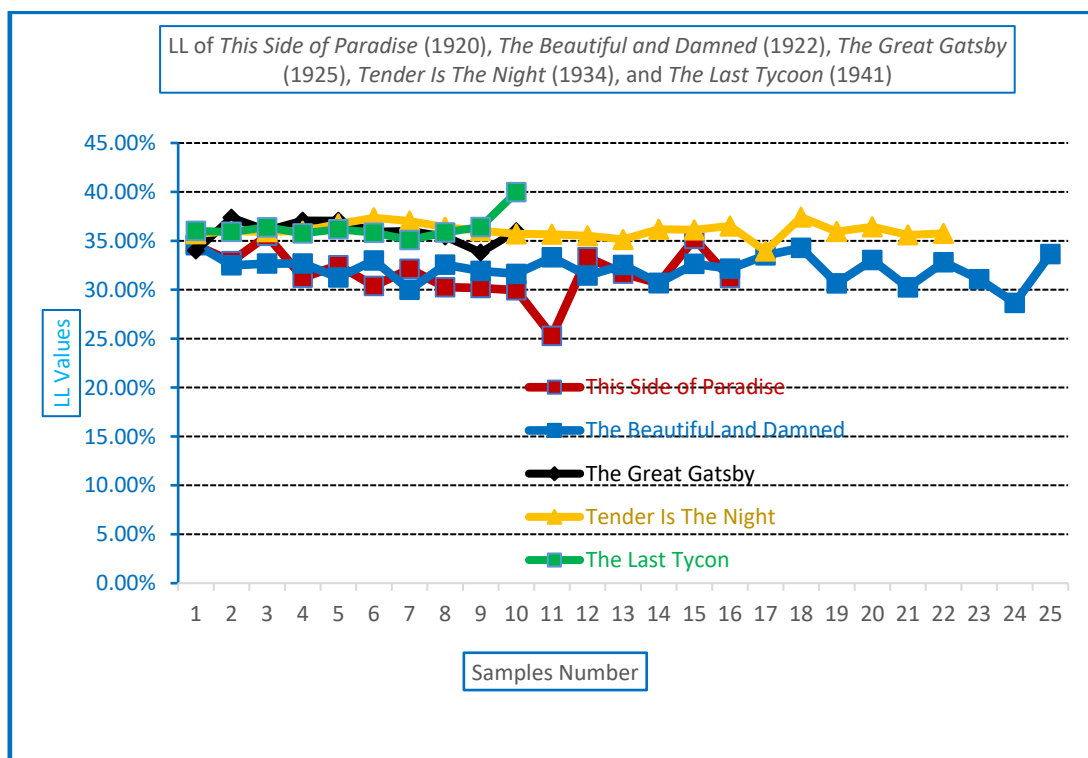


Figure 6. The Statistical Behavior of LL curves of: "This Side of Paradise" (1920), "The Beautiful and Damned" (1922), "The Great Gatsby" (1925), "Tender Is the Night" (1934), and "The Last Tycoon" (1941).

Following the curves shown in Figure 4, 5, a notable difference in the LL percentages that comprise the LL of the five novels can be noted. Neumann (2014) states that;

A high lexical density can be interpreted as an indirect indicator of frequent lexical reference since a high proportion of lexical words at the expense of function words, pronouns in particular, reflects the use of explicitly verbal rather than other resources to refer to objects or concepts. (p. 159)

According to the quantitative method in her study, Neumann (2014) claims that lexical luxury is a more appropriate measure for conducting an "investigation of orientation towards content" (p. 159) because it focuses on content words. As a result, the differences between the LL curves in the graphic above are due to vocabulary loads. In comparison to the other four novels, the percentages of LL in "*The Last Tycoon*" are the highest. It continues to rise from (35.09%) to (39.97 %). With (47,002) tokens and (17,005) lexical items, this novel has the highest LL ratio (36.34 %).

The curves of "*This Side of Paradise*", "*The Beautiful and Damned*", and "*The Great Gatsby*" begin with almost the same values in the first samples (34.54%), (34.62 %), and (34.00 %). They, on one hand, diverge directly in the second sample where "*This Side of Paradise*" achieves a score of (32.92 %), "*The Beautiful and Damned*" scores (32.49 %), "*The Great Gatsby*" gets a score of (37.37 %), and "*Tender Is The Night*" has a score of (35.97 %).

On the other hand, they end up with different LL values where "*This Side of Paradise*" scores the lowest LL percentage. It ends with (31.20 %) and (31.86%) as a total LL ratio with (79,756) tokens and (25,270) lexical items. "*The Beautiful and Damned*" scores a higher LL value than "*This Side of Paradise*" at its total ratio (32.14 %) with (123,479) tokens and (39,659) lexical items.

It is worth noting that although "*The Great Gatsby*" is similar to "*The Last Tycoon*" in terms of the number of samples (10 for both), they are not similar in terms of percentages or number of lexical words. The main reason seems to be the long period between the two novels, which in turn leads to noticeable differences in the writer's linguistic ability.

Despite the high LL percentages of each sample, the "*Tender Is The Night*" curve appears to be more lexically denser or more luxurious than "*The Great Gatsby*", "*The Beautiful and Damned*", and "*This Side of Paradise*" because the overall average of its lexical items is more than the total average of the other three novels. The quantitative analysis of the five novels is based on lexical luxury averages and percentages. "The Last Tycoon's" lexical luxury averages are quantitatively higher than those of "*This Side of Paradise*", "*The Beautiful and Damned*", "*The Great Gatsby*", and "*Tender Is the Night*". As a result, "*The Last Tycoon*" takes the first position with the highest LL average. "*Tender Is The Night*" comes at second place as being lexically more luxurious than "*The Great Gatsby*", "*The Beautiful and Damned*", and "*This Side of Paradise*" which comes at fifth place.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

To round off this study, the rapid growth or development of corpus linguistics in general, and corpus stylistics in particular, makes it possible to collect, classify, segment, analyze, and monitor large amounts of linguistic data. Corpus-based stylistic studies have proven to be effective in exploring specific aspects of style. However, the combination of corpus linguistics and stylistics (i.e., corpus stylistics) makes significant use of statistical descriptions offered by trustworthy and authentic measures such as Type/Token Ratio. In other words, corpus stylistics has proven to be extremely fruitful in investigating the statistical behavior presented by TTR gauges of lexical resources within texts involved in the analysis process.

Corpus linguistics, which is based on machine-readable databases, provides some basic feasible techniques for obtaining and analyzing data, building corpora, developing new models and tools of analysis, as well as answering research questions. In addition, it shows a collection of statistical procedures which can be applied to text analysis. In addition, linguistic characteristics such as lexical luxury can be measured using statistical approaches. The statistical and stylistic analyses are carried out under the umbrella of corpus stylistics, where there is genuine collaboration and real cooperation between corpus linguistics and stylistics. This is consistent and goes with the first hypothesis, which states that corpus-based techniques can be highly useful and helpful in producing empirical and quantitative stylistic descriptions of literary works in terms of lexical luxury.

The prior statistical step for developing lexical luxury profiles is lexical luxury identification using corpus linguistic methods. The lexical luxury profile is an adequate graphical representation for identifying lexicality in literary works, which verifies the second hypothesis as an efficient measure for lexicality and lexical development of the writer's style. This study's corpus consists of five novels published by Scott Fitzgerald, the lengths of these novels vary. The lexical luxury curves of these novels in the corpus demonstrated varying percentages of lexical luxury with (5000) tokens and (1000-2000) lexical items in each sample.

As the third hypothesis previously assumed, the high percentages of lexical luxury are due to high concentrations of lexical items resulting in luxurious lexical profiles. As a result, the values of the lexical luxury profile are sensitive to the number of lexical items. The analysis of the five novels using WordSmith Tools reveals various lexical luxury averages and percentages. In its lexical luxury profile, The Last Tycoon has higher lexical luxury percentages as well as a distinct lexical luxury average. *Tender is the Night* ranks second in terms of lexical luxury, then respectively: *The Great Gatsby*, *The Beautiful and Damned*, and *This Side of Paradise* which is in fifth place.

Furthermore, these five novels are studied and analyzed chronologically based on their original publication dates. This chronological arrangement of the corpus texts demonstrates that Scott Fitzgerald's linguistic choices get increasingly sophisticated over the context of these five novels. The high LL averages of each novel score, (1) *The Last Tycoon* (36.34%), (2) *Tender Is The Night* (36.05%), (3) *The Great Gatsby* (35.87), *The Beautiful and Damned* (32.14%), and *This Side of Paradise* (31.68%), they constitute quantitative evidence that confirms interesting progress in Fitzgerald's lexical performance. Additionally, because they have high LL percentages, such percentages indicate model averages for written fictional genres. These percentages exceeded the written text lexical luxury ratio of (30%).

After all the high frequency of lexical words in Fitzgerald's writing style is the linguistic trait that distinguishes his style as dense style. Thus, lexical luxury is the salient feature that has been quantitatively measured. Then it is obvious that lexical luxury could be regarded as a 'stylistic marker' in literary texts. It can reveal much about the style and how ideas and information are delivered in the text where the lexical choices can be clearly identified.

These choices are represented in higher lexical luxury percentages and denser lexical choices in which factual information is used to convey events in words. In terms of Fitzgerald's style, LL quantitatively demonstrates that its distinct solidity is found in precise sentences. This precise writing style contains a variety of stylistically diverse terms as well as obvious references to nouns and concepts. As a result of Fitzgerald's five novels, luxurious linguistic styles emerged. Fitzgerald's early journalist training and constant travel may have given his lexicon its depth and uniqueness, which are practically represented in his writing style.

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Transforming the Translation Industry: Innovative Applications of Blockchain Technology

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Abstract—Blockchain technology has emerged as a disruptive force with transformative potential across various industries. This study explores its profound implications within the translation industry, aiming to address critical challenges while uncovering new opportunities. Through a comprehensive analysis of survey interview responses from industry professionals and an in-depth examination of three compelling case studies, we delve into the multifaceted dimensions of blockchain's influence. Our findings reveal that blockchain promises to revolutionize the translation industry on multiple fronts. It offers a robust solution to the perennial challenge of data security, ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive documents. Blockchain's inherent transparency and traceability mechanisms instill trust by enabling stakeholders to verify the authenticity of translated work. Moreover, blockchain streamlines translation processes, enhancing efficiency through smart contracts and tokens and reducing reliance on intermediaries. This newfound efficiency reduces costs and accelerates payment processing, reducing delays and disputes. In educational contexts, blockchain elevates the quality of translation guidance by improving access verification and reliability, fostering better student learning outcomes. As we conclude, blockchain technology can potentially reshape the translation industry. Its impact extends to security, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, trust, and educational enhancements. While challenges remain, our research provides a roadmap for industry stakeholders to embrace this transformative technology, ushering in an era where translation services are more secure, reliable, and accessible than ever before. The translation industry stands on the brink of a paradigm shift, and blockchain technology catalyzes this transformative journey.

Index Terms—blockchain technology, translation industry, data security, transparency, efficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

The global translation industry has grown dramatically in recent years, primarily due to globalization. As the world becomes more interconnected, the demand for translation services has increased, transforming a niche market into a thriving, multibillion-dollar industry. Despite its undeniable importance, the translation industry faces several persistent challenges that prevent it from reaching its full potential. Quality assurance, data security, and payment procedures are perennial issues that vex service providers and clients. In this context, the emergence of blockchain technology offers a promising solution that has the potential to revolutionize the translation industry (Rauniyar et al., 2022). The translation industry is distinguished by its singular reliance on trust, its work's intangible nature, and its critical role in bridging linguistic and cultural divides. Clients entrust translators with the critical task of accurately communicating their messages across languages, often needing the ability to verify the quality of the work independently (Bourdieu, 1991). Similarly, translators rely on clients to pay them fairly and promptly. However, the industry's reliance on trust has exposed it to several challenges, including payment disputes, concerns about the authenticity of translations, and vulnerabilities to data security breaches (Ølnes et al., 2017).

Blockchain technology, first used for cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, provides a decentralized, transparent, and tamper-resistant ledger for secure, transparent transactions, removing intermediaries and mitigating risks associated with traditional trust-based systems (Antonopoulos, 2017). The use of blockchain technology in the translation industry holds enormous promise. One of the most challenging aspects of translation work is ensuring the consistency of the source text and the translated content. Blockchain allows for the immutable timestamping and storage of translations, providing an indisputable record of the work performed. This improves transparency and provides a strong defense against unauthorized changes or plagiarism (Vigna & Casey, 2018).

Furthermore, using smart contracts in blockchain technology can potentially revolutionize payment procedures in the translation industry. These self-executing agreements, with contract terms directly encoded in code, have the potential to automate the payment process, ensuring that translators are fairly and promptly compensated after completing their work (Vukolić, 2016). This addresses a long-standing issue of late or disputed payments, which frequently strained translators' relationships with their clients (Tapscott & Tapscott, 2016).

In an era of data breaches and increased concerns about the security and privacy of sensitive information, blockchain's robust cryptographic techniques have the potential to improve data security in translation projects

significantly (Batubara et al., 2018). Because blockchain is decentralized, data is stored across multiple nodes, reducing vulnerability to centralized attacks and data breaches. Clients can be more confident that their sensitive documents and information are secure (Mougayar, 2016). The objective of this research is to investigate the potential impact of blockchain technology on the translation industry. Our goals include investigating the challenges and opportunities perceived by industry professionals in terms of blockchain adoption and providing in-depth insights into their experiences and perspectives on integrating blockchain technology into translation processes. Finally, this research aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the transformative role that blockchain has the potential to play in the translation industry.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Blockchain Technology Overview*

Given the enormous potential benefits that blockchain could have for numerous areas, such as finance and the economy (Catalini & Gans, 2020; Csóka & Jean-Jacques Herings, 2018; Eyal, 2017), internet of things (Huckle et al., 2016; Bahga & Madiseti, 2016; Dorri et al., 2017), energy (Aitzhan & Svetinovic, 2016; Mengelkamp et al., 2018), and supply chain management (Iansiti & Lakhani, 2017), it is not surprising that blockchain technology is also being explored for its potential in the translation industry. The fundamental characteristics of blockchain technology, such as decentralization, transparency, immutability, and security, have made it versatile and adaptable for various industries. Because of these characteristics, blockchain can serve as a solid foundation for secure, transparent, and efficient transactions and data management. Blockchain adoption has spread far beyond its initial use in cryptocurrencies, demonstrating its potential to revolutionize finance, the Internet of Things (IoT), and energy management (Dutta et al., 2020). Blockchain has the potential to simplify transactions, reduce fraud, and eliminate intermediaries in finance (Catalini & Gans, 2020). The translation industry, like finance, relies on stakeholder trust, and blockchain can address trust-related challenges and optimize processes (Abbas et al., 2020).

The use of blockchain in the IoT sector demonstrates its utility in industries that require extensive data management (Grima et al., 2020). As IoT devices generate massive amounts of data that must be managed securely and transparently, the translation industry deals with sensitive documents that can benefit from blockchain's characteristics (Atlam et al., 2020). Blockchain can facilitate peer-to-peer energy trading and grid management in the energy sector, demonstrating its adaptability across industries (Aitzhan & Svetinovic, 2016; Mengelkamp et al., 2018). This adaptability highlights blockchain's potential to address translation industry challenges like data security, transparency, and trust. Establishing trust between clients and translators is one of the most difficult challenges in the translation industry. Clients are frequently forced to rely on translators' professionalism and expertise because they need help to verify the quality of the work independently. Blockchain technology has been extensively studied for its ability to establish trust in various domains due to its transparent and tamper-resistant ledger (Kochovski et al., 2019). Blockchain, for example, ensures trust in the financial sector by providing an immutable record of transactions that all relevant parties can audit. This aspect of blockchain that fosters trust is highly relevant to the translation industry, where clients seek assurance about the accuracy and authenticity of translated content.

Telehealth, despite its potential to enhance healthcare accessibility, faces challenges in privacy and adoption. Bawany et al. (2022) introduce the BlockHeal telehealth framework, integrating comprehensive healthcare services in a secure, fault-tolerant, and transparent environment. Utilizing blockchain technology, BlockHeal offers decentralized storage through hyper ledger fabric and decentralized applications (DApps). The framework demonstrates its effectiveness through various use cases. Service level agreements (SLAs) are vital in coordinating cross-organizational processes between cloud service providers and consumers in cloud manufacturing. While third-party monitoring methods have been used, there are challenges related to trust and efficient punishment mechanisms for SLA violations. Tan et al. (2022) propose a novel SLA model, SLABSC, integrating blockchain and smart contracts to address these issues. As demonstrated in experiments, their approach enhances trust and data security, effectively supervising cloud service providers for improved service quality. With the rise of international trade and foreign investment, translation services have gained prominence. Existing literature often assumes information symmetry, yet translation markets exhibit information asymmetry. Guo and Si (2017) employ comparative static analysis to explore the "lemon markets" formation in China's translation services sector. They uncover reasons behind this asymmetry and offer recommendations to address it, ultimately enhancing market efficiency.

B. *Translation Industry*

Dunne (2012) explores the industrialization of translation, a topic often overlooked in translation studies. This article employs microeconomics to investigate this trend's causes, consequences, and challenges. It begins with analyzing translation outsourcing and its effects, including quality uncertainties and perceived commoditization. Challenges such as signaling, productivity demands, and expertise development are also examined. The article highlights areas for potential future research in this field. Wang (2019) discusses the impact of globalization and informatization on the translation industry, ushering in a new era of language services. Emerging technologies have expanded and enriched translation's scope. The paper analyzes industry trends, including increasing demand, extended service sectors, diverse services, advanced technologies, evolving roles, and improved standards. It calls for translation educators to adapt to

market demands, participate in the industrial chain, and reform translation education to foster the sustainable development of language service education. The Global Language Services Market, as Imarc (2023) reported, comprises services that bridge linguistic gaps, including translation, interpretation, and localization. Key drivers include globalization, technological advancements, and the proliferation of e-commerce. Dominated by translation services, the market is supported by software solutions. The IT and telecommunications sector is the largest application segment, with Europe holding a significant market share. Language service providers are integrating advanced language technologies to enhance efficiency and are expanding services to meet global demands.

Due to increased globalization, Shaw and Holland (2010) explore the growing demand for language translation services in the global market. It provides a theoretical framework outlining the business processes and network configurations used to deliver and manage translation services efficiently. A case study of thebigword, an international translation company, illustrates the practical application of this framework, emphasizing their IT-based platform that connects translators, translation service providers, and clients in a global business network. Pym, Orrego-Carmona, and Torres-Simon (2017) explore the professionalization of translators in the context of shifting social signals and electronic media. They discuss how traditional indicators of a translator's professional status, such as academic qualifications and association membership, have evolved in the digital age. The paper presents case studies, including ProZ.com, aRGENTeAM, GrupoTS, and the Translator Scammers Directory, to illustrate the impact of market disorder caused by globalization, volunteer translation, and online machine translation. The authors highlight how these challenges have led to the emergence of new signaling mechanisms, emphasizing the value of verifiable professional experience and the need for more sophisticated electronic communication in the translation industry.

C. Blockchain in Translation Industry

Swan (2015) emphasizes blockchain technology's transformative potential, positioning it as a disruptive computing paradigm that has the potential to revolutionize several aspects of our economy, including the registration, inventory, and transfer of assets, including financial and physical assets as well as intangible ones like health data and intellectual property. Blockchain technology significantly impacts translation services, particularly in two key areas: blockchain translation and cryptocurrency-related localization. Companies now specialize in translating ICO materials, white papers, and other cryptocurrency-related content. Languages like Chinese, Korean, and Japanese are in high demand due to the global crypto movement. Blockchain-enabled marketplaces, funded by ICOs, allow secure transactions and quality traceability. This facilitates reliable linguistic asset sharing and faster payments through cryptocurrency (Kotoulia, 2021).

Blockchain technology offers diverse applications in the language industry (2 M Language Services, 2021). It streamlines transactions, providing faster payments to freelancers, eliminating intermediaries like banks, and reducing transaction costs. Smart contracts, securely stored on the blockchain, ensure compliance with contract terms, improving transparency. Blockchain can also provide transparency in machine translation involvement, meeting the growing demand for translation traceability. The language industry is a promising domain for these blockchain applications (2 M Language Services, 2021). Moorkens and Lewis (2019) explore the impact of data-driven machine translation (MT) methods, considering translation as a shared knowledge resource. They emphasize the importance of shared ownership models, suggesting that translation industry changes, such as translators' collective action and quantifying the threat to translation sustainability, could benefit all stakeholders. The authors propose research questions to assess translation's sustainability as a resource, industry, and occupation, addressing the role of machines in translation and the need for collective action. Wang (2022) explores the development of a decentralized online guidance platform for college English translation using a blockchain networking algorithm. The study focuses on a traditional Merkle tree, known for its balanced binary structure that facilitates parallel processing of sub-domains at the same tree level. This approach optimizes Merkle root calculation by segmenting the tree into equal-sized parts for parallel processing on multi-core CPUs. The proposed method enhances access verification accuracy by conducting a traversal search through the tree structure when a terminal application block sends a signal. The paper validates this approach through simulation tests, highlighting its robustness and potential in the context of an online guidance platform for college English translation.

Moreno (2020) addresses the implementation of ISO EN 17100:2015, a quality standard for translation services, and its intersection with blockchain technology for sworn translation in Spain. The ISO standard focuses on ensuring a quality translation process. In contrast, Moreno's paper explores the application of this standard, combined with blockchain and other disruptive technologies, to enhance the quality management system in the domain of sworn translation. The study delves into applicable regulations, methodological frameworks, and security measures. Blockchain technology's inherent features, including decentralization, transparency, and security, have practical applications in the healthcare industry. The translation services industry faces challenges, including inefficient market mechanisms, stakeholder conflicts, difficulty assessing translation quality due to information asymmetry, and underutilization of data resources. Huang et al. (2023) propose applying blockchain technology in this industry to address data transmission, privacy, and service evaluation issues. They advocate for the use of consortium blockchain. With the involvement of numerous nodes, a deployment model aided by edge computing is introduced to enhance data verification and high-speed transmission. This model fosters the development of a comprehensive credit system and real-time business processing, ultimately improving service quality and business capabilities. The article validates the effectiveness of blockchain applications and system performance through specific use cases.

D. Blockchain in Enhancing Data Security

Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the documents involved, data security is a top priority in the translation industry. Traditional data storage and transmission methods can be vulnerable to breaches, potentially exposing sensitive information. Blockchain's robust cryptographic techniques and decentralized structure significantly improve data security in translation projects (Khanum & Mustafa, 2022). Because blockchain is decentralized, data is not stored in a single, vulnerable repository, reducing the risk of a single point of failure. A blockchain's data is encrypted and linked in a chain of blocks, making it highly resistant to tampering or unauthorized access (Uddin et al., 2021). This increased level of security gives both clients and translation service providers greater confidence that their valuable documents are safe from data breaches, addressing a critical industry concern.

In a study on common risks in the translation industry, Vaezian and Akbari (2018) identified 44 risk candidates divided into six categories. This study discovered a significant need for more knowledge about risk management among translation company managers despite an interest in its application. Furthermore, Squires et al. (2013) emphasized the importance of a systematic translation process in multinational research studies to reduce threats to data validity. Blockchain's encryption techniques ensure that these documents remain private. Intellectual property (IP) is a significant concern in the translation industry. Translators frequently work with copyrighted materials; intellectual property infringement is safe with proper safeguards. The translation process can create new intellectual property, potentially leading to ownership and rights disputes. Blockchain can securely timestamp a translation work, acting as a 'proof of work' and thus protecting from copyright disputes. This is especially important in literary translations, where nuances and translation style can be a source of contention (Agrawal et al., 2022).

E. Smart Contracts for Efficient Payment Processes

Payment procedures have long been a source of contention in the translation industry, with issues such as late or disputed payments straining relationships between translators and clients (Orr & Scott, 2008). Smart contracts, which are self-executing agreements with predefined rules encoded in code, are introduced by blockchain technology. These contracts can automate payment processes in the translation industry, ensuring that translators are fairly and promptly compensated after completing their work (Hamledari & Fischer, 2021). Smart contracts can be programmed to automatically trigger payments when predefined conditions are met, eliminating delays and disputes. This reduces payment disputes and increases industry trust and collaboration (Li & Kassem, 2021). Translators can concentrate on their work without worrying about late payments, which improves job satisfaction and productivity. Clients can rely on transparent, automated payment processes, fostering more efficient and harmonious transactions in the translation industry (Courtney & Phelan, 2019).

F. Transparency and Authenticity

Due to the intangible nature of linguistic work, ensuring the authenticity and quality of translated content is difficult (Lines et al., 2017). However, the emergence of blockchain technology has provided a promising solution to address these challenges effectively. The inherent transparency and traceability of blockchain play a critical role in improving the integrity of translation processes (Gad et al., 2022). Blockchain records every transaction or change made to a document, resulting in an immutable and transparent historical ledger. This feature is handy in allowing stakeholders, such as clients, to quickly verify the authenticity of translated materials while ensuring that no unauthorized changes have occurred (Niranjanamurthy et al., 2018). Furthermore, blockchain capabilities extend to providing a transparent audit trail, improving accountability, and facilitating dispute resolution in case of conflicts or concerns during the translation process (Nikolakis et al., 2018). This newfound transparency fosters trust among all parties involved, contributing to developing a more robust and reliable translation ecosystem.

Another significant advantage of blockchain technology in translation is its ability to generate immutable records of translation projects. Each translation project can be timestamped and securely recorded on the blockchain, creating a transparent and verifiable history of the work done (Hackius & Petersen, 2020). This transparency is a powerful tool for addressing quality assurance concerns in the translation industry. Clients can independently validate the authenticity of translations, ensuring the content is not altered after completion. Furthermore, translators benefit from a definitive and irrefutable record of their contributions, which improves their professional reputation and trustworthiness in the industry (Drugan, 2013).

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

1. What are the key challenges and opportunities associated with integrating blockchain technology in the translation industry, as identified by industry professionals and supported by real-world case studies and peer-reviewed research?
2. How does blockchain technology impact data security, transparency, and efficiency in translation processes, and what are the practical implications for translation service providers and clients based on empirical evidence and expert opinions?

3. To what extent are translation industry professionals aware of and prepared for blockchain adoption, and what factors influence their willingness to embrace blockchain solutions, as revealed through interviews, surveys, and a synthesis of relevant research findings?

B. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research design, combining in-depth interviews and the analysis of real-world case studies. These methods were chosen to comprehensively understand industry professionals' challenges, opportunities, and experiences regarding integrating blockchain technology in the translation industry. Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for exploring nuanced and context-specific issues.

C. Data Collection

(a). Survey Interviews

The primary method for data collection involves conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with a select group of industry professionals from renowned organizations in the translation sector. These interviews will capture participants' perspectives, experiences, and narratives in their own words, allowing for a rich and detailed exploration of the research topic. The selection of participants for the interviews will be based on purposeful sampling to ensure diversity and relevance to the research objectives. Participants will include experts representing prominent entities in the translation industry, such as M2 Translation, Commit Global, thebigword, ProZ.com, aRGENTeAM, and GrupoTS. Designations for these participants will encompass a range of roles, including but not limited to translators, translation service providers, blockchain developers, and other stakeholders with insights or experience related to blockchain technology and translation. The aim is to encompass a broad spectrum of perspectives, both those with direct experience and those with reservations or concerns, contributing to a comprehensive examination of the use of blockchain technology in translation.

(b). Materials for Interviews

Structured interview guides will be developed, aligning with the research questions and objectives. These guides will provide a flexible framework to ensure essential topics are covered while allowing for open exploration of participants' experiences and viewpoints. Additionally, interviews will be audio-recorded to accurately capture participants' responses and prevent the loss of valuable information during data collection. Informed consent forms will be presented to participants, outlining the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and the right to withdraw at any point. Signed consent forms will be obtained from all participants before commencing the interviews.

(c). Case Studies

Real-world case studies that demonstrate the successful integration of blockchain technology in the translation industry will be examined. These case studies will provide valuable insights into blockchain adoption's practical implementation and outcomes within the industry. The research questions will inform the analysis of case studies and will contribute to a holistic understanding of blockchain's impact.

D. Analysis

Thematic analysis will be employed to analyze the qualitative data collected through interviews and the narratives presented in the case studies. Thematic analysis is a systematic method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. The analysis will entail several vital steps, including data transcription, coding, theme development, data interpretation, and report writing. This analysis approach will facilitate the identification of key themes and insights from interviews and case studies.

E. Ethical Considerations

This study will strictly adhere to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Informed consent will be obtained from all interview participants, and their privacy and confidentiality will be rigorously maintained throughout the research process. Participants will be assured of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences.

IV. SURVEY INTERVIEW RESULTS

A. Familiarity With Blockchain

In response to Question 1, which aimed to gauge the familiarity of industry professionals with blockchain technology, 35% of survey participants indicated that they were "very familiar," 50% reported being "somewhat familiar," and 15% claimed they were "not familiar at all." This distribution reflects a moderate level of awareness within the translation industry regarding blockchain technology.

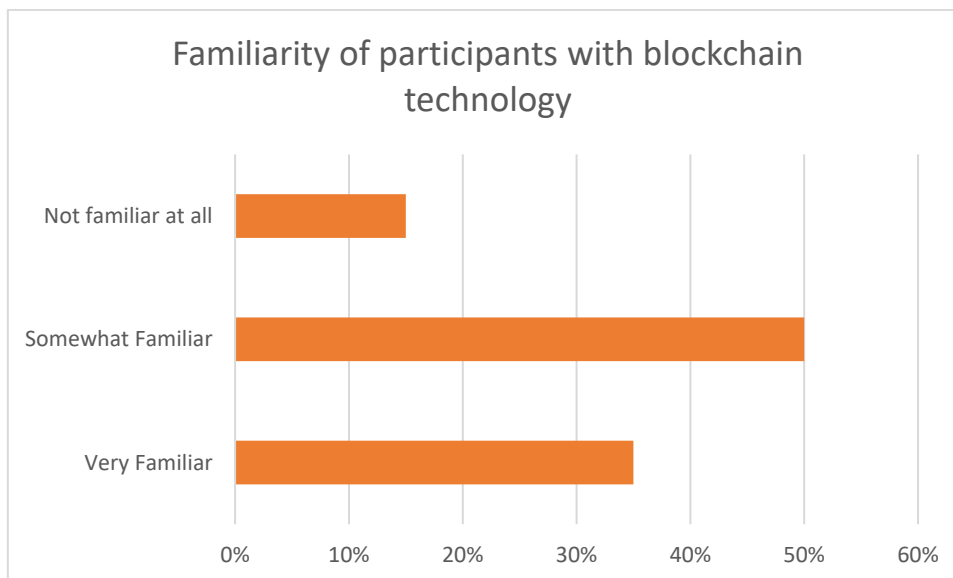


Figure 1. Familiarity of Participants With Blockchain Technology

B. Challenges in Efficiency and Security

Regarding Question 2, participants identified several critical challenges related to efficiency and security in the translation industry. Notable challenges included language barriers, data security concerns, and the need for faster translation processes. Survey responses emphasized the importance of addressing these issues to improve the overall efficiency of translation services.

C. Challenges Related to Data Security and Transparency

Question 3 aimed to uncover data security and transparency challenges in translation processes. Respondents shared instances of data breaches and the need for more robust security measures when dealing with sensitive documents. The survey highlighted the urgency of addressing data security concerns in the industry.

D. Successful Blockchain Implementations

Question 4 sought examples of successful blockchain implementations within the translation industry. Survey participants referenced case studies where blockchain technology had been utilized to secure and verify translated judicial documents in cases with foreign elements. These case studies provide evidence of blockchain's potential to enhance data security and translation trustworthiness.

E. Opportunities for Improvement

In response to Question 5, participants outlined opportunities for blockchain technology to enhance translation services. These opportunities included improved data security, transparency, and efficiency. Respondents expressed optimism about the potential benefits of blockchain adoption.

F. Blockchain Technology Impact on Data Security

Question 6 aimed to gauge respondents' beliefs regarding the impact of blockchain on data security in translation processes. Most participants (85%) believed blockchain technology could significantly enhance data security. This consensus underscores the potential of blockchain to address security concerns in the industry.

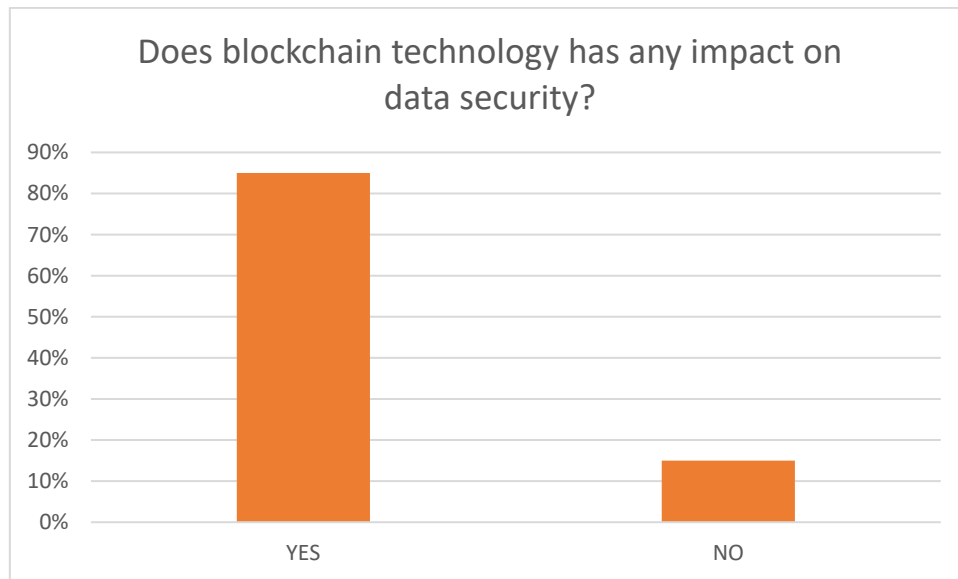


Figure 2. Impact of Blockchain Technology on Data Security

G. Transparency and Trustworthiness

Participants discussed the potential for blockchain to improve transparency and trustworthiness in translations in response to Question 7. Most respondents (70%) believed that blockchain could enhance transparency, while some (30%) raised concerns about potential drawbacks, such as increased complexity.

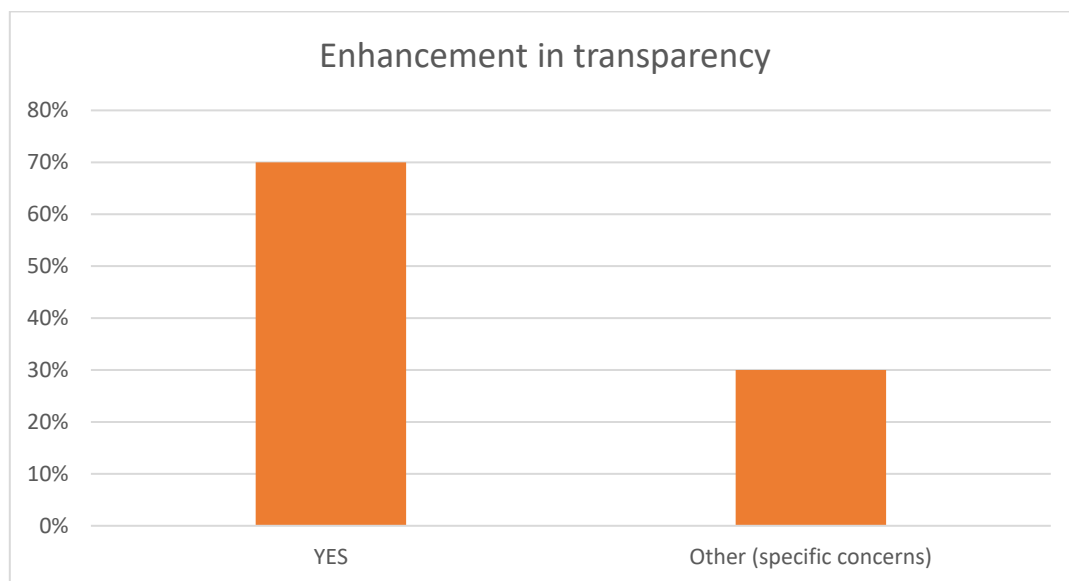


Figure 3. Enhancement in Transparency by Using Blockchain Technology in the Translation Industry

H. Blockchain Implementation and Efficiency

Question 8 explored the implementation of blockchain technology in translation workflows. While only a minority of respondents (20%) had direct experience with blockchain adoption, those who did reported improved efficiency and security. Challenges included initial setup and training.

I. Cost Structure of Translation Services

Respondents addressed the impact of blockchain on the cost structure of translation services in Question 9. Approximately 60% of participants perceived blockchain as a cost-effective solution, citing reduced overhead and intermediary fees.

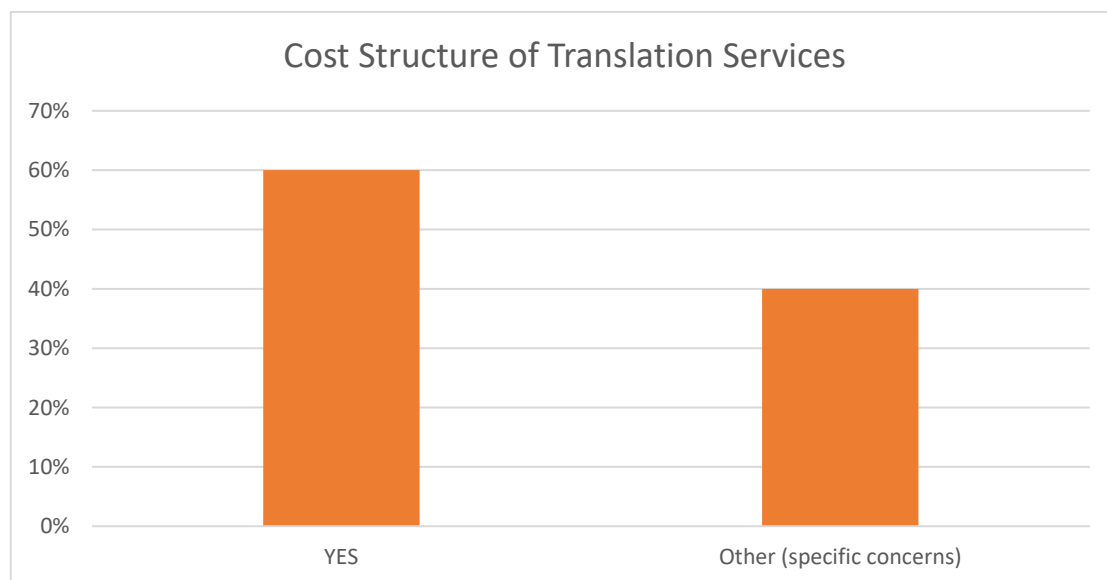


Figure 4. The Cost Structure of Translation Services by Using Blockchain Technology

V. DISCUSSION

A. Addressing Key Challenges and Opportunities

The survey findings align with Research Question 1, which sought to identify critical challenges and opportunities associated with blockchain adoption in the translation industry. The challenges identified, such as data security concerns and the need for greater efficiency, mirror the issues highlighted in peer-reviewed research and real-world case studies. The case studies, like the one involving the secure transfer and storage of judicial documents, provide practical evidence of blockchain's potential to address these challenges. By embracing blockchain's distributed ledger, encryption, and innovative contract capabilities, the translation industry can enhance its security measures, streamline processes, and create opportunities for improved services.

B. Enhancing Data Security and Efficiency

The implications of blockchain technology for data security, openness, and productivity in translation processes were the focus of Research Question 2. The majority of study respondents acknowledged that blockchain technology has the potential to improve data security. The case studies, which show how blockchain might protect the transfer and storage of critical judicial records, lend further credence to this idea. Respondents also highlighted the potential for blockchain use to increase translation transparency and reliability. These results imply that blockchain has the potential to significantly improve the translation industry, notwithstanding some worries regarding complexity.

C. Awareness and Preparedness for Blockchain Adoption

Research Question 3 explored the awareness and preparedness of translation industry professionals for blockchain adoption. The survey revealed that while awareness of blockchain exists, direct experience with blockchain technology still needs to be improved; the positive experiences of those implementing blockchain in their workflows indicate the potential benefits. Challenges related to training and setup are expected during the early stages of adoption. As blockchain solutions mature and become more accessible, these barriers may diminish, paving the way for broader adoption.

D. Case Studies: Blockchain in Action

This section explores three comprehensive case studies demonstrating blockchain technology's practical applications within the translation industry. Each case study is presented under an appropriate heading, followed by a detailed discussion highlighting its key findings and implications.

(a). Case Study 1: Consortium Blockchain for Judicial Translation Services

This case study by Huang et al. (2023) introduces a consortium blockchain-based model designed to oversee the translation of judicial documents in cases with foreign elements. Its primary objective is to enhance security and privacy while translating sensitive legal documents. It addresses a fundamental challenge within the translation industry: the secure transfer and storage of sensitive legal documents. It emphasizes the importance of data security, trustworthiness, and efficiency in judicial translation services. By implementing blockchain technology, the model ensures the security and privacy of transferred documents and provides traceability for feedback and evaluations. These features align

perfectly with the research's primary objective, as they demonstrate blockchain's potential to enhance the quality and security of translation services.

(b). Case Study 2: Blockchain-Based Translation Support System

The second case study by Han et al. (2020) introduces a blockchain-based system for supporting content translation. This innovative system incorporates intelligent contracts and tokens to manage the translation process, ensuring transparency, verification, and compensation. It presents a solution that directly addresses the challenges faced by the translation industry, particularly those related to data security and the need for efficient workflows. The system enhances translation transparency and trustworthiness by utilizing tokens and smart contracts. This aligns perfectly with our research's focus on improving data security, transparency, and efficiency in translation processes. The case study exemplifies how blockchain can revolutionize translation services by introducing novel ways to verify and compensate translators while maintaining transparency.

(c). Case Study 3: Decentralized Online Guidance Platform for College English Translation

The third case study by Wang (2022) focuses on designing a decentralized online guidance platform tailored for college-level English translation using blockchain networking algorithms. Its primary emphasis is on access verification and reliability. It addresses another critical aspect of the translation industry: the quality and trustworthiness of translations, particularly in educational contexts. The platform ensures that students receive accurate guidance by improving access verification and reliability. This aligns well with our research's broader goal of exploring blockchain's potential to enhance the overall quality of translation services. It demonstrates how blockchain can be leveraged to create a more secure and efficient environment for translation services, especially in educational settings.

(d). Synthesis of Case Studies

These case studies provide a comprehensive view of blockchain's transformative potential within the translation industry. While each case study has its unique focus, they all emphasize blockchain's pivotal role in addressing challenges and capitalizing on opportunities. Whether it is enhancing data security, improving transparency, or streamlining workflows, these case studies underscore how blockchain can empower the industry to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving global landscape. By considering these case studies alongside our survey findings, we gain valuable insights into the promising future of blockchain in translation services. They reinforce the alignment of our research with practical applications of blockchain technology, contributing significantly to a more profound understanding of its potential impact on the industry. While diverse in their focus and scope, these case studies collectively emphasize the pivotal role that blockchain technology can play in revolutionizing the translation industry. They provide evidence of blockchain's capacity to address challenges and capitalize on opportunities, ultimately fostering trust, security, and efficiency in translation processes. As blockchain adoption evolves and matures, these case studies serve as beacons of innovation and inspiration for translation professionals and stakeholders. They underscore the importance of embracing technological advancements and exploring how blockchain can empower the industry to meet the demands of an ever-evolving global landscape.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this study, we have embarked on a journey to explore the transformative potential of blockchain technology within the translation industry. We have gained valuable insights into blockchain challenges, opportunities, and practical applications in this dynamic field by examining various survey responses and delving into three compelling case studies.

A. Key Findings and Insights

Our research has yielded several key findings and insights:

(a). Enhanced Data Security

Blockchain technology emerges as a formidable solution to the pressing issue of data security within the translation industry. Through the immutability of records and robust encryption techniques, blockchain ensures the confidentiality and integrity of sensitive documents. This not only addresses industry concerns but also instills trust among clients.

(b). Transparency and Trustworthiness

Blockchain's inherent transparency and traceability could revolutionize how translations are conducted. By recording translation history on an immutable ledger, stakeholders can easily verify the work's authenticity, promoting trust and minimizing disputes.

(c). Efficiency and Cost Reduction

Smart contracts, tokens, and streamlined workflows showcased in our case studies demonstrate blockchain's ability to enhance efficiency in translation processes. Automation through smart contracts expedites payment processing, reducing delays and disputes. Direct interactions between clients and translators can also reduce intermediary fees, fostering cost-effectiveness.

(d). Educational Implications

The case study on educational translation platforms highlights how blockchain can contribute to educational settings. By improving access verification and reliability, blockchain can elevate the quality of translation guidance for students, ensuring accuracy and credibility.

B. Implications for the Translation Industry

The implications of our research for the translation industry are profound. Blockchain technology offers a path forward for addressing long-standing challenges and unlocking new opportunities:

(a). Security and Trust

Blockchain can be the cornerstone of trust within the industry. Ensuring the security and authenticity of translated documents can attract more clients, particularly those dealing with sensitive materials.

Efficiency and Cost Savings: Efficiency gains from blockchain adoption can reduce costs for clients and translators. Automating payment processes and reducing reliance on intermediaries can create a more competitive and cost-effective landscape.

(b). Quality Assurance

Blockchain's transparency and traceability mechanisms can elevate the quality assurance process. By making translation history accessible and verifiable, it ensures that high-quality work is recognized and rewarded.

(c). Educational Enhancement

In educational contexts, blockchain can ensure students receive accurate and reliable translation guidance, promoting better learning outcomes.

C. Future Directions

As we conclude this study, it is clear that blockchain's role within the translation industry is still evolving. Future research avenues beckon, including:

(a). Scalability and Sustainability

Addressing scalability and environmental concerns associated with blockchain systems will be critical to its widespread adoption.

(b). Regulatory Frameworks

The translation industry's cross-border nature necessitates the development of straightforward and adaptable regulatory frameworks to govern blockchain-based transactions and disputes.

(c). Training and Awareness

Preparing translation professionals for blockchain adoption requires comprehensive training programs and heightened awareness of its benefits and challenges.

Finally, our study highlights how blockchain technology can transform the translation market. It benefits the education industry and improves security, transparency, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. We hope that industry stakeholders and experts will embrace this game-changing technology as blockchain usage advances, opening the way for a time when translation services are more dependable and available than ever. Blockchain technology holds the key to realizing the full potential of the translation sector, which is on the verge of a significant upheaval.

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The Level of University EFL Students' Reading Motivation in Jordan

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Abstract—The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of university EFL students' reading motivation in Jordan. The participants of the study consisted of 20 first-year university undergraduate EFL students at Ajloun National University, Department of English Language and Literature, Jordan. The instrument was a motivation questionnaire based on Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) scale for measuring reading motivation. Data was collected and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS v. 26). The findings revealed that the level of Ajloun National University EFL students' reading comprehension motivation is high, with an overall mean of 3.40. Moreover, the findings indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students due to gender in the domains of challenge, curiosity, recognition, social aspects, competition and commitment. However, there were statistically significant differences in the domain of grades according to gender in favor of females. The study concludes with recommendations for further research.

Index Terms—motivation, EFL students, ANU, reading comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process. It is one of the main basic skills of language which plays a significant role in language learning. It requires students to learn vocabulary items and recognize phrases, clauses, and sentences. To do so, students need motivation in a way that encourages them and raises their self-esteem. Reading is also a way to obtain knowledge and information from a certain text. Harmer (2007) indicated that students read to get information related to their jobs, professions, study purposes, or enjoyment, and to get experience that may help them in life. Alexander (1988) states that reading is important to all subjects and school materials, as the more students read, the more information they gain.

Different factors affect students' reading performance, such as reading strategies, grammar, vocabulary, and syntax knowledge (Koda, 2007). In addition to that, other factors influence students' reading performance. These include students' awareness of reading motivation strategies, effective comprehension techniques, breadth of engagement in reading, extensive vocabulary knowledge and chances for oral and written expressions (Trehearne & Doctorow, 2005).

Moreover, reading is divided into many types, such as intensive reading, that includes scanning, which is reading a text silently and quickly to get certain specific points; Skimming, which is reading a text silently and quickly to get the main ideas.; reading comprehension, which is reading the text silently and answering different kinds of questions that need more time; extensive reading, which is reading literary texts for enjoyment; critical analysis, which is reading to have a look at other people's knowledge production to analyze and see its strengths and weaknesses that require a high level of education and time; and social reading, such as reading newspapers and magazines (Saragih & Oktavia, 2016, p. 59).

Motivation plays an important role in the education process and achievement. It affects human behavior psychologically. It is difficult to give a single definition. Ryan and Deci (2000) define it as "a stimulus and an intention." Bani Younis (2007) states that "motivation is self-strength that pushes and stirs behavior to achieve a certain goal.;" Atkinson (2000) defines motivation as "the degree of individual efforts and selections." Ghbary (2008) explains that motivation is "an internal tension that arouses behavior and urges it towards achieving a certain aim".

Researchers relate motivation to achievement aspects, such as reading, which is known as reading motivation. Abdel-Haleem (2009), Matheson (1985), and Alexander (1988) stress that motivation is very important and a key factor in enhancing the student's proficiency. Therefore, reading is the window through which the reader looks and sees a lot of written materials in books, which contain the experiences and knowledge of the world's authors and scientists.

A. Statement of the Problem

Teachers, parents and educators complain that students' reading motivation is low. However, the researchers observed through their work as instructors in the educational field that students' reading motivation is low. As the

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problems of motivation may affect the students, classroom activities, there is a need to investigate the level of motivation, especially for university students, as few studies have been conducted on university students measuring motivation in light of gender variable. Therefore, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

- What is the level of university EFL students' reading motivation in Jordan?
- Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between university EFL students' reading motivation levels due to gender?

B. Significance of the Study

Few studies were conducted on reading motivation at the university level in Jordan. Therefore, the researchers tried to attract teachers, educationists and curriculum planners towards the importance of reading motivation in teaching reading comprehension and stress the importance of using more reading activities related to reading motivation.

C. Limitations of the Study

The findings of the study can be generalized to university first-year undergraduate EFL students who studied the course 'Reading Comprehension' at Ajloun National University, Department of English Language and Literature, in the first semester of the academic year 2023-2024.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Baker and Wigfield (1999) stated that many research studies published on reading focus on processes and cognitive shapes of reading, such as word distinction, compulsions that need motivation towards reading, and taking care of reading activities.

Sobh (2015) investigated the level of reading motivation in light of gender, grade, and achievement of basic school students. The instrument was Wigfield's and Guthrie's questionnaire for measuring reading motivation. The sample consisted of 738 male and 651 female students from government schools. A three-way ANOVA and LSR test were used. The findings showed that the reading motivation of the Jordanian basic school students was high; the domain of marks was listed first.

Ahmadi et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between students' reading motivation and reading comprehension in Malaysia. They included motivation constructs (interest, perceived control, collaboration, involvement, efficacy), text genres, specific versus general contexts, and the self-versus. Using qualitative research, the results showed that reading motivation positively affects reading comprehension. Thus, students with higher motivation can score higher on reading comprehension tests.

Meniado (2016) conducted a study to find out if there is a relationship among metacognitive reading strategies, reading motivation, and reading comprehension performance. The researcher used descriptive survey and descriptive correlational methods with 60 randomly selected college-level EFL students in Saudi Arabia. The results revealed that the respondents moderately use the different metacognitive reading strategies when reading academic texts. It also showed that the respondents have high motivation to read. They particularly prefer to read humor and comic books. There is also no correlation between reading interest or motivation and reading comprehension.

Abu Abeeleh et al. (2021) investigated the reading difficulties faced students at Ajloun National University to get more insight into the causes influencing the students' reading process. The researchers used a questionnaire as an instrument. The findings showed that students have high estimations of some difficulties they encountered because of text complexity, word recognition, and anxiety. The findings of the study also revealed that there were statistically significant differences between male and female students in their reading comprehension difficulties in favor of female students. The researchers recommended that teachers should encourage students to practice reading as much as possible in order to overcome reading difficulties.

Maneba et al. (2021) analyzed students' motivations in reading English. The population was 11 classes, with 345 students. The sample was 25 students in Grade seven, chosen randomly. The instrument was a reading questionnaire. The findings revealed that 5 students had a high level of motivation, 13 students had an average level of motivation, and 7 students had a low level of motivation. Moreover, the study showed that the students' reading motivation level is an average.

Li and Gan (2022) investigated the reading motivation, self-regulated reading strategies, and English vocabulary influence on the English reading comprehension of undergraduate students from five universities in southern China who completed a questionnaire test. The findings showed that vocabulary depth predicted reading comprehension.

There have been some research and studies conducted on reading motivation, such as those by Guthrie, Wigfield, Penencevich, and Toboada (2006), who investigated reading motivation and comprehension, but few were done on university EFL students in Jordan. This study comes to fill the gap as it investigates the effect of motivation on university EFL students' reading comprehension in Jordan because reading motivation still needs more exploration to arrive at certain results that may help teachers, students, researchers, and textbook and curriculum planners.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The quantitative method was applied in the present investigation. The data were collected by using a questionnaire that was directed to university EFL students to reveal and analyze university students' motivation in English language reading comprehension. The questionnaire was designed and developed by the researchers to answer the research questions.

B. Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 20 first-year university undergraduate EFL students at Ajloun National University, Department of English Language Literature, Jordan (n = 20). Their age ranges between 18 and 20 years (10 male students and 10 female ones). They were chosen using a simple random sampling procedure.

TABLE 1
SHOWS THE FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF THE GENDER

Category	Frequency	Percent
Male	10	50%
Female	10	50%
Total	20	100.0

Table 1 shows the frequencies and percentages of the participants in the study sample by "gender," with a percentage of 50% for females and a percentage of 50% for males.

C. Instrument

The researchers developed a questionnaire based on Wigfield and Guthrie's (1997) scale for measuring reading motivation. The validity and reliability of the instrument were tested, and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated. The instrument was also validated. The questionnaire consists of 17 items that cover different aspects: efficacy, challenge, curiosity, recognition, competition, grades, commitment, and social aspects. The first part of the questionnaire relates to university students' demographic information, which asks them about their gender. The variables in current studies have been conceptualized and constructed from a review of several previous studies. The responding scale is (4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree). Before collecting the data, the researchers explained to the participants the objectives of conducting this research.

D. Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed using (SPSS v. 26). A descriptive analysis technique was applied to analyze the generated data. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the attributes of the data set of the questionnaire.

E. Instrument Reliability

The researchers applied reliability analysis (Cronbach's α) as a measure of internal consistency in the current questionnaire. This analysis is necessary to study scale features and internal consistency between the questionnaire items. The analysis was done by calculating Cronbach's alpha for the items in the instrument. Cronbach's alpha for the items of challenge value is (.789), and for the items of the curiosity value is (.847). For items with recognition the value is (.812). For the grade, the value is (.778). For items of the social aspect, the value is (.725). For items of the competition, the value is (.708). For items of the commitment the value is (.717), and the items' overall values are (.851).

F. Instrument Validity

As shown in Table 2, the researchers analyzed the correlation between all items in the instrument to confirm its validity. The analysis was done by calculating the Pearson Coefficient for the items in the instrument.

TABLE 2
VARIABLES CORRELATIONS

No	Items	Pearson Coefficient
1. Challenge		
1	I like reading texts that challenge my abilities.	.419
2	I like reading texts that need critical thinking questions and answers.	.391
3	I learn a lot from difficult texts.	.767
2. Curiosity		
4	I like reading texts on new topics	.694
5	I like to read about famous people	.537
6	I feel happy to read about topics of my interest	.632
3. Recognition		
7	I love to hear the teacher say that I am a good reader	.581
8	my classmates say that I am a good reader	.630
9	The teacher reinforces me for my good reading	.668
4. Grades		
10	I read to get high grades	.619
11	My parents inquire about my reading grades	.617
12	I read to better my reading grades	.648
5. Social Aspects		
13	I read for my parents	.553
14	I talk to my friends about my readings	.616
15	I consult my friends about what I should buy a book or a story.	.635
6. Competition		
16	I love to be the best to read in the class	.402
17	I study more to be the top in the class.	.682
18	I love to be the first one who answer the question.	.302
7. Commitment		
19	I exert efforts to finish my readings on time.	.477
20	I try to do all my reading tasks required by my teacher.	.646
21	Completing all my reading tales is one of my important interests.	.472

Based on Table 2, the Pearson correlation coefficient between all items for the challenge ranges between .391 and .767. Whereas the Pearson correlation coefficient between all items for commitment ranges between (.472-.646). Means and standard deviation (SD) were measured for each item. These items were ranked according to the following scale: (less than 1.75 = low; 1.76–2.51 = high; 2.52–4 = high).

IV. FINDINGS

Findings related to the first question: What is the level of university EFL students' reading motivation in Jordan? Table 3 shows means, standard deviations, ranks and levels of university EFL students reading motivation in Jordan.

TABLE 3
MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, RANKS AND LEVELS OF UNIVERSITY EFL STUDENTS' READING MOTIVATION

N	Domain	M	SD	Rank	Level
3	Recognition	3.52	0.33	1	High
1	Challenge	3.45	0.39	2	High
5	Social Aspects	3.42	0.34	3	High
2	Curiosity	3.37	0.42	4	High
6	Competition	3.37	0.34	4	High
4	Grades	3.35	0.48	5	High
7	Commitment	3.30	0.36	6	High
Overall		3.40	0.15	-	High

Table 3 shows that Ajloun National University EFL students' motivation level is high in all domains. It can be noticed that domain number (3) "Recognition" recorded the highest level mean value among the statements being rated by the study sample, thus it was ranked first with the mean of (3.52), a high level, and ($SD=0.33$). The researchers relate this to the students' interest in receiving new information and connect it with their previous experience. While domain number (7) "Commitment" was ranked last with a mean of (3.30) a high level, and $SD = 0.36$. The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.40), suggesting a high level, and ($SD = 0.15$).

A. Challenge

Analyzing the mean and standard deviation for the "Challenge" domain.

TABLE 4
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE CHALLENGE DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	I like reading texts that challenge my abilities.	3.55	0.76	1	High
2	I like reading texts that need critical thinking question answers,	3.50	0.51	2	High
3	I learn a lot from difficult texts.	3.30	0.86	3	High
Overall		3.45	0.39	-	High

Table 4 displays students' perceptions of "Challenge." It can be noticed that item number (1) "I like reading texts that challenge my abilities" recorded the highest level mean value. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.55) a high level, and (SD=0.76). While item number (3) "I learn a lot from difficult texts." was ranked last with a mean of (3.30), a high level, and SD=0.86. The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.45), and (SD=0.39).

B. Curiosity

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation of the "curiosity" domain.

TABLE 5
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE CURIOSITY DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	I feel happy to read about topics of my interest	3.45	0.60	1	High
2	I like reading texts on new topics	3.35	0.75	2	High
3	I like to read about famous people	3.30	0.66	3	High
Overall		3.37	0.42		High

Table 5 indicates students' perceptions of "curiosity.". It can be noticed that item number (1), "I feel happy to read about topics of my interest," recorded the highest level mean value; thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.45) a SD of (SD=0.60). While item number 3, "I like to read about famous people," was ranked last with a mean of (3.30) a high level, and (SD=0.66). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.37), and (SD=0.42).

C. Recognition

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation for the "Recognition" domain.

TABLE 6
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE RECOGNITION DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	My classmates say that I am a good reader	3.65	0.49	1	High
2	The teacher reinforces me for my good reading	3.50	0.51	2	High
3	I love to hear the teacher say that I am a good reader	3.40	0.60	3	High
Overall		3.52	0.33		High

Table 6 presents students' perceptions of "Recognition". It can be noticed that item number (1), "My classmates say that I am a good reader," recorded the highest level mean value. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.65) a high level, and (SD=0.49). While item number (3), "I love to hear the teacher say that I am a good reader," was ranked last with a mean of (3.40) a high level, and (SD=0.60). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.52), and (SD=0.33).

D. Grades

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation for the "Grades" domain.

TABLE 7
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE GRADES DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	I read to improve my reading grades	3.45	0.83	1	High
2	My parents inquire about my reading grades	3.35	0.81	2	High
3	I read to get high grades	3.25	0.64	3	High
Overall		3.35	0.48	-	High

Table 7 shows students' perceptions of "Grades". It can be noticed that item number (1) "I read to improve my reading grades" recorded the highest level mean value. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.45) a high level, and (SD=0.83). While item number (3) "I read to get high grades" was ranked last with a mean of (3.25) a high level, and (SD=0.64). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.35), and (SD=0.48).

E. Social Aspects

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation for the "Social Aspects" domain.

TABLE 8
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE 'SOCIAL ASPECTS' DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	I read for my parents	3.50	0.51	1	High
2	I talk to my friends about my readings	3.40	0.50	2	High
3	I consult my friends about what I should buy a book or a story.	3.35	0.67	3	High
Overall		3.42	0.34	-	High

Table 8 illustrates students' perceptions of "Social Aspects". It can be noticed that item number (1), "I read for my parents" recorded the highest level mean value. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.50) a high, and (SD=0.51). While item number (3), "I consult my friends about what I should buy a book or a story." was ranked last with a mean of (3.35) a high level, and (SD=0.67). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.42), and (SD=0.34).

F. Competition

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation for the "Competition" domain.

TABLE 9
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE COMPETITION DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	I love to be the best reared in class.	3.50	0.51	1	High
3	I love to be the first one who answers the question.	3.50	0.51	1	High
2	I study more to be the top in class.	3.10	0.97	3	High
Overall		3.37	0.34	-	High

Table 9 shows students' perceptions of "Competition". It can be noticed that item number (1), "I love to be the best reared in class," and item number (2), "I love to be the first one who answer the question," recorded the highest level mean value. Thus, they were ranked first with a mean of (3.50) a high level, and (SD=0.51). While item number (3), "I study more to be the top in class." was ranked last with a mean of (3.10) a high level, and (SD=0.97). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.37), and (SD=0.34).

G. Commitment

Analysis of the mean and standard deviation for the "Commitment" domain.

TABLE 10
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE COMMITMENT DOMAIN

N	Item	M	SD	Rank	Level
1	Completing all my reading tales is one of my important interests.	3.45	0.51	1	High
2	I extend my efforts to finish my readings on time.	3.35	0.59	2	High
3	I try to do all my reading tasks required by my teacher.	3.10	0.85	3	High
Overall		3.30	0.36	-	High

Table 10 presents students' perceptions of "Commitment". It can be noticed that item number (1), "Completing all my reading tales is one of my important interests," recorded the highest level of mean value among the statements being rated by the study sample. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.45) a high level, and (SD=0.51). While item number (3), "I try to do all my reading tasks required by my teacher," was ranked last with a mean of (3.10) a high level, and (SD=0.85). The overall assessment of this variable was rated by the mean of (3.30).

Results related to the second question: Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between university EFL students' reading motivation levels due to gender?

To answer the second question, the means and standard deviations of analysis of university students' motivation in English language reading comprehension according to the gender variable, and to show the significance of the statistical differences between the means, a (T-Test) was used, a Table 11 that shows this.

TABLE 11
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND (T-TEST) ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE READING
COMPREHENSION ACCORDING TO THE GENDER VARIABLE

Domains	Gender	N	Mean	Standard deviations	T	DF	Sig.
Challenge	Male	10	3.50	0.42	0.557	18	0.584
	Female	10	3.40	0.38			
Curiosity	Male	10	3.40	0.26	0.349	18	0.731
	Female	10	3.33	0.54			
Recognition	Male	10	3.53	0.32	0.218	18	0.830
	Female	10	3.50	0.36			
Grades	Male	10	3.07	0.49	-3.258	18	0.004
	Female	10	3.63	0.25			
Social Aspects	Male	10	3.37	0.29	-0.648	18	0.525
	Female	10	3.47	0.39			
Competition	Male	10	3.37	0.40	0.000	18	.999
	Female	10	3.37	0.29			
Commitment	Male	10	3.27	0.38	-0.408	18	0.688
	Female	10	3.33	0.35			
Total	Male	10	3.36	0.14	-1.153	18	0.264
	Female	10	3.43	0.16			

As for the domains of (Challenge, curiosity, Recognition, Social Aspects, Competition and Commitment), Table 11 shows that there were no statistically significant differences according to gender. As for the domain of "Grades," there are statistically significant differences according to gender in favor of female students.

V. DISCUSSION

The findings related to the first question: -What is the level of university EFL students' reading motivation in Jordan? The means and standard deviation were calculated for the students' questionnaire item responses in gender and for each item aspect: challenge and curiosity, love of reading and recognition, getting grades, social aspects, competing with others and commitment.

The results showed that the reading motivation level of Ajloun National University EFL students is high with the means of (3.40) and a standard deviation of (0.15) domain number (3) "Recognition" recorded the highest level of mean value among the statements being rated by the study sample. Thus, it was ranked first with a mean of (3.82) with a high level, and (SD=1.32). The researchers relate this to the students' interest in receiving new information and connect it with their previous experience. The 'challenge' domain was of high level and ranked second with a mean of (3.45), and (SD=0.39). It was of high level because it was a challenge to their abilities, and they like to appear capable in front of their teachers and classmates. The fifth domain 'social aspects' ranked third, with a mean of (3.50) a high level, and (SD=0.51), because university students like to feel happy and proud showing themselves as good readers. They like to read in class, in front of their classmates, and to their parents at home. Then, came fourth 'curiosity' and 'competition' with a mean of (3.37) a high level, (SD=0.42), and (SD=0.34) respectively. This may be because the reading materials and subjects provided by the university are very good and arouse their curiosity; they enjoy reading such subjects and materials. Then ranked 'Grades' with a mean of (3.35) a high level, (SD=0.48). The results of this study agree with the results of Sobh (2015); Ahmadi et al. (2013) and Meniado (2016).

The results related to the second question: Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) between university EFL students' reading motivation levels due to gender? To answer this question, means and standard deviations of university students' motivation in English language reading comprehension according to the variable (gender) were analyzed. To show the significance of the statistical differences between the means, a T-test was used. The findings indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students due to gender in the domains of challenge, curiosity, recognition, social aspects, competition, and commitment. However, there was a statistically significant difference in the domain of 'Grades', according to gender in favor of females. The researchers think that female students in general take more care of developing their reading as part of their ambitions than male students. Females exert more efforts to get higher grades to get better work opportunities, as society has more opportunities for males.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings revealed that the overall mean of the level of university EFL students' reading motivation at Ajloun National is high. There were no significant differences due to gender, as both male and female students study under the same circumstances, are taught by the same teachers, and live in the same environment for the domains of challenge, curiosity, recognition, social aspects, competition, and commitment. But for the domain of 'Grades', there was a significant difference due to gender, in favor of females.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Depending on the results of the study, the researchers recommend the following: Curriculum developers, textbook writers, and educational experts should take reading motivation into consideration. There should be training for teachers on reading motivation strategies. Further studies should be conducted using other instruments and other variables that affect reading motivation.

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Infographic English Literature Textbook: Faster and Better in Function Educational Material in the Disruptive Digital Age

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Abstract—In the era of disruptive digital advancements, all institutions must undergo significant transformative changes across all facets, education included. Within the university setting, educators must increasingly embrace media and technology. Similarly, students require educational resources that are more accessible, swifter, and more efficient. To meet the evolving expectations of students and to enhance the efficacy of learning, this research project seeks to create an infographic educational resource for the literature course 146345 Prose, offered as part of the bachelor's degree in English at the University of Phayao. Upon completion of the study, the findings indicated that students expressed high satisfaction with the infographic textbook, with an average score of 4.5. This positive feedback resulted in a heightened comprehension of the text, evident through an average achievement test score increase from 8.34 to 17.92.

Index Terms—infographic textbook, literature, educational material, disruptive age

I. INTRODUCTION

The number of students learning foreign languages has been increasing consistently. Even though, in the present, people undergo the COVID-19 pandemic which leads to disruption in various businesses including education, the higher education curriculum in English has never declined its popularity. The students enroll in the curriculum aiming to achieve their English skills for their future use within four years. During their four-year study period, the student's skills in communication, linguistics, translation, and literature aim to be mastered. This is because the committee establishing Thai Qualification Framework for Higher Education believes that these skills can complete the students' language acquisition and are essential for their future profession.

In enhancing students' English skills, literature courses are believed to be one of the important factors. Brumfit (1981) states that literature can help students develop English skills, especially reading, because "literature is a rich and widely appealing source of material for reading" (p. 105). Apart from developing reading skills, Parkinson and Thomas (2000) believe that literature offers students the chance to enhance their cognitive abilities and broaden their understanding of language and real-life situations, by delving into the experiences of others and grappling with complex issues. However, most students enrolling in literature courses lack enthusiasm for studying literature. This is because they encounter difficulties in studying. Al-Mahroqi and Al-Wahaibi (2012), claim that students' difficulties arise from the students' "deficient proficiency in English and their poor reading skills" (p. 78). Brumfit (1981), on the contrary, believes that students' basic understanding of the language is not the only factor in studying literature. He believes that a strong ability to interpret ideas is also needed.

The problem stated by Al-Mahroqi and Al-Wahaibi (2012) and Brumfit (1981) perfectly presents the situation our students confront. University of Phayao was aimed primarily at solving the problem concerning the low level of education; as a result, educational opportunities have been distributed to every student in all remote areas. We welcome all students without due regard to their proficiency and skills in English. These students must work hard to develop their skills. However, only one year seems not to be enough for them to acquire language proficiency to the level that they can appreciate the beauty of literary pieces or understand complicated issues.

To help the students to overcome these difficulties, the teachers not only have to enhance the student's language proficiency, but I believe that the student's comprehension of the lessons can also be provided through effective educational material used in the class. According to Wyles (2016), a textbook is an important material that should be developed. This is because it serves as a valuable tool in the ongoing endeavor to motivate students to actively participate in classroom activities and facilitate their engagement with specific aspects of a foreign language. The very same idea is also stated by Cruishshank et al. as cited in Guha et al. (2017) that textbooks are essential because they play a crucial role as a valuable resource for educators in facilitating student learning.

In the disruptive digital age, students seem to expect faster and better-functioning material. This makes infographic educational material or textbooks one of the most interesting choices for both teachers and students. According to Naparín and Saad (2017), infographic material has two prominent advantages. The first one deals with its ability to draw students' attention. Naparín and Saad explain that the way infographic presents complex information visually through visualization, colors, and images helps draw the student's attention better than plain texts. Moreover, an

infographic is also a good tool to enhance students' ability to learn new and complex things, because it "can transfer knowledge about a topic faster and more effectively than pure text" (p. 15).

As a result, the researcher is interested in developing the 146345 Prose infographic textbook which can draw students' attention and satisfaction as well as help them comprehend complicated issues presented in the lessons.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Studying and Teaching Literature*

In EFL or ESL classes, teachers' major concern is to master their students' ability to communicate. In doing so, Savvidou (2004) presents, teachers aim to expose their students to a diverse range of discourses. This includes expressive forms like letters and diaries, which allow for personal expression. Additionally, they introduce transactional discourses, centered around readers and messages, such as advertising, business letters, editorials, and instructions. However, the one that seems to be the most problematic type of discourse in EFL or ESL class is poetic. According to Savvidou, poetic discourse refers to a type of communication that prioritizes form and language, encompassing drama, poetry, novels, and short stories. She argues that teaching about poetic discourses presents challenges as it demands more than just the students' capability to grasp the structures and forms of language. Apart from linguistic ability, it is also necessary for the students to acquire "the ability to interpret discourse in all its social and cultural contexts" (p. 1).

Brumfit (1981) introduces quite the same idea as Savvidou. He believes that literature is very important, especially in EFL or ESL classes, but it is also the most difficult one. He holds the view that literature classes can assist students in mastering their skills, particularly in reading. However, the students who enjoy literature class are more likely those whose understanding of the language as well as their ability to interpret ideas is profound.

This kind of problem concerning teaching and studying literature happens around the world. According to Parkinson and Thomas (2000), Omani students face problems in studying literature because they cannot relate the text to its context. As a result, the interpretation of the literary text seems to be impossible for them. The same situation seems to happen also in Saudi Arabia. Nelson et al. (2019) claim that studying literature in most Arab institutions "is a daunting task for both the instructors and learners" (p. 937). They believe that this happens because they lack the linguistic and cultural background of English Literature.

Difficulty in studying literature for EFL or ESL students is not caused only by the subject's complexity but it is also arisen by the dull and lifeless literature textbook. According to the questionnaire about textbook selection distributed to 1871 undergraduate American students by Landrum and Hormel (2002), it is found that textbook selection is a very important factor contributing to the achievement of the class. The more experienced the instructors are, the more they place great importance on visualization: graphs, colors, and images. Biden and Beheshti (2017) explain that visualization tends to be used by experienced instructors in the educational sphere because these visualizations or infographics can "illustrate the complex information in a compact form" (p. 101).

Kartal and Arikan (2010) agree with Landrum and Hormel's idea. They oppose studying literature by totally relying on pure and plain textbooks. They suggest all teachers, especially those in the world of the fast proliferation and improvement of information and communication technologies, allow for the use of technologies such as audio and visual materials. It is found that the students who have a chance to use technology take more responsibility in their activities because these activities catch their interest. Moreover, by transferring their research into different types of visual and audio applications, the students also can develop their creativity.

B. *What is an Infographic?*

Kulenović (2022) defines infographics as graphic visual representations that aim to convey information, data, or knowledge efficiently and clearly. She adds that the combination of text and images is carefully designed for better data comprehension. Additionally, infographics can convey messages swiftly by streamlining the presentation of extensive data and facilitating the identification of data patterns and relationships. Kulenović believes that these kinds of representations are very suitable for today's fast-paced world where there is a high demand for quickly processing a substantial amount of information. To elaborate on this point, Kulenović refers to Smiciklas's idea proposed in 2012 explaining how the human brain works. According to Smiciklas, roughly half of the brain's capacity is allocated to visual processing. Moreover, the brain processes visual information holistically, while text is processed sequentially. In other words, the brain can decode visual images better and faster than text alone. Kulenović also emphasizes the efficacy of infographics by referring to Mawhinney (2018). Mawhinney proposes the result of the studies concerning information transmission during the process of enacting directions. It is revealed that individuals who receive directions accompanied by both text and illustrations outperform those who receive text-only instructions by a significant margin of 323%. Being a powerful tool of communication, infographics become the center of interest. Kulenović posits that the worldwide attention began around 2009 and reached its peak in 2020 as demonstrated by Google searches.

To craft effective infographics, Rajamanickam (2005) suggests a sequence of four crucial stages: planning, designing, reviewing, and finalizing. During the planning phase, creators need to address two key inquiries: the project's objective and its significance. Consequently, the project's subjects, objectives, and goals must be established. Subsequently, attention should be given to contextualizing, structuring, constructing the narrative of the infographics, determining

essential components, and devising both informational and visual concepts. Moving to the design stage, creators should adhere to the established plan. When it comes to tools, a decision must be made regarding the use of professional software, online utilities, or outsourcing. In terms of content, simplicity is paramount, requiring creators to design in the most straightforward manner. Rajamanickam emphasizes that reviewing infographics before publishing is very necessary and if it is possible infographics ought to undergo testing with various specialists. In the final step, the infographic is finalized and made public.

C. Infographics Guided by Theories of Second Language Acquisition

To explain how infographic textbook possibly leads to students' better comprehension, especially in the classroom, it is necessary to refer to a second language acquisition theory, and the theory that possibly explains how infographic works well with students' process of acquiring knowledge is the cognitive theory of multimedia learning. The cognitive theory of multimedia learning or CTML was proposed by Mayer (1997, 2001). Mayer puts forward his fundamental idea that combining words and images enhances learning effectiveness compared to using words alone. To illustrate his point, Mayer (2001) describes the brain's information processing through two distinct channels: one for visual content, which encompasses images, videos, charts, and printed words. The second channel, known as the auditory-verbal channel, is responsible for processing auditory content, encompassing spoken words within a narrative and other non-verbal sounds. Mayer posits that human understanding entails employing these two separate channels and memory routes. During the understanding process, the simultaneous tasks of retaining and handling information within working memory generate a burden often known as cognitive load. Sweller (2008) outlines that there are three categories of cognitive load. The inherent intricacy of the information being processed gives rise to an intrinsic cognitive load that cannot be diminished without affecting the learner's comprehension. The other two types of cognitive load, which can be controlled, are extraneous and germane. Extraneous cognitive load is both superfluous and excessive and should be minimized, whereas germane pertains to an optimal cognitive load that doesn't overwhelm working memory and facilitates the transfer of new information into long-term memory. In the case that the lesson is intricate, the inherent cognitive load will be significant. However, if the lesson is structured incorporating both visual elements like pictures and diagrams alongside text-based instructions, both will be handled within the visual channel of working memory. Sweller insists that the simultaneous presence of both visual instruction formats, alongside the substantial intrinsic load, may result in an extraneous cognitive load, indicating a learner who is overwhelmed. To avoid an extraneous load, we need to transform text-based instructions into audio-based instructions. With this strategy, the learner will concurrently handle images and diagrams in the visual channel of working memory while processing audio instructions in the auditory channel of working memory. This reduction in extraneous cognitive load enables learners to manage the substantial intrinsic load more effectively, utilizing their expanded working memory capacity.

However, CTML researchers believe that not all visual and multimedia presentations are effective for learners. Sorden (2012) suggests that designers should consider and incorporate strategies for crafting instructional multimedia content that supports efficient learning for learners. In 2010, Mayer puts forth a set of 12 instructional principles that should be taken into account during the design of educational multimedia. These principles are categorized according to three instructional design objectives which are, "reducing extraneous processing, managing essential processing, and fostering generative processing" (p. 547). Based on CTML, the infographic learning material can minimize cognitive load because it visualizes the textual input and allows working memory to bypass redundant text processing and instead concentrate on the visual information conveyed through infographics.

D. Infographics in Education

Researchers investigating infographics or visualized learning tools often report positive outcomes. The primary topic of discussion often revolves around how infographics can streamline intricate information, making it more accessible and comprehensible for students (Abilock & William, 2014; Kaya-Hamza & Beheshti-Fezile, 2017). Clark and Lyons (2010) also reveal how infographics reinforce students' understanding, but they do not focus on the process of simplification as others do. They argue that infographics can boost students' understanding by piquing their curiosity and encouraging them to engage with the text for more extended periods compared to other materials. Clark and Lyons also add that by enhancing the grasp of the content and message, learners are also able to retain information over an extended period. The outcome concerning students' ability to remember was also revealed in Yildirim's study conducted in 2016. The result of the study showed that engaging with educational information conveyed via infographics results in lasting learning and a high retention rate.

Kaya-Hamza and Beheshti-Fezile (2017) discuss other advantages of infographics in education by referring to Borucu's ideas presented in 2015. Firstly, it is believed that visuals can effectively convey the significance of the subject taught in class in a straightforward and easily understandable manner. Secondly, infographics enrich students' learning experiences by presenting a wealth of knowledge, ideas, and concepts in a user-friendly format. Finally, infographics facilitate the development of students' critical thinking abilities and help them organize their thoughts. Lastly, they aid in better retention and recall of information throughout the learning process.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. *Developing Infographic Literature Textbook for 146345 Prose*

In the initial phase of the project, the focus was on making a comprehensive plan to guide the development of the literature textbook. This involved several key steps, beginning with a careful analysis of the course description outlined in the curriculum. By aligning the content of the textbook with the themes and objectives specified in the curriculum, the researcher ensured that the material was both relevant and tailored to the needs of the students. In addition, a clear target for the literature textbook was identified during this planning phase. Defining the intended audience, their level of comprehension, and their educational background helped shape the content and style of the textbook. This step was crucial in ensuring that the material resonated effectively with the learners and supported their educational journey. Furthermore, this planning phase included the task of identifying suitable infographic types. Infographics offered an engaging visual means to convey complex concepts and information. By determining the most appropriate types of infographics for the content, the researcher also tried to enhance the overall learning experience and facilitate a deeper understanding of the literary concepts presented in the textbook.

The next phase of the project involved the meticulous design of the textbook in accordance with the previously established plan. This step encompassed organizing the content in a structured and engaging manner, incorporating relevant visuals and examples to enhance the learning experience.

Subsequently, a thorough proofreading process was undertaken to ensure the accuracy and quality of the content. This was complemented by a content validity assessment carried out by subject matter experts. The assessment utilized a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Outstanding" to "Poor," to gauge the excellence and appropriateness of the material. This feedback-driven approach guaranteed that the textbook achieved a high standard of clarity and effectiveness.

Once the design and validation stages were complete, the textbook was ready for practical implementation in the classroom. This marked a pivotal point where the material was used, allowing students to engage with the content in a real-world learning environment. This application phase provided valuable insights into the textbook's effectiveness and served as a foundation for potential improvements in subsequent iterations.

B. *Students' Comprehension of the Content Investigation*

To evaluate students' capacity to grasp intricate concepts, a systematic approach that encompasses several key steps is involved. Firstly, pre-test and post-test assessments were thoughtfully designed to gauge the participants' comprehension before and after engaging with the material. To ensure the accuracy and dependability of the assessment tool, a thorough evaluation of its validity and reliability was conducted. This step safeguards the integrity of the data collected and the subsequent analysis. With a validated assessment tool in hand, the tests were administered to the participants, allowing us to measure their progress and understanding accurately. Subsequently, the collected data underwent a comprehensive analysis.

C. *Students' Perceptions Investigation*

The subsequent phase delves into exploring students' perceptions. To begin, a questionnaire was thoughtfully crafted, utilizing the Likert scale, to gauge participants' perspectives comprehensively. Ensuring the credibility and consistency of the questionnaire was paramount, and as such, a thorough assessment of its validity and reliability was undertaken. Once the validated questionnaire was prepared, it was administered to the participants, thereby eliciting their valuable perceptions. Following this, a meticulous analysis of the gathered data was conducted. This analysis unveiled a deeper understanding of students' viewpoints which in turn informs ongoing enhancements in the educational methodology and content delivery.

D. *Participants*

The researcher developed an infographic textbook for 146345 Prose which is a subject designed for second-year students as a part of their Bachelor Degree of Arts in English, University of Phayao. Then the tests and questionnaire were designed and applied to the 50 second-year English major students who enrolled in 146345 Prose in the first semester of the academic year 2022.

The data was collected after being approved by Ethical Considerations Involved in Research on Human Subjects of University of Phayao Human Ethics Committee. The initial steps involved ethical considerations. The researcher began by seeking ethical approval, a vital process to ensure the study's adherence to ethical guidelines. Subsequently, upon receiving the necessary ethical clearance, the researcher introduced herself to the participants and transparently outlined the study's objectives. To ensure participant consent, the approved consent form, sanctioned by the University of Phayao Human Ethics Committee, was employed. This step exemplifies the commitment to upholding ethical standards and respecting participants' autonomy. Finally, participants were engaged in a comprehensive process, involving the review of the infographic literature textbook, as well as the completion of tests and a questionnaire. This holistic approach facilitates a robust understanding of their perspectives and insights while maintaining ethical rigor throughout the study. The data was kept for three years. The digital information was transferred into a computer that requires a

password for access. The physical printout of the information was destroyed using a document shredder, and the digital files were subsequently removed.

E. Data Analysis

The collected quantitative data was analyzed by average values to determine the influence and perception towards utilization of infographic teaching material in higher education literature textbook.

IV. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Validity of the Textbook

Three experts who hold doctoral degrees in English and Education assessed the validity of the textbook and employed a 5-point Likert scale, spanning from "Outstanding" "Very Good" "Good" "Fair" to "Poor," in the following aspects: textbook design, the appropriate and up-to-date content, the coherence of the content and the usefulness to measure the quality and suitability of the textbook. The results of the validity test from the experts showed that the textbook gained an average score of 4.26 which means that the textbook's quality is very good and proper to be used in the classroom. The result obtained as follows:

TABLE 1
THE VALIDATION RESULT

Aspect	Average Score	Criteria	Judgement
Design	4.33	Very Good	Proper to be used
Appropriate Content	4.33	Very Good	Proper to be used
Up-to-date Content	4	Very Good	Proper to be used
Coherence	4.33	Very Good	Proper to be used
Usefulness	4.33	Very Good	Proper to be used

B. Students' Comprehension of the Content Investigation

To investigate the students' comprehension of the learning content enhanced by the infographic textbook, a set of pre and post-achievement tests were given to 50 second-year English major students who enrolled in 146345 Prose in the first semester of the academic year 2022. The pretest was distributed before the students interacted with the material and the posttest was circulated after their engagement. The result revealed as follows:

TABLE 2
AVERAGE SCORE AND STANDARD DEVIATION FOR PRE AND POST-ACHIEVEMENT TEST

Population	Size	Pretest		Post-test	
		Average	SD	Average	SD
2nd-year students	50	8.34	2.81	17.92	1.76

According to the table, the average score of the students in the pre-achievement test is 8.34 and the post-test is 19.92 with a difference of 9.58 in favor of the post-test. This result indicated that the infographic may be distributed to students' academic achievement in the class.

C. Students' Perceptions Investigation

The data concerning students' satisfaction with the Prose infographic textbook was obtained by the 5-point Likert scale questionnaires which were administered to 50 students. The questionnaire was divided into three parts concerning the students' perception of the textbook design, its content, and its utility respectively. The result showed that the students have a positive attitude towards the infographic textbook in all aspects with an average score of 4.45. The highest average score belongs to the textbook's utility (4.48), then the content (4.45) and the design (4.41) as follows:

TABLE 3
AVERAGE SCORE FOR STUDENTS' SATISFACTION OF TEXTBOOK'S DESIGN

Aspect	Average Score
The visual design aligns with the content.	4.54
The illustrations in the textbook are clear.	4.52
There is creativity in the design of the textbook.	4.48
The use of colors in the textbook is suitable.	4.44
The imagery enhances and reinforces understanding of the lesson.	4.42
The design of the textbook is aesthetically pleasing.	4.40
The layout is appropriate for educational content.	4.40
The typography in the textbook is easy to comprehend.	4.40

According to Table 3, the students were very satisfied with two aspects which concerned how the design aligns with the content (Average score = 4.54) and its illustration (Average score = 4.52); while other aspects obtained a satisfied level (Average score = 4.48, 4.44, 4.42 and 4.40 respectively). The typography of the textbook is the aspect the least likely of all aspects they appreciate (Average score = 4.40).

TABLE 4
AVERAGE SCORE FOR STUDENTS' SATISFACTION OF TEXTBOOK'S CONTENT

Aspect	Average Score
The content of the textbook aligns with the learning objectives of the subject.	4.52
The subject matter is organized sequentially.	4.46
The content is coherent throughout the entire topic.	4.42
The content in the textbook is engaging.	4.42
The content is divided appropriately.	4.32
The lesson content in the educational media is easy to understand.	4.32

Table 4 revealed the students' satisfaction with the textbook's content. The result was shown in the same manner as the student's perception of the textbook's design. That is, the result varied from very satisfied to satisfied level. In this part, the only issue that gained great satisfaction from the students was how the content of the textbook aligns with the learning objectives of the subject (Average score = 4.52); whereas other aspects of the textbook's content attained a satisfied level (Average score = 4.46, 4.42 and 4.32 respectively).

TABLE 5
AVERAGE SCORE FOR STUDENTS' SATISFACTION OF TEXTBOOK'S UTILITY

Aspect	Average Score
The textbook can be used effectively in the classroom.	4.62
The textbook is suitable for learners.	4.52
The textbook leads to students' better comprehension.	4.50
The textbook is beneficial for learning and practical.	4.46
The textbook helps learners remember the content better.	4.32

The highest average score gained in this part revealed the students' very positive attitude towards the infographic textbook. They strongly believed that the textbook could be used effectively in the classroom (Average score = 4.62). They also firmly claimed that the book is very suitable for them as learners and could lead them to a better comprehension of the content (Average score = 4.52 and 4.50 respectively). The textbook's practicality and its function in enhancing learners' ability to memorize were less satisfied. These two aspects gained only a satisfactory level with an average score of 4.46 and 4.32.

In the last part of the questionnaire, the researcher left the area for the students to write down their further suggestions and comments they might have about the requirement of the literature textbook used in their class. There were 20 students out of 50 giving some suggestions and comments to the researcher and 60% of these 20 students gave their comments concerning the overwhelming content and letters of the literary textbook. They claimed that the textbook with loads of letters made them bored. They believed that the textbook with the short phrases and summarized content might help them more in memorizing and understanding. Moreover, another 40% of the students talked about how pictures and graphics could help them in learning. They believed that pictures and graphics could increase the student's interest and their ability to comprehend the complicated content in the class.

V. CONCLUSION

In the disruptive digital age, every institution needs dramatically transformative changes in every aspect including the educational one. In the university, teachers must rely more on media and technology; in the same way, students need educational materials that are easier, faster, and more effective. To fulfill the changing attitude of the students and achieve the effectiveness of the study, this study aims to develop an infographic educational material for 146345 Prose, a literature subject in Bachelor Degree of Arts in English, University of Phayao. After conducting the research, the result showed that the students felt very satisfied with the infographic textbook, and this led to the students' better understanding of the text which can be seen by the average score on the achievement test which increased from 8.34 to 17.92.

However, this research focused only on the development of the textbook, the students' satisfaction, and their better understanding after engaging with the infographic material. The researcher did not include the investigation on how infographic material can enhance student's responsibility as proposed by Kartal and Arikan's (2010) idea or how infographic textbooks can develop students' critical thinking and memorization as presented in Kaya-Hamza and Beheshti-Fezile (2017). As a result, it will be beneficial if there is research studying the other possible advantages of the infographic textbook so that a better understanding of the infographic education material can be gained.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This endeavor would not have been possible without the generous support from School of Liberal Arts, University of Phayao, Thailand, who financed my research.

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Appraising Romanticism in Autobiographical Text: A Translation Study

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Abstract—This study aims to examine the appraisal of romanticism in autobiographical text from the perspective of translation study. The data were purposely taken from the autobiography of the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, titled *Sukarno, An Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams* (1965) and its Indonesian translation (2014). The appraisal resources of romanticisms were evaluated by using Martin and White framework (2005) particularly in terms of attitude and graduation while the translation quality was assessed in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability (Nababan et al., 2012). This study reveals that appraisal devices contribute significantly to explaining romanticism through linguistic evidence of the attitude and graduation sub-systems. Appraisal theory, which has a great attention in investigating human emotions and feelings, is very appropriate to describe the characteristics of Sukarno's romanticism and its translated version. It serves a primary indicator to assess the translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability.

Index Terms—appraisal devices, autobiographical text, translation studies, translation quality, romanticism

I. INTRODUCTION

The ideal definition of autobiography is a retrospective prose story about one's own life that is written by a genuine person with an emphasis on that person's unique personality and/or life experiences (Anderson, 2001; Lejeune, 1989). It serves as the foundation for the retrospective account of the author's life and draws attention to the moments and occurrences that make up a person's life and have a significant influence on it. Lejeune (1989) even argues that autobiography is more referential rather than fictitious. It means that an autobiography could not be treated as fiction regardless of its narrative genre.

Translating an autobiography means transferring the truth of one's personal life. According to Taylor (2014), autobiographical translation requires more accuracy than other literary genres. She adds that the meta-message incorporated into the translated text is just as important as the explicit message when it comes to translating autobiographies. Additionally, the significance of the semiotic dimension in the translation process—which takes into account the textual and contextual elements—has been highlighted by Hatim and Mason (1997). Thus, translators, in delivering the message from the source text to the target text must pay more attention to the message equivalence both explicitly and implicitly.

Since autobiographies narrate one's life experience, it describes a lot about how the author perceived people and situations in any different circumstance. Appraisal system (Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007) is considered as the compatible device to portray emotion and judgment. The theory focuses on the negotiated attitude examination uncovered in texts. In terms of social interactions, attitudes allow readers to understand how to express their thoughts and emotions towards other individuals or things. Under this system, attitude and graduation are introduced. Attitude discusses how one's evaluation is represented through affect, judgment and appreciation while graduation explains how the evaluation is scaled.

This research focuses on the translation of Sukarno romanticism in his Autobiography "Sukarno, An Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams", published by The Bobbs-Merrill Company, New York, USA (1965). This was translated into Indonesian entitled "Sukarno, Penyambung Lidah Rakyat Indonesia " (Adams, 2014). Sukarno's autobiography through

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Cindy Adams as the author was decided since it became one of the phenomenal works about Sukarno's life and the history of the Indonesian nation in general. Of the many biographies about the founder of the Republic of Indonesia, Cindy Adams' work is the most powerful and lively as it is written based on Sukarno's direct narrative.

Sukarno and romanticism are intertwined. In the opening of his autobiography, it states that the simple way to describe Sukarno is to say that he is a great lover. He loves his country, he loves his people, he loves women, he loves art, and, best of all, he loves himself (Adams, 1965). The strength of his emotions and strong love shaped Sukarno's attitude which transformed him into a romantic individual. This is in line with the opinion of many Sukarno observers who say that Sukarno's ideas are a reflection of pure romanticism (Hering, 2003). In fact, *Tempo* in its book series entitled *Sukarno: Paradox of the Indonesian Revolution* contains a claim that Sukarno was basically fascinated by elements of historical drama, namely by the romantic elements in the biographies of George Washington, Garibaldi and Abraham Lincoln. Apart from that, Sukarno's romanticism was strengthened by *wayang* stories which he had known since childhood and which became his most effective medium of communication with the public (2010).

Studies which employ appraisal devices within translation studies have been carried out so far. These studies were conducted through comparative studies between the original text and its translation (Qian, 2007, 2012, 2017; Munday, 2009, 2012, 2015; Alvaro, 2012; Tajvidi & Arjani, 2017; Zhang, 2013; Pan, 2014; Romagnuolo, 2014; Mouka et al., 2015; White, 2016). These studies adopted appraisal theory as the main conceptual tool for description and classification. The majority of the aforementioned research focuses on attitude and graduation criteria or uses multiple assessment methods simultaneously by using different kinds of texts. Nevertheless, it appears that no translation study has employed the assessment method using autobiographical materials as its primary source. Based on these premises, this study concentrates on Sukarno's attitude and graduation in expressing romanticism in both the original and translated texts. Accordingly, this study formulates two problem statements namely (1) attitude and graduation of Sukarno's romanticism and (2) the translation quality of Sukarno's romanticism in Indonesian version. By this study, it adds up something new to the range of texts from both translation studies and the appraisal perspectives.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Romanticism comes from the word "romantic" which has its roots in ancient French "romanz", which developed from Latin-Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan which refers to the 18th and 19th centuries which described the intensity of emotional experiences and intellectual experiences (Heath & Boreham, 1999). Meanwhile, Hoffman (cited in Maunder, 2010) explains that the idea of romanticism, which is a work of literature primarily in the form of poetry, started to be introduced in schools and colleges as a kind of culture. The term romanticism can also be used or conveyed in the form of art, especially music and painting. Things pertaining to someone's sentiments are often featured in romantic stories. Beauty and excellent looks are always told, and exoticism and nostalgia for the past are employed to evoke strong emotions in the audience. The figure who was truly rebellious and first planted the banner of romanticism was Theodore Gericault (1791-1824), where romanticism depicted a story about great deeds or terrible tragedies, other figures in the romantic flow were Eugene Delacroix, Theodore Gericault, Jean Baptiste, and Jean Francois Millet. Based on the opinions of the experts above, it can be concluded that romanticism is a literary genre that is dominated by feelings rather than logic in thinking. Romanticism is more concerned with the outpouring of beautiful and soul-stirring feelings as well as depictions of a life full of sorrow expressed in aesthetic diction and lilting language style. This flow is characterized by interest in nature, settings in the past, melancholy, sadness, anxiety and spontaneity in thinking, actions far from reality.

Appraisal is a theory proposed by Martin and White (2005) and Martin and Rose (2003, 2007) which focuses on a speaker or writer's assessment. They say that how a speaker and writer expresses his admiration and hatred, approval and disagreement can be examined through the diction or lexical choices (Martin & White, 2005). To reveal a person's assessment, appraisal theory is divided into three main sub-system: attitude, engagement, and graduation. Attitude is related to how a writer/speaker expresses emotions and justification for the attitudes of people and inanimate objects. Meanwhile, engagement is related to how a relationship is built, and graduation relates to the intensity of words used to support written or delivered statements.

This theory is a development of the interpersonal meaning of Halliday's Functional Systemic Linguistics. According to Halliday, language realizes the meaning of a text through its three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning (Martin; cited in Qian, 2017). The role that language plays in establishing and preserving interpersonal connections is known as interpersonal meaning. The appraisal theory is concerned with assessing the attitudes that are present in a text. This idea holds that attitudes and social interactions are related. The attitudes and values that are negotiated with the reader are the main emphasis of the appraisal. A crucial component of appraisal is attitude, which is a means of expressing sentiments or emotions as well as behaviour and an evaluation of others, things, or situations that are based on affect, judgement, and appreciation.

This research examines autobiographical texts from a translation perspective. Anderson (2001) defines autobiography as a retrospective prose narrative produced by someone relating to their existence, especially their life and personality. As a literary concept, autobiography focuses on the author's role in his life. This underlines the retrospective narrative of the author's life and emphasizes events or occurrences that had a major impact on his life. In agreement with Anderson, Lejeune (1989) defines autobiography as a retrospective prose narrative written by someone about their life

story, especially their personal life. He claims that autobiography is referential, not fictional, even though it is a literary genre. Different from forms of fiction, autobiographies are classified as referential texts like scientific or historical texts since these texts present information about reality outside the text and can be verified.

In the context of translation, autobiographical translation, due to its referential nature, demands more accuracy than other forms of literary genre. This level of accuracy can even be compared with, for example, medical texts or legal texts for the precision of the message in the target language. Taylor (2014) claims that the main focus in translating an autobiography is not only on the words in the original text but also on the meaning or meta message related to certain expressions. In other words, the important point in translating an autobiography is the message behind what is implied in the text.

Apart from that, translating an autobiography does not change the essence of the narrative through the language style used. This is closely related to the referential, not fictitious, nature of the text. The translator must be able to present and maintain the context in the original text to be presented to the target reader. Changing the nuances and context of the source culture to the target culture will have the impact of not conveying or not conveying the purpose the original author wanted to convey.

To assess the translation quality, Nababan et al. (2012) formulated three aspects as parameters in assessing a translation product, namely accuracy, acceptability and readability. The accuracy aspect is used to measure the suitability of the translated message to the original text by ensuring that there are no omissions or distortions of the message. Equivalence refers to the similarity of content and messages between the two. Furthermore, the aspect of acceptability refers to whether a translation has been expressed in accordance with the rules, norms and target culture or not at both the micro and macro levels, including grammatical adjustments and naturalness of the text are discussed in this aspect. Lastly, the readability aspect refers to the degree of ease with which a text is understood. This relates to the form of the text in terms of structure and the audience's reading ability.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research was descriptive qualitative research aiming to reveal Sukarno's romanticism in his autobiography and its translated version along with the translation quality. The qualitative paradigm was chosen by the researcher as it cannot be separated from the research focus. Yin (2016) states five features of qualitative research that distinguish it from other researches. The five features are (1) studying the meaning of human life, (2) representing human views and perspectives, (3) considering the contextual conditions of human life, (4) contributing to existing concepts to support human life, and (5) using a variety of different rather than a single source. These features are in line with the current research focusing on Sukarno's romanticism to be investigated based on attitude and graduation component as well as assessing the translation quality.

B. Data Source

The data were collected from the original version of Sukarno's autobiography and the translated version. The original work, entitled *Sukarno: An Autobiography as Told to Cindy Adams*, was authored by American journalist Cindy Adams with Sukarno's approval and published in 1965 by The Bobbs-Merrill Company in New York, USA. Meanwhile, the translated version used in this research was the revised edition which was published in 2014 translated by Syamsu Hadi, under *Bung Karno* Foundation and Pressindo media. The translation is entitled *Bung Karno, Penyambung Lidah Rakyat Indonesia* (Bung Karno, the mouthpiece of the Indonesian people). The data of this study were the expressions of Sukarno's romanticism identified in both source text (ST) and target text (TT).

C. Data Collection

The data were collected through purposive sampling method. This means that the researchers purposively set out the data which include any romantic expressions containing attitude (affect, judgment, appreciation) and/or graduation in both ST and TT. In addition, this study also employed a focused group discussion involving eligible raters to assess the quality of the translation in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. To make the data richer and more in-depth, discussions were held to match the views and perceptions of the research data including confirmation, clarification, and validation. The assessment results from the raters and the information gathered during the discussion were integrated with the researchers' analysis to produce objective and valid data.

D. Data Analysis

This research adopted Spradley's (1980) data analysis model which was adapted and refined by Santosa (2021). This model included four following stages: domain, taxonomy, componential, and cultural theme analysis. Simply put, domain analysis is a stage where researchers sorted out what should be included as data and what was not. The data were then put into a domain that matched the context. Then, taxonomy analysis was carried out to organize the data by classifying it based on its natural categories. After taxonomy analysis, the next step was for the researcher to connect between categories in the domain and categories in the taxonomy to obtain patterns of relationships between categories. Finally, cultural theme analysis interpreted the pattern of relationships between categories in the context of the situation

and cultural context surrounding the focus of the research, the findings of previous research were used as a foundation for the theoretical framework. Concisely, all of these stages were then synergized with theory, context, and secondary data which work simultaneously to search for a more established theory.

In this study, the findings regarding romantic attitudes, graduation, and translation quality were juxtaposed with the relevant theories. This included data gathered from Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as well as information sourced from articles and videos about Sukarno, along with an analysis of the cultural context surrounding him. In addition, the findings were compared and contrasted to previous studies to show the differences and novelty of this research. Ultimately, a new theory would be built about how the realization of romantic attitudes and graduations in autobiographical texts is seen through a translation perspective with an appraisal approach.

IV. FINDINGS

This section displays the findings of the research which is subdivided into two based on the proposed research objectives. The first subsection describes the attitude and the graduation of the romantic expressions identified in Sukarno's autobiography by applying appraisal theory (Martin & White, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007). Meanwhile, the latter sub section illustrates the translation quality of the romantic expressions generated from the focused group discussion.

A. The Attitude and Graduation of Sukarno's Romanticism

Based on the data identification using the appraisal tool, Sukarno's attitude and graduation in his autobiography were expressed through affect, judgment, and appreciation. Meanwhile, the graduations found in this autobiography were force and focus as illustrated through the following table.

TABLE 1
ATTITUDE AND GRADUATION OF SUKARNO'S ROMANTICISM

Appraisal Devices	Category	Polarity	Σ	%
Attitude	Affect	+	76	14
		-	39	7
	Judgment	+	86	16
		-	19	3.5
	Appreciation	+	46	8.5
		-	5	1
Graduation	Force		264	49
	Focus		4	1
TOTAL			539	100

Table 1 illustrates the realization of appraisal devices through attitude and graduation to describe Sukarno's romanticism. From the attitude component, 115 (21%) data are classified into affect, 105 (19.5%) data are included in judgment, and 51 (9.5%) data are categorized into appreciation. In the meantime, graduation is identified in force as much as 264 (49%) data while focus is found in 4 (1%) data. Attitude is used by Sukarno to either positively or negatively express his emotion. This finding proves that Sukarno expressed positive emotions more than negative ones. Dealing with the judgment, it portrays how Sukarno gave an evaluation to other people. The table shows that Sukarno preferred giving positive rather than negative judgment. Likewise, in evaluating things, Sukarno exploited more positive appreciation. Meanwhile, graduation is exploited to show the scale of evaluation whether it is used to strengthen or to weaken the expression. This table proves that force is more frequently used to intensify the intention than focus.

Affect is one form of attitude realization related to the assessment of feelings or emotional outbursts. The realization of affect can be positive or negative (Martin & Rose, 2007). Furthermore, affect is divided into realist affect and irrealist affect (Martin & Rose, 2003, 2007; Martin & White, 2005). The manifestation of emotions that typically entail aims rather than reactions is referred to as realist affect. Additionally, there is always a trigger in this subset of affect that sets off the opposing emotions of want and dread. In the meantime, the realist affect depicts the overflow of emotions as reactions, which include emotional manifestations like unhappiness, insecurity, and dissatisfaction.

Sample 1. "When I speak about my land, I become **excited**." (130/U.082/ Adams)

Sample 2. "What burned inside me was **brighter than the fever**." (228/U.218/ Adams)

Both data above describe Sukarno's happy emotions towards his country. Sample 1 occurs when Sukarno began to establish the PNI party and when he actively gave speeches in front of the people to arise love for the country to fight for Indonesian independence. The lexis **excited** shows a great outburst of emotion every time he spoke in front of the masses regarding Indonesia. He is always enthusiastic when he talks about his country in front of the audience to make them realize that they are a great nation and deserve to be independent.

The climax (sample 2) was the night before the reading of the proclamation of independence. Although Sukarno was suffering from malaria fever at the time, the disease did not prevent him from writing dozens of announcement letters as well as instructions to several regional leaders to take over the government and allocate troops for defense. Linguistically, Sukarno's emotion is characterized by the phrase **brighter than fever**, which means greater than the malaria attack, at which time his body temperature rose to 40 degrees Celsius and could not sleep for two days. This

shows that his determination could not be defeated by the physical illness.

Judgement is the second subcategory of attitude. In particular, judgement is the evaluation of an individual's character that is not predicated on the rules and regulations. The value system and standards that emerge in a given society serve as the foundation for attitude assessment in the form of judgement (Martin & Rose, 2007). Like affect, judgments can be either positive or negative.

Furthermore, judgments are divided into two main categories, social esteem and social sanction. Social sanctions refer to decisions made in light of social penalties, whereas social esteem is connected to social acknowledgment. Both subcategories are capable of eliciting opposing opinions in the form of praise or condemnation. Social esteem is realized through normality (how special one is to others), capacity (how capable one is considered), and tenacity (how one seeks solutions to problems or how dependent one is on others). Meanwhile, social sanction is manifested through veracity (how trustworthy one is) and propriety (regarding one's moral good and bad).

Sample 3. "Perhaps, I **am a politician with a romantic soul** who too often strums the lute of idealism, but when the Israelites revolted against Pharaoh, who set the machinery in motion? Moses. The Great Prophet." (131/U.089/ Adams)

Datum 131 represents a form of judgment: positive normality. This evaluation is given by Sukarno to himself by judging him as a politician who has a romantic soul. The lexis **romantic soul** here is evidence of a positive normality judgment since the meaning to be conveyed through the selection of the lexis is that Sukarno was special in terms of emotional sensitivity and always adhered to his ideals. However, when the Indonesian nation was divided due to the politics of *devide et impera* carried out by the Dutch colonizers, Sukarno was present to realize and provide understanding to the Indonesian people that whoever they are, where they come from or their ethnic groups, they are still one as Indonesians.

In relation to the appraisal system, appreciation refers to the institutionalization of feelings based on the context of propositions regarding the appraisal of products and performance (Martin & Rose, 2007). Similar to other subcategories, the appraisal of appreciation can be either positive or negative. Reaction, composition, and valuation are the three primary variables that are involved in appreciation. First, impact (the degree of interest one finds in something) and quality (the degree to which one finds something appealing) are included in the reaction sub-category. Second, complexity (the degree of complexity) and balance (the degree of balance) are components of composition. Third, valuation refers to assessment of an object's value (Martin & White, 2005).

Sample 4. "... we grow the **world's best** coffee, which is how the expression "a cup of Java." (014/U.006/ Adams)

This sample is a representation of positive valuation. Contextually, the phrase **the world's best** coffee was expressed by Sukarno to provide an assessment that Indonesian coffee is the most valuable coffee as it is the best in the world. He even revealed that it was due to this fact that the phrase 'cup of Java' emerged to refer to the deliciousness of Javanese coffee. The use of the lexis **world's best** used to value coffee proves that positive valuation is used to describe its romanticism. Overall, Sukarno used positive valuation to describe the beauty and richness of Indonesia.

The second major sub-system is graduation. The graduation sub-system displays the high and low points of an evaluation (up- or down-scaling) of the three categories of attitudes, both favourably and unfavourably. Furthermore, graduation is achieved by two methods: focus and force. The category of force refers to several sub-categories in the form of intensifiers, attitudinal lexis, metaphors, and swearing indicating the height or lower of an assessment. Meanwhile, focus refers to two types of rating scales indicating high (sharpen) and low (soften) ratings.

Sample 5. "But oh I was **madly in love** with this girl." (054/U.028/ Adams)

Sample 6. "... and there I could live and be **a little** happy." (074/U.039/ Adams)

The first sample represents an effect: happiness which forms Sukarno's romanticism. The intensifier realized through the lexis **madly** describes Sukarno's feelings of happiness as he fell deeply in love with Rika Meelhuysen. It could be said that he was deeply in love with the Dutch girl. In the meantime, the second sample illustrates the realization of graduation: intensifier (low raise) of Sukarno's sentiment. This intensifier form is characterized by the choice of the lexis **little** in the phrase *a little happy*. Linguistically, this form is a realization of happiness: positive. In other words, this intensifier describes Sukarno's attitude, which is happiness but with a low intensity marked by the lexis **little**.

Focus is another source of assessment of graduation. Martin and Rose (2003, 2007) mention that focus is a 'resource for making something that is inherently non-gradable. In other words, focus refers to a linguistic unit that functions to provide gradation both sharpening and softening. In this research, focus is realized through the form of sharpening.

Sample 7. "This was my **only** breath of life." (180/U.130/ Adams)

The sample shows the manifestation of positive appreciation: valuation which is realized through graduation, focus, sharpening. Contextually, the use of sharpening lexis **only** is intended to emphasize that the play association that Sukarno founded was his only hope and passion for life during his exile in Flores.

B. Translation Quality of Sukarno's Romanticism

The translation quality of Sukarno's romanticism was assessed holistically using three parameters: accuracy, readability, and legibility. This assessment refers to the translation quality assessment instrument proposed by Nababan et al. (2012). This research involves three eligible raters who are responsible for evaluating the translation quality in terms of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. Based on the focus group discussion with them, the results of the quality assessment of the translation of Sukarno's romantic attitudes and graduations into Indonesian are illustrated in Table 2.

TABLE 2
TRANSLATION QUALITY OF SUKARNO'S ROMANTICISM

No	Features of Romanticism	Accuracy			Acceptability			Readability			Σ
		high	med	low	high	med	low	high	med	low	
1	Sentimental	108	6	1	113	1	1	114	0	1	115
2	Primitivism	68	1	2	69	0	2	69	0	2	71
3	Melancholic	40	5	0	44	1	0	45	0	0	45
4	Individualism	33	1	0	34	0	0	34	0	0	34
5	Back to nature	9	0	0	9	0	0	9	0	0	9
	Total	258	13	3	269	2	3	271	0	3	274

Table 2 shows the translation quality of Sukarno's romanticism in his autobiography. In the first feature, 108 data are considered accurate, 6 data are less accurate, and 1 data is inaccurate. In terms of acceptability, 113 data are classified as acceptable, 1 data is less acceptable and 1 datum is categorized as unacceptable. Meanwhile, in terms of readability, 114 data are readable, 1 datum is unreadable. In this feature, the data of high level of accuracy, acceptability, and readability are much more than the other two categories.

Next, 71 data are identified in the second feature, 68 of which are accurate, 1 datum is less accurate and 2 data are inaccurate. From the aspect of acceptability, 69 data are categorized as acceptable and 2 data are less acceptable. From the aspect of readability, a total of 69 data are readable and 2 data are unreadable. In this feature, it can be concluded that the translation has a high level of accuracy, acceptability and readability.

Then, the third feature consists of 40 accurate data and 5 less accurate data. In terms of acceptability, 44 data are acceptable and 1 datum is less acceptable. In terms of readability, the melancholic trait has an absolute high level of readability and no data are found in the less readable or unreadable category.

The fourth feature comprises 33 accurate data and 1 less accurate datum. From the aspect of acceptability and readability, all data (34 data) have high scores. This distribution proves that individual characteristics have a high level of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. The last feature of romanticism is identified in the 9 data, all of which have a high level of accuracy, acceptability, and readability. This finding proves that the back-to-nature feature has a high level of translation quality. This study provides several samples to represent the findings as follows.

(a). *Translation Accuracy*

Based on the translation accuracy assessment instrument by Nababan et al. (2012), the qualitative parameters of accurate translation identify that the meaning of words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences or texts of the source language is accurately transferred into the target language. Furthermore, achieving an accurate translation necessitates maintaining the integrity of the original meaning without distortion.

Sample 8.

ST: "I **love beauty in every form.**" (029/U. 012/ Adams)

TT: "*Aku mencintai keindahan dalam setiap bentuknya.*" (029/A. 014/ Adams)

The sample shows Sukarno's romantic attitude and graduation through the phrase **love beauty in every form** in ST which is translated to *mencintai keindahan dalam setiap bentuknya* in TT. In ST, the evaluation is materialized by the constituent **love** (mental process) and **beauty** (phenomenon). Meanwhile in TT, it is realized through the constituent *mencintai* and the phenomenon *keindahan*. By doing this, the translator succeeds in maintaining the nuances of Sukarno's romanticism. In addition, the forms of attitude and graduation are also translated proportionally, resulting in an accurate translation without any distortion of meaning. Thus, the datum has high accuracy.

Sample 9.

ST: "Oh, I **missed** my mother so much." (064/U. 037/ Adams)

TT: "*Ah, aku merasa sangat kehilangan ibuku.*" (064/A. 044/ Adams)

The sample above is categorized as a less accurate translation. The use of modulation technique chosen by the translator to shift the message contained in the word **missed** to *kehilangan* is less appropriate. Contextually, the verb **missed** (mental process) is used to represent Sukarno's longing for his mother when he had to continue his schooling in Surabaya and for the first time he was away from his family. Meanwhile, the meaning of *kehilangan* conveyed in TT implies that Sukarno no longer has a mother. The modulation technique used by the translator causes a partial distortion of the meaning to be conveyed in TT. Therefore, this sample is considered as less accurate or medium acceptability.

Sample 10.

ST: "Once a week, I indulged in my sole form of luxury - movies. **I dearly love them.**" (060/U. 036/ Adams)

TT: "*Sekali dalam seminggu aku menikmati satu-satunya kemewahan—film.*" (060/A. 043/ Adams)

The sample belongs to the inaccurate translation. As the aspect that has the highest weight among the other two aspects, accuracy represents the significance of a translation. This is in accordance with the basic concept of the translation process as a process of transferring the message (accuracy) from the ST text into the TT text (Nababan et al., 2012). The application of the deletion technique causes the loss of the message conveyed in the ST. Contextually, the clause **I dearly love them** shows Sukarno's romanticism, especially about his love of enjoying movies. In ST, the type of attitude realized is affect: happiness as a mental process manifested by the lexis **love** and circumstantial constituents

dearly with a rating scale of intensifier (raise). The choice of the lexis **dearly love** shows the intensification of the message with a high rating scale to be created. On the contrary, this nuance is not found at all in TT due to the deletion technique used by the translator. Regardless of the factors behind the translator's choice of the technique, the total omission of the message in the target text can be said to be an attempt to manipulate the message against the original author's intention.

(b). *Translation Acceptability*

The acceptability level assessment of translation in this study adapts Nababan et al.'s (2012) translation acceptability assessment instrument. The qualitative parameters of an acceptable translation describe that the translation feels natural. Furthermore, the technical terms used are also commonly used and familiar to target language readers.

Sample 11.

ST: "I want the world to see what Indonesian look like and to see that we are no longer **"a stupid nation of toads"** as the Dutch repeatedly told us we were;" (011/U. 006/ Adams)

TT: "*Aku ingin dunia tahu, bagaimana rupa orang Indonesia, dan melihat bahwa kami bukan lagi **"Inlander goblok"** yang hanya pantas untuk diludahi,*" seperti mereka katakan kepada kami berkali-kali." (011/A. 007/ Adams)

The data describes Sukarno's romanticism which is characterized by the phrase **a stupid nation of toads**. This phrase is a metaphor to describe the Dutch assessment of the Indonesian people. Idiomatically, the phrase **a stupid nation of toads** means a dumb country of despicable people. The metaphorical word, toads, refers to people who are despised and disliked (dictionary.cambridge.org, collinsdictionary.com). In the TT, this concept is transposed by using the expression *inlander goblok*. The word *inlander* refers to a form of ridicule for native Indonesians by the Dutch during the Dutch colonial period (kbbi.kemendikbud.go.id). In this case, the translator replaces the cultural elements contained in the ST expression into the target cultural context. As a result, the attitude and graduation in the ST text are translated proportionally so that they have a high level of acceptability.

Sample 12.

ST: "Is it not better Sukarno should suffer for a while than Indonesia **should suffer forever**?" (147/U. 103/ Adams)

TT: "*Bukankah lebih baik Sukarno menderita untuk sementara daripada Indonesia **menderita untuk selama-lamanya**?"* (147/A. 124/ Adams)

Sukarno's romanticism is represented in ST through the phrase **should suffer forever**, translated to *menderita untuk selama-lamanya*. This sample illustrates Sukarno's sadness when he realized that he had to let himself go to prison as a consequence of fighting for Indonesian independence. Grammatically, the verb group **suffer forever** is considered ineffective and less acceptable to transfer the message to Indonesian. The expression would be more effective and acceptable if translated as *menderita selama-lamanya* by omitting the word *untuk*, or the alternative translation is *menderita selamanya*. Thus, it has a moderate level of acceptability.

Sample 13.

ST: "**To hell with you all:** I'm a rebel and I'll always be one and I am not about to have anybody dictate to me on my wedding day." (098/U. 048/ Adams)

TT: "*Aku adalah pemberontak dan akan selalu memberontak. Aku tidak mau didikte di hari perkawinanku.*" (098/A. 057/ Adams)

The realization of romanticism is shown through the phrase **To hell with you all**. However, the translator deliberately omitted the phrase. As a result, the message and emotion are not conveyed at all in the target language, which affects the acceptability aspect. If the reason is cultural constraints, the expression can still be expressed with other similar expressions such as 'persetan' or other expressions. However, the translator chose not to translate it into the target language, resulting in a low level of acceptability.

(c). *Translation Readability*

The qualitative parameters of a high readability translation describe that the words, technical terms, phrases, clauses, sentences, or texts can be easily understood by the readers.

Sample 14.

ST: "When I found my voice my only comment was pure Javanese: **"Ducks go together but eagles fly alone."**" (213/U. 188/ Adams)

TT: "*Ketika aku mampu berbicara lagi, komentarku adalah khas Jawa, **"Bebek berjalan beramai-ramai, tetapi burung elang terbang sendirian."***" (213/A. 228/ Adams)

The romantic expression through the realization of the metaphor **Ducks go together but eagles fly alone** is translated into *Bebek berjalan beramai-ramai, tetapi burung elang terbang sendirian*. The translator has successfully transferred the Javanese expression into Indonesian. Unquestionably, the translator had no difficulty in transferring this message since, even though the ST is in English, the concept is that of Indonesian culture, especially Javanese society. Thus, the sentence construction used in TT produces easily understandable translation for the target readers.

Meanwhile, data categorized into low readability can be seen in sample 10 and 13. Both data not only have low accuracy and acceptability but also low readability. It happens since the translator deleted the intended expression and remained untransferred into the TT. Consequently, the readers do not receive the information or messages that should be there in the TT.

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, the research demonstrates that from the attitude and graduation system, affect and judgment manifest many forms of Sukarno's emotions and his judgment of himself and others. Meanwhile, appreciation reveals many of Sukarno's assessments of objects or entities. This strengthens several previous studies (Khrisna et al., 2016; Zhaoying, 2017; Iswandi, 2019; Finalia, 2020; Martopo, 2021; Yumrohtun, 2021), revealing that the realization of affect and judgment describe various positive and negative forms of the main character's emotions and judgment of other characters.

The translation of affect shows a tendency to produce good translations. This is proven by the high value each aspect contributes to the quality of affect translation. The good quality translation is strongly influenced by the use of contextually appropriate translation techniques. Otherwise, these techniques have a negative impact on the translation quality even if they occur on a small scale.

Judgment translations are patterned by varying the quality of the translations produced. This means that some translations of judgments realized positively and negatively produce a high translation quality while others produce a low translation quality. The varying quality of the translations is caused by some techniques being used correctly while others are applied inappropriately, giving rise to shifts in both attitude and graduation.

The translation of appreciation shows a tendency for a good translation quality, although there are still a small number of findings that show different ideas. Good translation quality is proven by high accuracy, acceptability, and readability scores. This fact is closely related to the use of translation techniques that are contextually appropriate so as to be able to present sentimental romance in the target text as it is in the source text. However, some inappropriate translation techniques cause shifts in form and level of graduation which ultimately have a negative impact on the quality of the translation.

The novelty of this research is the application of appraisal theory that provides a more detailed, objective, and systematic evidence to investigate the aspects of romanticism as well as the primary indicator to show the evaluation. By using appraisal tools, this research is able to present and explain Sukarno's romanticism better through attitude and graduation with an affect sub-system that portrays Sukarno's emotions and feelings, judgment which reveals how Sukarno views and assesses himself and others including family, friends, nation, and his political opponents as well as appreciation that illustrates how Sukarno assessed the situation, atmosphere or things that were happening around him. In the attitude sub-system of affect, for example, the presentation of linguistic evidence comes down to the ability to identify emotive lexis and its realization in the form of qualities that function to describe participants, provide attributes, or provide descriptions of the processes that occur. Apart from that, linguistic evidence can also be realized through processes that refer to affective experiences and behaviours as well as metaphorical expressions and comments. This comprehensive presentation is what romanticism research has so far not been able to do.

Simultaneously, graduation is able to show with more precision the degree of Sukarno's romantic characteristics. The high and low levels of the message can be proven using force-graduation devices through attitudinal lexis, intensifiers, swearing words or metaphorical forms. Meanwhile, the strength and weakness of the assessment is shown through focus which symbolizes the meaning of the participant's experiences. In other words, appraisal theory contributes significantly to prove the characteristics of romanticism by the presentation of linguistic evidence realized through the attitude and graduation sub-systems which cannot be done by other approaches. Appraisal theory, which has great attention in investigating human emotions and feelings, is very appropriate to use to describe the characteristics of Sukarno's romanticism.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, this study demonstrates that Sukarno's romanticism was especially evident in his attitudes and judgments. This study uses appraisal tools to better present and explain Sukarno's romanticism through attitude and graduation, with an affect sub-system that describes Sukarno's emotions and feelings; judgement, which reveals how Sukarno views and assesses himself and others, including family, friends, the nation, and his political opponents; and appreciation, which demonstrates how Sukarno assesses the situation, atmosphere, or things happening around him.

Practically, the findings of this research are expected to be able to provide knowledge to the general public, especially translators, in translating romantic attitudes so that they match the message and purpose of the source text. In return, a high quality of translation would be achieved. Apart from that, it is also hoped that this research will attract the interest of other researchers to be motivated to carry out similar research with different study objects. Finally, with the findings of this research, readers and the general public gain a new perspective in understanding and viewing Sukarno's characters, especially through the manifestation of his romantic attitude both as an individual and a national figure.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher would like to express her gratitude to Prof. Drs. M.R. Nababan, M.A., M.Ed., Ph.D; Prof. Drs. Riyadi Santosa. M.Ed., Ph.D; and Prof. Djatmika, M.A., for their valuable supervision, constructive inputs, and guidance during the dissertation research at Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia.

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Cross-Disciplinary Analysis of the Syntactic and Lexical Features of Chinese Master Thesis Titles

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Abstract—This study offered a detailed cross-disciplinary analysis of master thesis titles (MTTs) in the fields of Linguistics and Literature, focusing on the variations in title length, syntactic structure, and lexical features. Utilizing a corpus-based approach, the research analyzed 1,000 MTTs from 25 top universities in China, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore how titles reflect disciplinary conventions. The quantitative analysis revealed that Linguistics titles were typically longer and utilized complex nominal structures with a higher lexical density of substantive words, emphasizing precision and detailed content communication. In contrast, Literature titles demonstrated greater syntactic diversity and lexical variety, reflecting a broader thematic scope and adaptability in narrative and thematic expressions. Qualitatively, the study highlighted how these features aligned with the distinct cultural and academic settings of each field. The findings suggested that while Linguistics titles focused on analytical depth, Literature titles incorporated more creative and interpretative elements. This research provided valuable insights into the construction of thesis titles and suggested practical applications for enhancing academic communication across disciplines.

Index Terms—master thesis titles, genre, academic community, cross-disciplinary, corpus

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Swales's foundational work, *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings* (1990), interest in academic genres has expanded considerably across diverse disciplines, languages, cultures, and linguistic competencies, involving both native and non-native English speakers. This scholarly attention has primarily focused on specific sections of academic texts, such as research articles (RAs) and theses/dissertations. The scope of these investigations covers a range of analytical topics including rhetorical structures such as moves and steps (Amnuai, 2019; Arboleda, 2022; Bonsu & Afful, 2022), linguistic features like tenses (Tseng, 2011; Jasrial et al., 2021), metadiscourse (Herriman, 2022; Nur et al., 2021; Pooresfahani et al., 2012), and lexical bundles (Hyland, 2012; Nguyen, 2023). Additionally, there is a marked interest in the study of titles of academic works, often referred to as "Titleology" (Biacchi, 2003). This interest is driven by the critical role that titles play in disseminating new knowledge within academic communities, as they are the primary point of contact between the reader and the content of an article, often determining whether the reader will engage with the full text. Effective titles succinctly communicate the main topic of the research, identify the critical variables or theoretical issues under investigation, and clarify the relationships among them (American Psychological Association, 2020). Titles should be appealing, informative, and concise (Pearson, 2021; Ball, 2009; Hartley, 2005; Jiang & Jiang, 2023; Kerans et al., 2020; Wang & Bai, 2007). They must adhere to the conventions of their respective disciplinary communities, despite the existence of variations in title construction across disciplines (Hyland & Zou, 2022; Xie, 2020; Diao, 2021; Nagano, 2015; Ball, 2009; Hartley, 2007; Haggan, 2004). Consequently, significant time, discussion, and effort are devoted to ensuring that titles are both appropriate and engaging (Swales, 1990). Anthony (2001) emphasized the need for extensive research on academic titles (ATs) to establish discourse conventions within and across fields before offering practical advice on title composition.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The scholarly examination of ATs across diverse disciplines, languages, and genres has been a prominent area of research focus. Many studies have predominantly explored titles within different academic genres, including RAs (Heßler & Ziegler, 2023; Jiang & Jiang, 2023; Diao, 2023; Jiang & Hyland, 2022; Hyland & Zou, 2022; Xiang & Li, 2020; Kerans et al., 2020), review papers (Soler, 2007), conference papers (Afful & Ankomah, 2020; Yakhontova, 2002), case reports (Salager-Meyer et al., 2017), and even posters and short communications (Cianflone, 2013). Theses and dissertations, which reflect differences between US and UK academic norms (Kawase, 2018), are considered

typical examples of advanced academic literacy (Thompson, 2005; El-Dakhs, 2018; Kawase, 2015) and are positioned between student-produced coursework and peer-reviewed articles, embodying specific genre-defining characteristics (Xiao & Sun, 2020; El-Dakhs, 2018; Kawase, 2015; Swales, 2004). Despite their significance, the titles of theses and dissertations have attracted minimal research attention, with only a few studies examining their form and content features (Hao, 2024; Morales et al., 2020; Slougui, 2018; Afful & Akoto, 2010; Jalilifar, 2010; Gesuato, 2008; Dudley-Evans, 1984). Cross-genre studies reveal that these titles are marked by distinct syntactic structures, rhetorical functions, and levels of informativeness (Hao, 2024; Gesuato, 2008; Jalilifar et al., 2010). Notably, Gesuato (2008) noted that thesis titles often exhibited high syntactic complexity due to the condensation of sophisticated information and the use of specialized technical terminology. Furthermore, Hao (2024) analyzed key characteristics of titles in research articles and doctoral dissertations across various disciplines, observing significant variations in length, punctuation, structure, and content, which underscored the influence of disciplinary and genre-specific conventions.

Crafting an effective English thesis title poses significant challenges for novice writers, particularly those for whom English is a foreign language (EFL). These novice researchers often face difficulties due to limited proficiency in English, which hinders their grasp of the subtle complexities required for creating successful academic titles (Ichiyama, 2021). Additionally, they frequently encounter barriers due to a lack of access to resources and opportunities to familiarize themselves with the norms and conventions of English academic writing. Simui et al. (2018) found that creating a compelling thesis title typically involved multiple revisions and posed numerous dilemmas, emphasizing the importance of ongoing title refinement throughout the research process to promote innovation and improve critical thinking skills. Slougui's (2018) research further highlights the significant impact of gaps in language proficiency and the shortage of educational resources. Addressing these issues necessitates tailored support and educational interventions specifically designed to aid EFL researchers in mastering the complexities of academic writing (Jalilifar, 2010). Such support is essential for enabling them to craft titles that meet academic standards and effectively gain the acceptance of the academic community.

III. AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Although existing research has explored specific characteristics of thesis titles using discipline-specific, cross-disciplinary, or cross-generic approaches, there has been a lack of comparative studies focusing on MTTs in Linguistics and Literature. This paper aims to address this gap by undertaking an exploratory analysis of MTTs in these fields, examining elements such as title length, syntactic structure, and lexical features. The study is intended to provide a valuable resource for postgraduates, supervisors, examiners, and researchers in English for Academic Purposes (EAP), thus contributing to the advancement of knowledge in the area of Titleology. Consequently, this research seeks to address the following questions:

- (1) What are the word lengths of Linguistic and Literature thesis titles?
- (2) Are there disciplinary similarities or differences in the syntactic structure and lexical features of these titles?
- (3) Why are there disciplinary variations in the length, syntactic structure and lexical features of these titles?

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Design*

This research employed a mixed-method corpus-based approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to examine MTTs. Quantitatively, the study explored statistical elements such as title length, syntactic structure, lexical density, diversity, and word frequency, incorporating numerical data into tables to outline trends and facilitate comparisons between Linguistics and Literature titles. This method enhanced the clarity and presentation of results and discussions. Qualitatively, the study employed content analysis to observe and describe phenomena related to title lengths, format styles, syntactic structures, and lexical attributes without influencing them, providing insights into various aspects of MTTs. The corpus methodology, often used to identify linguistic variations and similarities, allows for an in-depth examination of syntactic complexity and lexical richness (Taylor, 2018; Egbert & Schnur, 2018). Although corpus linguistics is primarily empirical, focusing on quantitative data, it also accommodates qualitative interpretations of these data (Szudarski, 2017). The sections that followed will detail the corpus used and the specific analysis techniques that were applied.

B. *Corpus*

The corpus of English major's MTTs was created to analyze the titles in the fields of Linguistics and Literature, comprising 1,000 titles from 25 leading universities in mainland China, renowned for their English Language and Literature programs. These titles, covering the years from 2013 to 2022, were carefully selected from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) to reflect the current and evolving academic standards in thesis title crafting. A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure a representative and unbiased sample, enabling diverse linguistic expressions and thematic diversity across the disciplines, with each university contributing equally to the corpus.

C. Theoretical Frameworks and Data Analysis

All titles were stored in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, Microsoft Word document, or plain text file for coding and subsequent analysis. In this study, the length of each title was measured using both manual and automated methods via WordSmith 7.0 to enhance accuracy and reliability. WordSmith 7.0, specifically designed for text analysis, optimizes tasks such as measuring text lengths, Type-Token Ratio (TTR), and word frequency, ensuring efficient and effective analysis. A word was defined as a string of characters bordered by spaces or punctuation, in accordance with typographical norms. Specific counting rules included treating each word, including hyphenated terms and possessive forms, as a single word. For instance, the title “‘Man-Woman’: Roxana’s Gender Construction” (Literature, 2018) was counted as four words. Additionally, figures, abbreviations, and acronyms without any corresponding referents in the title were each counted as one word (Gesuato, 2008; Li & Xu, 2019; Milojevic, 2017), regardless of their length or complexity. For example, the title “On the Chinese Reversible Construction Based on the CDF Model” (Linguistics, 2013) was counted as ten words.

In this study, the syntactic features of MTTs were analyzed using a refined adaptation of the models developed by Gesuato (2008) and Wang and Bai (2007). This research advanced beyond previous studies by also examining the structural components of multi-unit or compound titles, thereby providing a clearer and more comprehensive understanding of MTTs’ syntactic organization. The analysis proceeded in three stages. Initially, MTTs were classified as either single-unit titles, containing only one structural element, or multi-unit titles, consisting of two or more elements. This classification depended on the presence of punctuation marks such as colons, commas, question marks, or dashes, which indicate significant pauses within the titles (Anthony, 2001). The identified units were then analyzed for their specific structural forms: nominal phrases (NPs), prepositional phrases (PPs), verb phrases (VPs), and full sentences (FSs). These forms could either stand alone or be linked through coordination or expanded via modifications before or after the main phrase elements. Notably, as nominal phrases were most prevalent, echoing findings from previous studies (Jiang & Jiang, 2023; Diao, 2021; Pearson, 2020; Morales et al., 2020; Wang & Bai, 2007; Soler, 2007; Hartley, 2005; Haggan, 2004). This prevalence is attributed to the nominal structure’s ability to efficiently convey detailed information through extensive pre- and post-modifiers, thus clearly articulating the research focus. In the final stage of analysis, the focus shifted to the core elements of these nominal phrases—specifically, the head words, which were categorized into uni-head, bi-head, and multi-head types according to Wang and Bai (2007). Each head word and its modifiers were manually coded to further analyze the structural depth of the titles.

For instance, the title “An Analysis of Adultery in Flaubert’s Parrot, Arthur & George, and The Sense of an Ending” (Literature, 2019) is characterized as a single-unit noun phrase. This title forms a uni-head structure with “Analysis” as the central noun, post-modified by the prepositional phrase “of Adultery in Flaubert’s Parrot, Arthur & George, and The Sense of an Ending” and pre-modified by the determiner “An”. Conversely, the title “On Utterance-final Particles in MinNan Local Mandarin—A Pragmatic Perspective” (Literature, 2017) displays a multi-unit format. It consists of a PP “On Utterance-final Particles in MinNan Local Mandarin” and a NP “A Pragmatic Perspective”. The latter is also a uni-head NP structure, with “Perspective” as the head, modified by the pre-modifier “A Pragmatic”. These examples highlight single-unit nominal titles with extensive modifying phrases and multi-unit titles combining various syntactic structures, thereby illustrating the diverse syntactic configurations utilized in the construction of academic titles.

The analysis of lexical features in MTTs concentrated on lexical density, diversity, and word frequency. Lexical density, sometimes termed the “substantive word rate” (Nagano, 2015), assesses the proportion of substantive words such as nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and specialized terms, which carry specific meanings, as opposed to function words like pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions (Méndez & Alcaraz, 2015). A title with a higher lexical density is more informative due to a greater proportion of substantive words. For instance, the title “A Contrastive Study of Conceptual Metaphors in English and Chinese Football News Reports” (Linguistics, 2019) includes 9 substantive words out of 13, resulting in a lexical density of 69.2%. The lexical density of MTTs in this study was evaluated using TagAnt 2.0.5, a tool that facilitates the analysis of texts by examining contextual cues, word structures, and syntactic patterns. This software also provides part-of-speech (POS) tags for individual words, aiding in a comprehensive analysis of lexical features.

Lexical diversity, referring to the variety of vocabulary within a title, is an indicator of linguistic proficiency and the quality of vocabulary used. In this study, lexical diversity was measured by the Type-Token Ratio, where “types” are distinct words and “tokens” are the total words used within a title. A higher TTR indicates richer vocabulary usage and is calculated as the ratio of distinct word types to the total word count (Malvern et al., 2004). WordSmith 7.0 was employed to assess the TTR of the titles in the corpus. For example, the title “Trauma of War: An Interpretation of Michael Ondaatje’s The English Patient” (Literature, 2017) exhibits a high lexical diversity, with a TTR of 91%, containing 10 unique types out of 11 tokens.

$$\text{TTR} = \frac{\text{Type Count}}{\text{Token Count}}$$

Furthermore, the analysis of word frequency in this study entailed examining the frequency distributions that categorize and quantify the occurrences of each word type within the corpus. This study provided insights into the most frequently used substantive and function words. WordSmith 7.0 was also employed to perform the word frequency analysis of MTTs. These methodologies collectively offer a detailed overview of the lexical characteristics of thesis titles in the fields of Linguistics and Literature.

D. Inter-Rater Reliability Analysis

The validity and reliability of the analysis were rigorously established through a structured process. An independent co-rater with a PhD in Applied Linguistics and experience in the relevant field assisted in assessing the reliability and validity of the analysis. Reliability was quantified using Cohen's kappa, a statistical index of inter-rater agreement. According to the scoring criteria recommended by Kanoksilapathan (2005), scores are interpreted as follows: below 0.40 indicates poor agreement, 0.40 to 0.59 suggests fair agreement, 0.60 to 0.74 is considered good, and 0.75 or higher reflects excellent agreement. In this study, a Cohen's Kappa value of 0.88 was achieved, indicating an excellent level of agreement between the raters and thus confirming the analysis's reliability. When discrepancies in analysis results emerged, the raters engaged in discussions to resolve these differences, aiming for consensus to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the analysis.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Title Length

Thesis title length should conform to university guidelines to uphold academic standards and ensure uniformity. Adherence to these guidelines guarantees that titles are both concise and comprehensive, adequately reflecting the content of the thesis and facilitating its cataloging and retrieval in academic databases. The appropriate length of a title is crucial as it helps clearly communicate the core of the research to various academic stakeholders, including advisors, supervisors, and examiners. This supports the efficient dissemination and evaluation of scholarly work within the academic community.

TABLE 1
LENGTH OF MTTs

Disciplines	No. of Titles	No. of Words	Max	Min	Average Title Length
Linguistics	500	6924	32	5	13.85
Literature	500	6166	25	4	12.33
Total	1000	13090	32	4	13.09

Note: Max=Maximum Length; Min=Minimum Length

Table 1 displays the lengths of titles within the corpus, showing that titles in Linguistics were longer than those in Literature (13.85 vs. 12.33 words). Linguistics MTTs varied from 5 to 32 words, while Literature titles ranged from 4 to 25 words, as illustrated by the examples provided below. This difference suggests that Linguistics MTTs often incorporated more complex or specific terminologies, leading to longer titles, whereas Literature titles tended to be more concise or focused on broader themes. The average lengths observed in this study were comparable to those of Dentistry thesis titles at 13.4 words (Morales et al., 2020), Linguistics dissertation titles at 12.9 words (Gesuato, 2008), Applied Linguistics thesis titles at 13.65 words (Jiang, 2013), and Literature dissertation titles at 12.8 words (Afful & Akoto, 2010). However, these lengths were considerably shorter than the 18.87-word titles found in Slougui's (2018) study of Applied Linguistics dissertations and longer than Chemistry titles at 10.2 words (Afful & Akoto, 2010). When compared with RA titles, the thesis title length in this study was close to that found in Applied Linguistics by Hyland and Zou (2022) at 13.4 words but was longer than the average lengths reported by Xiang and Li (2020) for Linguistics and Literature (both 11.2 words) and by Haggan (2004) for Linguistics (8.8 words) and Literature (9.4 words). It was also shorter than the title lengths observed in Biology (15.33 words) and Medicine (15.48 words) by Soler (2007), highlighting significant variations in title length across different disciplines and genres. The findings indicated that the average length of academic titles varies considerably across different fields of study, as previously noted in the literature (Hyland & Zou, 2022; Milojevic, 2017; Nagano, 2015; Soler, 2007).

(1) An Appraisal Analysis of Advertorials (5 words, Linguistics, 2018)

(2) A Study of the Discursive Construction of China's National Image in the Cases of President Xi Jinping's Political Discourse on "A Community of Shared Future for Mankind" from the Perspective of Transitivity (32 words, Linguistics, 2019)

(3) History Writing in *Paradise* (4 words, Literature, 2020)

(4) An Exploration of Jamie Tyrone's Spiritual Journey in *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *A Moon for the Misbegotten* from the Perspective of Posttraumatic Growth (25 words, Literature, 2019)

While most research has reported overall word counts and average title lengths across entire corpora, an examination of preferred title length ranges offers deeper insights. According to data from Table 2, a smaller percentage of titles in Linguistics (23.2%) fell into the shortest word range (1-10 words) compared to Literature (33.4%). The majority of titles for both disciplines were within the (11-20 words) range, with Linguistics displaying a higher percentage (71.0%) than Literature (64.0%), aligning with findings from prior studies (Morales et al., 2020; Slougui, 2018; Jalilifar, 2010; Gesuato, 2008). Furthermore, Linguistics titles (5.8%) were more likely than Literature (2.6%) to extend beyond 20 words, suggesting a tendency in Linguistics for longer titles both in the prevalent mid-range and the longer range. This trend proves that MTTs in Literature tend to be shorter in length compared to those in Linguistics.

TABLE 2
RANGE LENGTH OF MTTs

	Linguistics		Literature	
	No.	%	No.	%
1-10 W	116	23.2	167	33.4
11-20 W	355	71.0	320	64.0
21+ W	29	5.8	13	2.6
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0

Hyland and Zou (2022) suggested that differences in title lengths across disciplines might be associated with the nature of the research conducted. For example, thesis titles in Linguistics were typically longer than those in Literature, a pattern linked to the frequent inclusion of academic terms such as “study” and “analysis”, as well as language-specific terms like “Chinese” and “English”, and methodology-related terms such as “perspective”, “comparative”, and “corpus-based” by novice researchers in Linguistics. As a result, Linguistics MTTs often provided more detailed information about the dataset, research methods, designs, or results compared to those in Literature. This trend is exemplified by the following examples:

(5) A Comparative Study of Elite English Speech Discourses Between Chinese and American Universities from the Perspective of Positive Discourse Analysis (20 words, Linguistics, 2014)

(6) The Effects of Relevance and Tolerance for Ambiguity on Understanding Conflicting Information in L2: An Eye-Tracking Study (17 words, Linguistics, 2022)

B. Syntactic Structure

(a). Format Styles of Titles

The current study assessed the composition of thesis titles based on their structural units. Titles can consist of either a single unit or multiple units. A title is categorized as a single-unit if it presents as a unified entity, while it is classified as a multi-unit title if it is divided into various parts separated by appropriate punctuation marks.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF MTTs' STYLES

	Single-unit	%	Multi-unit	%	Total	%
Linguistics	349	69.8	151	30.2	500	100.0
Literature	246	49.2	254	50.8	500	100.0

Table 3 shows that Linguistics significantly preferred single-unit titles (69.8%) over multi-unit titles (30.2%), which contrasted with the findings from Hyland and Zou's (2022) study. Their research indicated a dominance of compound formats (63.7%) over single formats (36.3%) in Applied Linguistics RAs titles. In contrast, Literature displayed a more balanced distribution, with single-unit titles comprising 49.2% and multi-unit titles slightly more common at 50.8%. These results were consistent with earlier research, such as that by Jalilifar (2010), who found that thesis titles generally favored single-unit structures (primarily nominal phrases), while RAs in Applied Linguistics often featured compound-unit titles. Additionally, Gesuato (2008) observed that although both single and two-unit titles were prevalent across various genres, dissertations were more likely to feature single-unit titles, accounting for 51.2%, compared to 48.0% for two-unit titles.

Single-unit titles provide a clear and straightforward preview of an article's content, marked by their transparency and minimalist style. Their simplicity enhances their appeal, facilitating comprehension and searchability. Haggan (2004) and Hartley (2007) noted that such titles were often preferred by scientists addressing specific communities. Kuhn (1996) highlighted that in “normal science”—a context where knowledge expands steadily and linearly within a defined framework—scientists preferred single-unit titles because they believed their work would be easily understood within their community. Conversely, multi-unit titles allow authors to include additional keywords, thereby enhancing their discoverability (Moore, 2010). Van Wesel et al. (2014) suggested that including a colon in the title could capture readers' attention, balancing informativeness with intrigue. Additionally, Hyland and Zou (2022) observed that compound titles enabled scientists to make their titles more engaging and appealing. Examples demonstrating the trend in both styles of MTTs are illustrated below:

(7) An Interactive Pragmatic Study of English and Chinese First-Person Reference (single-unit, Linguistics, 2015)

(8) A Heideggerian Interpretation of the Death Motif in Albee's Works (single-unit, Literature, 2013)

(9) An Application Study of English Euphemism—Taking Film *Emma* for Instance (multi-unit, Linguistics, 2013)

(10) Worry and Meditation of Nature and Redemption of Humanity: An Eco-critical Interpretation of *Solar* (multi-unit, Literature, 2013)

(b). *Distribution of Syntactic Structure*

Table 4 provides a detailed analysis of the syntactic structures found in single-unit titles within the disciplines of Linguistics and Literature. The data indicated a strong preference for NPs in both fields. Specifically, Linguistics showed a greater dependence on NPs, which comprised 95.13% of its single-unit titles. In contrast, Literature also primarily used NPs (85.37%) but displayed a wider range of syntactic structures, including PPs at 12.2% and VPs at 2.43%, more often than observed in Linguistics. Notably, FS was absent in the single-unit titles of both disciplines. Examples illustrating the different syntactic structures of single-unit titles are provided below:

- (11) A Generative Approach to “XP de-ge YP” Construction in Lanzhou Dialect (NP, Linguistics, 2021)
- (12) Performativity in *The Loves of Cass McGuire* (NP, Literature, 2022)
- (13) Interpreting *The Overstory* from the Perspective of Ecocriticism (VP, Literature, 2021)
- (14) On the Transcategorization of Perception Verb *look* (PP, Linguistics, 2016)

TABLE 4
SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF SINGLE-UNIT TITLES

	Linguistics		Literature	
	No.	%	No.	%
NP	332	95.13	210	85.37
VP	5	1.43	6	2.43
PP	12	3.44	30	12.2
FS	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	349	100.0	246	100.0

Note: NP=Nominal Phrase; VP=Verbal Phrase; PP=Prepositional Phrase; FS=Full Sentence

Table 5 illustrates the syntactic constructions present in multi-unit MTTs in the corpus, identifying 11 distinct types in total. In Linguistics, the most common configuration was NP-NP (68.87%), with other structures like NP-VP (13.25%), NP-PP (6.62%), PP-NP (3.97%), VP-NP (3.97%), NP-NP-NP (1.33%), FS-NP (1.33%), and PP-S (0.66%) occurring less frequently. In contrast, Literature also favored the NP-NP arrangement (62.60%) but showed a wider range of syntactic variations, including NP-PP (9.06%), PP-NP (7.87%), VP-NP (7.48%), FS-NP (7.09%), NP-VP (2.76%), PP-PP (1.57%), VP-PP (0.79%), FS-PP (0.39%), and NP-NP-NP (0.39%). The inclusion of sentence structures, such as FS-NP, in Literature indicated a move toward more complex and potentially narrative-driven titles, differing from the more straightforward nominal constructions typically seen in Linguistics. But this demonstrated a strong preference for MTTs constructed from multiple nominal phrases. The prevalent use of NP-NP structures in thesis titles was consistent with previous research findings (Morales et al., 2020; Jalilifar et al., 2010; Gesuato, 2008), highlighting consistent syntactic preferences in academic title formulation. Examples illustrating the syntactic constructions of multi-unit titles are provided below:

- (15) Ideational Metaphor in Popular Science and Academic Research: A Case Study of Environmental Problems (NP-NP, Linguistics, 2019)
- (16) Docility and Resistance—On the Character’s Seeking of Cultural Identity in *Half a Life* and *Magic Seeds* (NP-PP, Literature, 2013)
- (17) Ethical Consciousness and Ethical Identity: An Ethical Literary Analysis of *Song of Solomon* (NP-NP, Literature, 2021)
- (18) On the Vagrancy in *Homecoming*: Form, Connotation and Significance (PP-NP, Literature, 2015)
- (19) Nothing is Black and White in South Africa—A Reading of Nadine Gordimer’s *July’s People* (FS-NP, Literature, 2013)

- (20) Manipulating the Body and Soul: Power Mechanisms in *The Tempest* and *Hag-Seed* (VP-NP, Literature, 2022)

The findings of this study were consistent with prior research (e.g., Moslehi & Kafipour, 2022; Diao, 2021; Moattarian & Alibabae, 2015; Nagano, 2015; Cheng et al., 2012; Jalilifar et al., 2010; Soler, 2007; Wang & Bai, 2007), which consistently demonstrated a predominance of nominal titles in academic works. The prevalent use of nominal structures is attributed to their capacity to succinctly present core topics, thereby producing titles that are both informative and concise. From the Systemic-Functional perspective introduced by Halliday (1994), nominalization allows for the inclusion of extensive information within a compact nominal group structure, enhancing the coherence and clarity of academic writing. This characteristic promotes the widespread adoption of nominal titles in scholarly communication. What’s more, Literature multi-unit titles exhibited more complex and diverse syntactic constructions than Linguistics because Literature often explored a broader range of themes, narrative styles, and interpretative angles. This diversity necessitates varied syntactic forms to encapsulate complex ideas and creative expressions effectively. In contrast, Linguistics focused more on precise and structured language analysis, favoring simpler, more straightforward syntactic constructions to clearly communicate specific research methodologies and linguistic phenomena. This disciplinary focus influences their respective title complexities.

TABLE 5
SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF MULTI-UNIT TITLES

	Linguistics		Literature	
	No.	%	No.	%
NP NP	104	68.87	159	62.60
NP PP	10	6.62	23	9.06
NP VP	20	13.25	7	2.76
NP NP NP	2	1.33	1	0.39
PP NP	6	3.97	20	7.87
PP PP	0	0.0	4	1.57
PP FS	1	0.66	0	0.0
VP NP	6	3.97	19	7.48
VP PP	0	0.0	2	0.79
FS NP	2	1.33	18	7.09
FS PP	0	0.0	1	0.39
Total	151	100.0	254	100.0

(c). *Heads of NPs*

The distribution of head types in NPs of MTTs in Linguistics and Literature is displayed in Table 6. The data showed that both disciplines predominantly used uni-head nominal phrases in MTTs, with Linguistics demonstrating a stronger preference (95.76%) than Literature (80.74%). In contrast, Literature displayed a greater variety in head types, employing bi-head (15.21%) and multi-head (4.05%) NPs more frequently than Linguistics, where these occurred at rates of 3.9% and 0.34%, respectively. This variance was significant when compared to the distribution of head types in Dentistry thesis titles, as reported by Morales et al. (2020), where one-head titles constituted 70.5%, two-head titles made up 14.3%, and other types comprised 15.2%, highlighting distinctive patterns across disciplines.

TABLE 6
NPs' HEAD TYPES IN MTTs

	Linguistics		Literature	
	No.	%	No.	%
uni-head	565	95.76	499	80.74
bi-head	23	3.9	94	15.21
multi-head	2	0.34	25	4.05
Total	590	100.0	618	100.0

Literature MTTs exhibited greater diversity in head types of NPs and more syntactic complexity, reflecting the varied and creative nature of the field. This diversity is indicative of the broad scope of themes, styles, and approaches that characterize literary studies. In contrast, Linguistics, with its more structured and formulaic approach to language study, typically used simpler, more straightforward titles. Linguistics MTTs often consisted of uni-head NPs, aligning with the analytical and objective nature of linguistic research.

(d). *Modifications in NPs*

The distribution of modifier types in NPs of MTTs within the corpus, seen in Table 7, highlighted differences between Linguistics and Literature. Linguistics MTTs predominantly used pre-and-post modifiers in 81.69% of its NPs, showing a stronger preference for this type compared to Literature, which exhibited this style in only 56.02% of its NPs. In contrast, Literature displayed a wider range of modifier types, using non-modifiers (18.72%), pre-modifiers (14.01%), and post-modifiers (11.25%) at higher rates than Linguistics, where these occurred at rates of 2.59%, 7.29%, and 8.43% respectively. This data indicated that although the NPs of MTTs in both disciplines frequently utilized modifiers, particularly combining pre-and-post types, Literature demonstrated greater diversity in its approach to modifying NPs in thesis titles compared to the more focused method found in Linguistics.

For instance, example (11) is a single-unit NP title with only one head noun, "Approach", which is modified by a pre-and-post modifier, "A Generative" and "to 'XP de-ge YP' Construction in Lanzhou Dialect". Example (12) also shows a uni-head NP, with the head noun "Performativity" being post-modified by the PP "in *The Loves of Cass McGuire*." Example (17) represents a multi-unit title consisting of two NPs. The first NP is a bi-head type with the head words "Consciousness" and "Identity", both pre-modified by "Ethical". In its second NP, the head noun "Analysis" is surrounded by the pre-and-post modifier "An Ethical Literary" and "of *Song of Solomon*". The multi-unit title (18) features a PP, "On the Vagrancy in *Homecoming*", and an NP, "Form, Connotation, and Significance", which is a multi-head type with all three head words unmodified.

TABLE 7
NPS' MODIFIER TYPES IN MTTs

	Linguistics		Literature	
	No.	%	No.	%
Non-modifier	16	2.59	143	18.72
Pre-modifier	45	7.29	107	14.01
Post-modifier	52	8.43	86	11.25
Pre-and-post modifier	504	81.69	428	56.02
Total	617	100.0	764	100.0

C. Lexical Features

(a). Lexical Density

The informativity of MTTs in Linguistics and Literature is revealed in Table 8. Linguistics MTTs displayed a lexical density of 65.48%, with 4,534 substantive words out of a total of 6,924 words, resulting in an average of 9.07 substantive words per title. This outcome was similar to Gesuato's (2008) findings on Linguistics dissertation titles, which reported a lexical density of 68.3% and an average of 8.8 substantive words per title. In comparison, Literature titles demonstrated a lower lexical density of 60.36%, with 3,722 substantive words from a total of 6,166 words, averaging 7.44 substantive words per title, suggesting that Linguistics titles generally contain a higher proportion of content-carrying words than Literature. Overall, the lexical density of MTTs in this study was comparable to that found in Li and Xu's (2019) study of RA titles in Pragmatics but was lower than the results reported in thesis or dissertation titles from previous research (Morales et al., 2020; Gesuato, 2008; Afful et al., 2010). Moreover, it was below the lexical density observed in recent studies of RA titles across different fields, including Jiang and Jiang's (2023) research in TESOL, Diao's (2021) study in Library Science and Scientometrics, and Xiang and Li's (2020) investigation in Linguistics and Literature.

Linguistics titles tended to contain more substantial words than Literature, a difference primarily attributable to the disciplinary focus. Linguistics, as a field, frequently utilized specific, technical vocabulary to articulate complex language concepts, such as "cognitive", "discourse", and "construction". These terms, dense with information, were essential for precise linguistic analysis. In contrast, Literature, while also analytical, generally emphasized broader themes such as cultural context, character development, and thematic exploration, areas that typically did not demand as much densely packed technical terminology as Linguistics. This variance in thematic concentration resulted in a greater density of substantial words in Linguistics MTTs.

TABLE 8
INFORMATIVITY OF MTTs

	Linguistics	Literature
Substantial words/ total words	4534/6924	3722/6166
Lexical density	65.48%	60.36%
Substantial words per title	9.07	7.44

(b). Lexical Diversity

Table 9 shows that the TTR for Linguistics MTTs was 23.32%, calculated from 1,615 unique words out of a total of 6,924 words. In contrast, Literature MTTs exhibited a higher TTR of 31.11%, with 1,918 unique words from 6,166 total words, suggesting that Literature thesis titles utilized a more varied vocabulary than those in Linguistics, as indicated by the higher TTR. However, the TTRs for both disciplines in this study were significantly lower than those reported by Xiang and Li (2020) for RA titles in Linguistics (44.6%) and Literature (48.2%), reflecting a lower degree of lexical diversity in thesis titles compared to research articles titles. Thesis titles tend to exhibit less vocabulary variety than research article titles because they are designed to be concise and specific, closely focusing on the thesis topic and content. Conversely, research articles might employ a broader vocabulary to attract a wider audience and improve discoverability through diverse keywords.

Literature investigated a wide range of themes, from psychological analysis to cultural critique, necessitating a diverse vocabulary. For example, a title in Literature might use words such as "identity", "feminism", or "ethical", each reflecting different thematic focuses. Conversely, Linguistics was more concentrated on specific language structures, methodologies or theories, frequently employing specialized terminology such as "discourse", "comparative", or "corpus". This focused scope tended to result in the repeated use of certain technical terms, which consequently lead to a lower TTR.

TABLE 9
LEXICAL DIVERSITY OF MTTs

	Linguistics	Literature
Types	1615	1918
Tokens	6924	6166
TTR	23.32%	31.11%

(c). *Word Frequency*

Table 10 outlines the top 10 substantial words used in MTTs of the corpus, illustrating differences between Linguistics and Literature. In Linguistics, commonly encountered terms included academic markers such as “study” (314 occurrences) and “analysis” (84); discipline-specific terms like “Chinese” (202), “English” (155), “discourse” (59), “construction” (43), and “cognitive” (43); along with methodology-related terms including “perspective” (82), “comparative” (69), and “contrastive” (51). In contrast, Literature frequently used terms were academic markers “study” (143), “interpretation” (38), and “analysis” (36); discipline-specific markers “identity” (47), “novels” (30), “reading” (29), “narrative” (27), “ethical” (27); and methodology-related markers “perspective” (63) and “theory” (22). These terms indicated Literature’s emphasis on themes such as identity, narrative structure, and ethical considerations. Overall, both disciplines often employed the generic academic terms like “study” and “analysis”. However, Linguistics MTTs typically focused more on language-specific and methodology-related terms, while Literature titles highlighted a variety of thematic explorations and literary interpretations.

TABLE 10
SUBSTANTIAL WORDS IN MTTs

	Linguistics		Literature	
	Substantial Words	F	Substantial Words	F
1	STUDY	314	STUDY	143
2	CHINESE	202	PERSPECTIVE	63
3	ENGLISH	155	IDENTITY	47
4	ANALYSIS	84	INTERPRETATION	38
5	PERSPECTIVE	82	ANALYSIS	36
6	COMPARATIVE	69	NOVELS	30
7	DISCOURSE	59	READING	29
8	CONTRASTIVE	51	NARRATIVE	27
9	COGNITIVE	43	THEORY	22
10	CONSTRUCTION	43	ETHICAL	19
			NEW	19

In Linguistics MTTs, as shown in Table 11, the most frequently used function words included “of” (630 occurrences), “a” (385), “the” (324), “in” (312), “and” (258), “on” (192), “from” (97), “an” (53), “to” (33), and “by” (30). Conversely, in Literature, the most common function words were “of” (539 occurrences), “the” (499), “in” (367), “a” (265), “and” (277), “on” (113), “from” (79), “an” (76), “to” (42), and “as” (19). This usage reflected a high frequency of prepositions such as “of”, “in”, “on”, and “from,” aligning with findings from prior research by Afful and Akoto (2010). Both disciplines extensively utilized function words, particularly prepositions and articles. Linguistics MTTs more frequently used function words like “of”, “a”, “and”, “on”, and “from” to denote specific relationships and structures within language study. Literature MTTs, focusing on thematic and spatial elements, more commonly used “the”, “in”, “an”, and “to”, reflecting their narrative and descriptive emphasis. This variation in word usage reflected differing emphases on relational and structural components across academic fields when crafting titles, illustrating how disciplinary focuses shape title construction.

TABLE 11
FUNCTION WORDS IN MTTs

	Linguistics		Literature	
	Function Words	F	Function Words	F
1	OF	630	OF	539
2	A	385	THE	499
3	THE	324	IN	367
4	IN	312	A	265
5	AND	258	AND	227
6	ON	192	ON	113
7	FROM	97	FROM	79
8	AN	53	AN	76
9	TO	33	TO	42
10	BY	30	AS	19

VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

This exploratory analysis of MTTs in the fields of Linguistics and Literature offered profound insights into how thesis titles were constructed within these disciplines. The study underscored the subtle yet significant differences in title construction between Linguistics and Literature, reflecting the distinct academic writing traditions and scholarly practices that shape these fields. Firstly, the analysis revealed that Linguistics MTTs were generally longer than those in Literature. This is attributed to Linguistics' reliance on specific, technical vocabulary necessary for describing complex structures, which emphasized the need for precision and detailed explanation to facilitate a deeper understanding of language phenomena. Secondly, Linguistics titles predominantly employed complex nominal structures with multiple modifiers, aligning with the field's focus on analytical depth and specificity. These structures enhanced the precision of the conveyed linguistic analyses. Conversely, Literature titles displayed greater syntactic diversity and complexity, which accommodated the field's broad thematic scope. This diversity reflected Literature's inherent creativity and interpretative flexibility, allowing for a rich exploration of narrative techniques and thematic content. Thirdly, there was a noted difference in the lexical density and diversity of MTTs across the two fields. Linguistics titles showed a higher density of substantial words, consistent with the field's emphasis on specific content communication. This lexical choice supports the precise and detailed nature of linguistic analysis. On the other hand, Literature titles demonstrated greater lexical diversity, facilitating the exploration of a broad range of cultural, thematic, and philosophical issues, which enhanced their appeal and accessibility to the readers. These findings highlighted the tailored approach both fields took in thesis title crafting, influenced by their distinct academic and cultural contexts. This not only aids in shaping a reader's first impression but also plays a crucial role in the academic dissemination of knowledge.

This comprehensive study on MTTs in Linguistics and Literature has several implications. Theoretically, it enriches our understanding of academic discourse in genre analysis by highlighting how disciplinary conventions influence title construction, emphasizing their significance in academic writing. Practically, the findings assist advisors, supervisors and reviewers by providing a nuanced understanding of title elements that effectively convey complex research within specific disciplines, thereby improving the evaluation and guidance of thesis work. Pedagogically, the study serves as a valuable resource for students and educators in EAP, offering concrete examples of how titles can be structured to meet disciplinary norms while maintaining engagement and informativeness. By demonstrating the distinct approaches to title construction in Linguistics and Literature, the study helps instructors in better preparing students to meet academic standards and conventions, enhancing their communication skills within the academic community.

While this study provides valuable insights into the construction of MTTs in Linguistics and Literature, it is not without limitations. First, the analysis is confined to titles from only two academic disciplines, which may not fully represent the diversity and nuances of title construction practices across a broader range of fields. Second, the study's focus on English-language theses from Chinese universities may limit the generalizability of the findings to other linguistic and cultural contexts. Further research could extend the analysis of MTTs to a broader range of disciplines and cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Incorporating a comparative study involving more languages and examining non-English thesis titles could provide deeper insights into linguistic and cultural variations in academic title construction.

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Environmental Injustice in African American Ecopoetry in the Twentieth Century: An Ecocritical Study of Selected Poems

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Abstract—This article examines five poems of different African American poets from 1900 to 1999. Its main objective is to explore how each poet tackles African Americans' – and sometimes other minorities' – marginalization and persecution in the US, highlighting the eco-injustice practices conducted by the white authority. It also traces the established bond between African Americans and nature in the twentieth century through an ecocritical analysis of the selected poems. The article includes an examination of the reaction of African American schools developing from racial romanticism to resistance. To achieve this, the article identifies the differences between two basic terms that are usually used interchangeably: ecojustice and environmental justice. Then it identifies and illustrates four types of ecopoetry: nature poetry, environmental poetry, ecological poetry, reclamation ecopoetics/ecojustice poetry.

Index Terms—ecojustice, environmental injustice, ecopoetry, Harlem Renaissance, The Black Aesthetics

I. INTRODUCTION

With a growing sense of the dangers that represent a real threat to the environment of our planet, environmentalists call for immediate actions to stop violation of nature. In dealing with topics related to such threats, terms such as environmental justice and ecojustice have been used synonymously to mean violation of man against nature, though both terms are slightly different. According to Encyclopedia.com, ecojustice refers to at least two meanings. "The first refers to a general set of attitudes about justice and the environment at the center of which is dissatisfaction with traditional theories of justice." This definition entails that "the value of non-human life-forms is independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes." The other usage refers 'to the linking of environmental concerns with various social justice issues. This implies "concern with the frequent location of polluting industries and hazardous waste dumps near the economically disadvantaged." It also "involves the fostering of sustainable development in less-developed areas of the globe" and stopping the export of such pollutants to these areas.

This second definition of ecojustice is synonymous to the definition of environmental justice in Encyclopedia Britannica where the term refers to a "social movement seeking to address the inequitable distribution of environmental hazards among the poor and minorities" (Arney, 2021). Thus, environmental justice has an anthropocentric dimension which seeks equity and justice to all people regardless of race, color or any other discriminatory criteria.

Sorrowfully, examples of environmental injustice are found in all the corners of the globe and not confined to less developed countries. For example, the United States is one of the developed countries that have a long history of eco-injustice on the environmental and anthropological levels. A lot of studies warn against the abuse of natural resources and discriminating against minorities. In "Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class, and Environmental Quality," sociologist Robert D. Bullard emphasizes the huge discrepancy concerning levels of pollution and environmental stressors between the rich and working class, and between the whites and the colored minorities (Bullard, 2000, p. 1). Ironically, the author reveals that "[d]espite Legislation, court orders, and federal mandates, institutional racism and discrimination continue to influence the quality of life in many of the nation's black communities" (p. 6). He attributes this bitter irony to different factors. "Federal policies, for example, played a key role in the development of spatially differentiated metropolitan areas where blacks and other visible minorities are segregated from whites, and the poor from the more affluent citizens" (p. 6).

Charles Lee in "Toxic Pollution and Race," published in *Ecojustice: The Unfinished Journey*, enumerates some aspects of environmental injustice African Americans and colored groups are subjected to in the US. For instance, "the nation's largest hazardous waste landfill, receiving wastes from forty-five states, is located in predominantly black and poor Sumter County, Alabama." Another example is found in south Chicago, predominantly inhabited by black and Hispanic ethnicities. It "has perhaps the greatest concentration of hazardous waste sites in the nation." In west Dallas, black children "suffered irreversible brain damage from exposure to lead pollutants from a nearby lead smelter, won a \$20 million out-of-court settlement" (Lee, 2004, pp. 93-4).

Lee also refers to an important report conducted by The United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice. The report is entitled, "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States: A National Report on the Racial and Socio-Economic

Characteristics of Communities with Hazardous Waste Sites." In this report, the commission documents the disproportionate distribution of hazardous waste in the US and draws to some conclusions of which are the following:

- (1) Race consistently proved to be the most significant among factors tested in association with the location of commercial hazardous waste facilities.
- (2) Communities with the highest number of commercial hazardous waste facilities had the greatest composition of racial and ethnic residents.
- (3) More than fifteen million blacks and eight million Hispanics lived in communities with one or more uncontrolled toxic waste sites.
- (4) Forty percent of the nation's total commercial hazardous waste landfill capacity was located in three predominantly black and Hispanic communities. (1987, p. 96)

As a result of this environmental awareness, a surge in studies in all fields rapidly increases. Ecopoetry and ecocritical studies have flourished in the recent decades as a means to highlight such dangers and their catastrophic consequences on man and nature. Ecocritics often use different terms to describe poetry that tackles environmental issues; e. g. nature poetry, environmental poetry and ecological poetry...etc. In *The Ecopoetry Anthology*, Ann Fischer-Wirth and Laura-Gray Street classify ecopoetry into these three terms identifying the differences between them.

In terms of poetry written since the rise of environmentalism in the 1960s, we have come to envision contemporary American ecopoetry as falling loosely into three main groupings. The first is nature poetry. In Wendell Berry's words, this is poetry that 'considers nature as subject matter and inspiration. (Fischer & Street, 2013, p. xxviii)

Fischer and Street identify that environmental poetry is

propelled by and directly engaged with active and politicized environmentalism. It is greatly influenced by social and environmental justice movements and is committed to questions of human injustice, as well as to issues of damage and degradation to the other-than-human world. (p. xxix)

The editors consider the third category, ecological poetry, "elusive" for "it engages questions of form most directly, not only poetic form but also a form historically taken for granted—that of the singular, coherent self." They cite Forrest Gander's definition of the term as "it thematically and formally investigates 'the relationship between nature and culture, language and perception.'" Fischer and Street conclude that the three categories fall under the big umbrella of ecopoetry. Also, they argue that it is likely to have a poem that falls under more than one category (p. xxix).

Katherine R. Lynes, in "'A Responsibility to Something besides People': African American Reclamation Ecopoetics," extends this categorization to encompass a fourth category she calls reclamation ecopoetics which attends "to the history of dangers human groups bring to the black human subject, along with the dangers humans bring to nonhuman" (Lynes, 2015, p. 51). This same definition is synonymous to ecojustice poetry.

I use 'reclamation' as part of the term because of its sense of resetting the course and realigning our attention; I use 'ecopoetics' as part of the term because it signals to the reader the environmental concerns that are often more strongly present in ecopoetry (as usually, though loosely, defined) than in nature poetry. (p. 51)

In her *Environmental Justice Witnessing in the Modernist Poetry of Lola Ridge, Muriel Rukeyser, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Elizabeth Bishop*, Sarah Grieve studies these four women poets whose poetry bears witness to whites' segregation of African Americans and violation of natural environment. She terms this as environmental justice witnessing which she defines, "as accounts that testify to experiences of injustices that affect humans and the environments they inhabit" (Grieve, 2015, p. i). Like Kelly Oliver, the author employs the dual meaning of witness, "to observe as an eyewitness and to bear witness as someone testifying to something beyond observable recognition" (p. xii). She justifies her choice of the four poets for they "tether concerns of social consciousness to environmental concern" and "bear witness to traumas that affect human and non-human members" (p. xv).

Many scholars wrote about and/or edited anthologies about ecopoetry and its subsequent classifications. These anthologies exemplify how nature has always represented an inspiration to poets from classical poetry until now. Of these are anthologies which focus on African American ecopoetry in particular. For example, Camille Dungy edited *Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry*, where she illustrates how African American poets have been concerned about nature. She was driven by her sense of responsibility to register the ignored effort of Afro-American poets.

African Americans, specifically, are fundamental to the natural fabric of this nation but have been noticeably absent from tables of contents. To bring more voices into the conversation about human interactions with the natural world, we must change the parameters of the conversation. (Dungy, 2009, p. xxi)

The editor uses a thematic categorization of the African American works rather than chronological order. She classifies the poems in ten cycles where she exhibits how both the natural and human world, whether aligning with or opposing each other appear in the selected poems of the anthology. "They document natural and human-provoked disasters and their effects on individuals and communities. They explore sources of connection to, but also alienation from, the land" (p. xxii). The author here adopts Elizabeth Dodd's supposition that,

African American writers have not embraced nature writing' in the same manner as the dominant culture because 'the literary attempt to deflect attention away from human beings . . . might not be appealing for writers who already feel politically, economically, and socially marginalized. (p. xxv)

Dungy argues that some poems in the anthology "suggest a distaste for or disconnection from wilderness spaces" (xxv). In order to justify the complex relationship between African American and the land, she refers to what she calls

"the collusion between nature and [black] man". This collusion is represented in "the manner in which the natural world has been used to destroy, damage, or subjugate African Americans." Therefore, "it is no wonder that many African Americans link their fears directly to the land that witnessed or abetted centuries of subjugation" (p. xxvi).

Another anthology casting light on "culturally diverse poetry" is *Ghost Fishing: An Eco-Justice Poetry Anthology* edited by Melissa Tuckey. Influenced by Camille Dungy's anthology, Tuckey is inspired to write about the marginalized ethnicities because she believes that they "live disproportionately in harms with regard to environmental crisis," and their voices "have been historically underrepresented among nature and eco-poetry collections" (Tuckey, 2018, p. 1). The editor suggests a definition of ecojustice that explains a connection between the land and people; that is, "Ecojustice is recognition that the fate of the land is connected to fate of people" (p. 2). Tuckey also saw "how poetry and other arts have served throughout as a form of resistance, as an act of resurgence, and as cultural memory..." (p. 2). Like Camille Dungy, she follows a thematic classification of the poems relevant to major environmental issues.

This article will attempt to benefit from Camille Dungy and Melissa Tuckey's work. Its major aim is to examine five poems by different African American poets from an ecocritical approach. It will trace the development of ecojustice poetry of African American writers from 1900 to 1999. All the selected poems of this article are found in Camille Dungy's anthology, specifically "Cycle Five: Forsaken of the Earth". According to the editor, this part is where the line between the harm humans do to one another and that delivered by environmental forces blurs. These poems implicate the natural world in a personal or collective history of trauma ... As Cycle Five progresses, aspirations dwindle, and articulated more and more frequently are expressions of frustration or exasperation, descriptions of the natural forces that got the poems' subjects to this place of discontent. (p. xxxi)

The selected poems are Paul Laurence Dunbar's 'The Haunted Oak', Anne Spencer's "White Things," Langston Hughes' "Lament for Dark Peoples," Nikki Giovanni's "For Saundra," and G. E. Patterson's "The Natural World" respectively. They illustrate the relationship between the human and natural worlds and the divergent attitudes of African American writers toward the recurrent violations against their fellow Afro-Americans and the environment in the twentieth century, and the consequences of such violations. The article will also demonstrate how African American poets are driven by their sense of injustice pertaining to the long history of the white Americans' racist practices on African Americans and the environment. Following Melissa Tuckey's footsteps, the article will also explore how African American ecopoetry reflects a form of resistance and cultural memory. Ecocriticism, and eco/environmental justice theory will be utilized to investigate the African American poets' works.

II. AFRICAN AMERICAN ECOPOETRY

During the twentieth century, African American poetry has developed rapidly to cope with the shifts in life conditions and sociopolitical circumstances. Like other artistic forms, it has echoed African Americans ordeals and aspirations. Nature has had an important share in their poetry; a share that nature has acquired from the long historical relationship dating back to the enslavement of Africans who were imported to work in the white man's plantations in the new land. The poems are selected and chronologically ordered to mark the development of this relationship between the victimized African Americans and violated nature.

Dunbar's 'The Haunted Oak' was written in 1900 when Ku Klux Klan, the white racist group, lynched a black American under the false allegation of 'the old, old crime' of raping a white woman. The oak tree sympathizes with the 'guiltless man' in a motherly way.

I bent me down to hear his sigh;
I shook with his gurgling moan,
And I trembled sore when they rode away,
And left him here alone. (Dungy, 2009, p. 159)

Rape was a common accusation against the African Americans and widely used to stigmatize the black ethnicity. The tree feels as victimized as the innocent man for she has lost the bough on which the victim has been lynched; it has become 'bare' unlike the other boughs as a result. At the same time, the tree feels as guilty as the lynching group for she unwillingly participates in the crime. Camille Dungy illustrates 'the grisly function America's trees have served' to victimize African Americans has been a recurrent theme of many poems including Dunbar's "The Haunted Oak".

Many of the poems in this collection point to the collusion between nature and man, the manner in which the natural world has been used to destroy, damage, or subjugate African Americans. Even those poets who write decades after and miles away from the locus of the events they describe reveal caution and heightened awareness. (p. xxvi)

In "Green and Is the New Black: A Grammar of Ecocritical Readings in African American Poetry and Environmental Justice Law," Shanon Prince suggests that the lynch mob could have been incited by racist advocates such as Rebecca Felton "who claimed that white women were in such danger of being raped that, if necessary, whites should lynch one thousand black men a week" (Prince, 2013, p. 200). Unfortunately, the jailers were heedless to the warnings of his friends.

Ho, keeper, do not stay!
We are friends of him whom you hold within,
And we fain would take him away

From those who ride fast on our heels
With mind to do him wrong;

They have no care for his innocence,
And the rope they bear is long. (Dungy, 2009, p. 160)

Hurriedly, the white mob lynched the "guiltless man" on a branch of the oak tree which becomes "bare" unlike the rest of the tree boughs. Sympathetically, the tree bends down to 'hear his sigh' and shows intense emotions of trepidation and helplessness.

Prince bases her ecocritical analysis of "The Haunted Oak" on two terms: sacrifice zones and redlining. The first refers to the disproportionate areas where the marginalized groups in the American society such as the African American as sacrifice zones; a term that environmental activists use to describe areas where "low-income and minority populations, living adjacent to heavy industry and military bases, are required to make disproportionate health and economic sacrifices that more affluent people can avoid." The other term which is a financial term describing "how banks neglect impoverished communities" (Prince, 2013, p. 200).

By so doing, Felton "was transforming black men into a sacrifice zone, into a type of people whose humanity could be forfeited." The same devaluation is applicable to the oak tree that was "anguished at having been used for a lynching." The 'oak [was] victimized by the discrimination suffered by its human neighbors' (p. 200). In this way, "minority communities are indeed invested in – they are desirable because they are seen as disposable, fitting sites for the 'heavy industry and military bases' that Lerner describes" (p. 201). The tree thus feels the pain of her lost bough and the guilt of the lynched man.

I feel the rope against my bark,

And the weight of him in my grain,
feel in the throe of his final woe
The touch of my own last pain.
And never more shall leaves come forth
On the bough that bears the ban;

I am burned with dread, I am dried and dead,
From the curse of a guiltless man. (Dungy, 2009, pp. 160-1)

These paradoxical feelings of guilt and pain accentuate the inseparable bond between man the surrounding environment. Each violation of man against nature influences both man and nature. Also, nature helps one group, though involuntarily, in doing injustice to another group. This melodramatic ending reveals Dunbar's racial romanticism, signifying the poet's lament for the whites' persecution of African Americans rather than showing resistance to injustice. The oak tree asks the murdered man not to weep condoling him that "the time will come when these shall dread /The mem'ry of your face" (p. 160).

With the rise of Harlem Renaissance in 1920s, the African Americans' voice became louder. Decrying the whites' othering of African Americans and other minority groups, condemnation of institutional segregation, and showing up a distinctive black identity are recurrent themes in its literary works. Though obscure in comparison to other pioneers of the school, Anne Spencer adopts the movement agenda in resisting whites' domination in "White Things." Although the poem was published in 1923 in *The Crisis*, after the killing of white farmer, who was known for his cruelty to the blacks, at the hands of one of his Afro-American employees. In search for the murderer, a white mob lynched nine innocent blacks including the murderer's pregnant wife who

was hung by her feet. Gasoline was thrown on her clothing and it was set on fire. Her body was cut open and her infant fell to the ground with a little cry, to be crushed to death by the heel of one of the white men present. The mother's body was then riddled with bullets. (Greene, 1977)

The poet divides the poem into two stanzas with a gradual rise in tone reflecting the poet's infuriation. In the first, Spencer highlights how the blacks are in harmony with the natural world for being colorful, and how the whites must come from another world for being colorless.

Most things are colorful things—the sky, earth, and sea.
Black men are most men; but the white are free!
White things are rare things; so rare, so rare
They stole from out a silvered world—somewhere. (Dungy, 2009, p. 155)

Spencer here espouses the radical view that the blacks are the first race, and the whites are just anomaly. Hence, the backs are "most men" perhaps because they are chained with responsibility towards humanity and the natural world whereas the whites are "free" of any responsibility. Spencer reinforces the inseparable bond between man and nature hence. Being "free" and alien in this world, the whites start violating nature and subjugating the man – here the African Americans and all people of color. "They strewed white feathers of cowardice" everywhere: "the golden stars", red hills, and "darkened pine" trees.

In the second stanza, Spencer's tone is heightened to cope with the whites' blatant violations against man and nature "to wield power and spread whiteness" as Greene puts it. "The lines suggest that the psychological sustenance for whites is in destroying blackness" (Greene, 1977).

They blanched with their wand of power;
And turned the blood in a ruby rose
To a poor white poppy-flower.
They pyred a race of black, black men,
And burned them to ashes white; ... (Dungy, 2009, p. 155)

Susan Gubar, in *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture*, attributes the whites' destructive tendency to destroy the colored world and usurp the lively black color of black men, thus turning them to their ghastly white color of death.

Unlike [Spencer's] most earlier speculations, ... She therefore attributes racism to white belatedness, the anxieties of whites about entering a world of green, gold, red, dark, and ruby rose colors, all of which are born and born alive, while whiteness is produced by and through death. At its most gruesome Spencer's poem implies that, though colors simply exist, whiteness must be manufactured out of sacrificed black bodies. If blacks turn white only in death, perhaps white men are dead men, ghoulish ghosts in a silvered world of Unbeing. (Gubar, 1997, p. 102)

In the last four lines, Spencer demonstrates her mounting anger against the brutal white man through depicting them as son of hell. The white man, "Promethean and satanic" as they are, "they defiantly swing/In the face of God" and swear by their mother hell "Man-maker, make white!" Spencer, thus, suggests that white man's greed for power and domination will not be satisfied unless God makes all creatures as ghostly species and/or lifeless "white things" like them. The poet underlines the strong connection between the human and natural world, therefore. She stresses that human practicing of "othering" on another group will entail a transgression on the environment as people often link the place to the brutal events it witnesses. Her angry tone reflects Harlem Renaissance spirit which promotes protest against racism and environmental injustice.

In "Lament for Dark peoples", published in 1924, Langston Hughes tackles the impact of white racism on nature and man likewise. He widens his scope to focus on the whites' subjugation of African and native Americans, and other minorities. In the first two stanzas, Hughes illustrates the systematic dislocation of indigenous and African American the white man has implemented.

I was a red man one time,
But the white men came.
I was a black man, too,
But the white men came.

They drove me out of the forest.
They took me away from the jungles.
I lost my trees.
I lost my silver moons. (Dungy, 2009, p. 154)

In *Black Poets of the United States, from Paul Laurence Dunbar to Langston Hughes*, Jean Wagner explains why Hughes mentions certain natural elements in the poem.

The African forest and its trees, the jungle with its silvery moons – these are the romantic symbols of freedom of which the while man has deprived the colored people, so that he may enclose them in the cage of his civilization, as the tamer pens up wild beasts in his circus cages: ... (Wagner, 1973, p. 396)

After the white man have appropriated the land and have enslaved and persecuted African and native Americans, they've caged them "with the many" people belonging to other minorities "in the circus of civilization".

Now they've caged me
In the circus of civilization.
Now I herd with the many—
Caged in the circus of civilization. (Dungy, 2009, p. 154)

In *Enslavement and Emancipation*, Harold Bloom and Blake Hobby suggest that by the end of the poem, "the sense of being inescapably 'caged' is emphasized through the reiterative, circular phrasing that dominates the whole poem, but especially the final stanza" (Bloom & Hobby, 2010, p. 91).

The cage in the circus of civilization Hughes mentions likely refers to the forced assimilation policies the successive Federal governments have imposed on colored people. In 'Cultural Assimilation of Native Americans', Giulia Marchiò (2022) explains that

Americanization policies were based on the idea that when Indigenous peoples learned the customs and values of the United States, they would be able to merge tribal traditions with American culture and peacefully unite with the majority of society. After the end of the Indian Wars in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the federal government banned the practice of traditional religious ceremonies. It established Native American

boarding schools that children were required to attend. In these schools they were forced to speak English, study standard subjects, attend church and leave tribal traditions behind.

Under slavery and then institutional and racial segregation, the African Americans were subject to harsher versions of Americanization. The enslaved ancestors were forced to leave their countries and work as farmers. Even after the Abolition, the freed slaves and their children were forced to assimilate into the white American culture. Langston Hughes, like other Harlem Renaissance writers, criticizes these measures which consider African Americans real citizens when they agree on depriving themselves of their black identity and embracing their victimizers'. The poet speaks out about the miseries of all other subjugated minorities in the last two lines to attract a wider audience of the marginalized ethnic groups. Hence, the poem, though simple in language and structure, conveys multiple themes. For example, it tackles the theme of eco-injustice on the environmental and anthropological levels. It also explains how the whites practice further measures on colored people to make them adaptable to the white "circus of civilization".

The fourth selected poem is Nikki Giovanni's 'For Saundra' published in *Black Judgment* in 1968. In this era, 1960s and 1970s, most of the African American works can be described as ethnocentric. Adhering to one's ethnic affiliation was a means of protection and survival. The Black Arts Movement, also called Black Aesthetic, was the major trend in black literature and art at the time. As per *Encyclopedia Britannica*,

Black Arts movement, period of artistic and literary development among black Americans in the 1960s and early '70s. Based on the cultural politics of black nationalism, which were developed into a set of theories referred to as the Black Aesthetic, the movement sought to create a populist art form to promote the idea of black separatism. Many adherents viewed the artist as an activist responsible for the formation of racially separate publishing houses, theatre troupes, and study groups. The literature of the movement, generally written in black English vernacular and confrontational in tone, addressed such issues as interracial tension, sociopolitical awareness, and the relevance of African history and culture to blacks in the United States.

As a loyal writer to Black aesthetic, Giovanni dedicates her poetry of this era to the life problems of African Americans and 'For Saundra' is no exception. The poet, like others, was influenced by the political turmoil and riots spreading in the American society, especially after the assassination of two major African American activists: Malcom X in 1965 and Martin Luther King in the same year of publishing the poem in 1968. In the beginning of the poem, she refers to these events as a revolution that cripples her ability to write poetry.

i wanted to write
a poem
that rhymes
but revolution doesn't lend
itself to be-bopping (Dungy, 2009, p. 151)

In the next two stanzas the Giovanni depicts environmental injustice represented in ruining the green cover in her neighborhood and blocking the political horizon before African Americans.

i like trees
so i thought
i'll write a beautiful green tree poem
peeked from my window
to check the image
noticed that the school yard was covered
with asphalt
no green – no trees grow
in manhattan

then, well, i thought the sky
i'll do a big blue sky poem
but all the clouds have winged
low since no-Dick was elected (p. 151)

In a report entitled, "Nature Gap: Confronting Racial and Economic Disparities in the Destruction and Protection of Nature in America," the authors reveal the environmental discrepancy between the districts of the rich and those of the poor and colored.

1. Communities of color are three times more likely than white communities to live in nature deprived places. Seventy-four percent of communities of color in the contiguous United States live in nature-deprived areas, compared with just 23 percent of white communities.
2. Seventy percent of low-income communities across the country live in nature-deprived areas. This figure is 20 percent higher than the figure for those with moderate or high incomes.
3. Nature destruction has had the largest impact on low-income communities of color. More than 76 percent of people who live in low-income communities of color live in nature-deprived places. (Rowland et al., 2020)

The report is conducted more than fifty years after the poem was published, so one can imagine the volume of environmental violations then. Such conditions justify the terrible feeling coming over the poet when she looks from the

take exclusive possession of the natural world. To achieve this, they take advantage of everything and let the minority groups and the environment clean up the mess.

By depicting this bond between the subjugated African Americans and nature, the poets likely suggest that both share the same destiny. For this reason, people of color were living in harmony with nature until the white man came. The poets implicitly, or subconsciously, suggest that the two victimized parties can enjoy peace if only they could deter the whites from subjugating the first and ravaging the other nature. Among the five poets, Nikki Giovanni is the only one who undertakes the initiative to do this, i.e., putting an end to African Americans' marginalization and stopping violations against nature. Instead of lamenting white man's injustice like Dunbar and Patterson or being satisfied with defaming their racism and environmental injustice like Spencer and Hughes, she incites African Americans and other minorities to clean their guns as this is the only language those in power can hear. Thereupon, it is obvious that none of the selected poems can be categorized as nature poetry. However, they all fall under the umbrella of environmental, ecological and ecojustice poetry for they highlight the dangerous practices of man on other human groups and nature. They also expose the devastating impact of the dominant culture on the minority sub-cultures.

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Does Input Enhancement Develop Writing Skill? A Case Study of Jordanian EFL University Students

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Abstract—This research investigates the possible efficacy of input enhancement as one of the form-focused instruction (FFI) techniques for developing Jordanian English as a foreign language learners' (EFL) writing. Fifty university students of English language literature and translation participated in the study. The participants were divided randomly into two groups, a control group of (24) which received traditional teaching of paragraph writing and conjunctions; and an experimental group of (26) which received instruction on conjunction using input enhancement. Descriptive statistics, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), and Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) were used to examine the data. The findings demonstrated that input enhancement developed students' writing abilities and had a favorable impact on their learning of conjunctions. Thus, many pedagogical implications and recommendations which emerged from the current study can be used by language instructors, curriculum designers, and researchers.

Index Terms—form-focused instruction, input enhancement, conjunctions, writing skill

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Teaching writing to second or foreign language learners (henceforth, EFL) has been the focus of many language teachers and educators for a long time. Writing is a way to contact others such as family and friends and to express feelings and share knowledge. Writing is a powerful tool to influence the thoughts of people and change others' attitudes and beliefs. It is also a tool for learning, gathering, preserving, and transmitting information. It also has a significant effect on learning other language skills, especially reading (Graham et al., 2013). Writing has many purposes in our lives; it is a means of communication, a tool for expressing feelings, a facilitator of business work as well as its academic role (Dastjerdi & Samian, 2011).

There are two categories of language skills: receptive and productive. The ability to take in language created by others is known as receptive abilities. They consist of listening and reading. Conversely, writing and speaking are productive skills. These are two essential abilities that are fundamental to the intricate process of communication (Hyland, 2003, p. 4). To write well, students must have a high level of precision in writing different tasks. Writing is, by far, the hardest language talent to acquire when compared to other language abilities, according to many language teachers (Hyland, 2003).

Interest in teaching writing has increased due to its importance in our lives. Graham et al. (2013) stated that the interest in teaching writing is shown at all students' levels. Writing is not only taught to improve the writing skill, but also to facilitate students' learning in general. Students write for various purposes so schools must pay considerable attention to teaching students how to write. Schools must also focus on incorporating technology in teaching writing. However, it was noted that some of the teachers teach writing inappropriately because they do not have the experience or the suitable technique to teach writing as a productive skill.

Writing has been considered the most difficult skill in the field of language teaching and learning. Brown (2001) stated that writing is a complicated skill that is not acquired naturally; it should be taught through practice and training to acquire and master it acceptably. Thus, teaching writing should direct the students' attention to the form of the written text which is coherently organized using cohesive devices and discourse markers paying attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Teachers, when they teach writing, should know that there are many differences between writing in L1 and L2 as stated in Silva (cited in Brown, 2001). Silva surveyed L2 writing and demonstrated that L2 writers lack a lot of L2

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writing skills and commit a lot of errors due to the difference between grammar and lexicon, and differences between cohesive devices, and their meanings in both languages. Therefore, language teachers should be aware of these differences to choose the best way of teaching writing to their students.

In the process of teaching writing to EFL learners, teachers should explicitly and implicitly provide their students with instruction related to all aspects concerning writing. Omaggio (2001) emphasized that teachers of writing should use contextualized and meaningful activities even when focusing on forms and combine different writing processes that are taught in the language classroom such as grammar, vocabulary, and discourse features. In this context, Al-Ghazo and Ta'amneh (2021) stressed the importance of positive enhancement as well as suitable feedback in writing, as this will help students improve and monitor their progress effectively and efficiently.

The ultimate goal of teaching writing is to teach students how to write down their ideas and thoughts in a coherent text. But students have cohesion problems in their writing as Dastjerdi and Samian (2011) hypothesized. These problems refer to the lack of knowledge of the appropriate cohesive devices in the L2. So, they produce missing or misleading sentence connections.

Through writing, individuals may acquire and comprehend the ideas and opinions of others who live in different times and places or the same periods as them, as well as about science, politics, history, and other subjects. Warschauer (2010) emphasized the importance of teaching writing to L2 learners because writing is a skill that is needed for learning and having a good job. Writing can also work as an effective tool for language skills development as well as the development of different subject matter.

Cohesion helps to combine the elements of the text. Students write effectively if they can use cohesive devices properly. There are many aspects of cohesion, such as the use of some devices that guide readers and show them how the ideas of a written text relate to one another. There are various kinds of cohesive relations such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunctions, and lexical cohesion (Emah & Omachonn, 2018).

Writing serves as a communicative function, so it is recommended to be learned in a communicative context or by using communicative language teaching methods but without ignoring to emphasize and focus on the formal aspects of the language especially those that help students compose meaningful well-organized, and grammatically correct writings. These aspects include using cohesive devices that connect ideas in the written text. According to Long (1991), Nassaji (1999), and Spada (1997) form-focused instruction (henceforth, FFI) techniques provide language learners with formal instruction in a communicative language learning context that makes students master language fluency and accuracy at the same time. For better language learning, it is recommended that these FFI techniques should be planned by the language teacher in advance such as completion tasks (Nassaji, 1999) (this is obviously represented in input enhancement, the technique chosen in this paper). FFI refers to any explicit or implicit instructional strategy that is prepared ahead of time and involves bringing the language learners' attention to language forms (Long, 2000).

Focused L2 instruction results in better language learning. The teaching method that incorporates form and meaning results in much more durable learning than the other methods. Explicit instruction is direct and practical. Moreover, FFI activities develop accuracy as well as fluency and provide an interesting and motivating learning context (Brown, 2001; Norris & Ortega, 2001).

FFI provides several pedagogical practices that make students notice forms in a flexible meaningful way. Instructors must choose when and how to apply FFI techniques in their classrooms based on the needs of their students (Haley & Retz, 2002). The importance of FFI arises from its role in making the non-salient form noticeable and easy to understand (Ellis, 2011).

FFI provides several pedagogical practices that make students notice forms in flexible meaningful ways (Haley & Restz, 2002). Ellis (2011) stressed the importance of explicit teaching (such as input enhancement) because of its importance in making non-salient forms noticeable and easy to understand. However, Fotos and Nassaji (2011) stated that students can be subjected to repeated exposure to the intended forms (such as input flooding practices) during language learning.

FFI makes students notice the target forms and helps them to store these forms in the long-term memory, this is what Schmidt (1990) called consciousness-raising by noticing. Input enhancement exercises involve the use of italics, bolding, enlargement, and underlining, which direct the learners' attention to forms more than input flooding which involves exposing learners to input with an exceptionally large amount of the form under focus (White, 1998).

II. PROBLEM, PURPOSE, AND QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Jordanian EFL students, like other learners of English as a foreign language, are reported to face many challenges in mastering the language (e.g., Al-Damiree & Bataineh, 2016; Al-Qeyam et al., 2016; Bataineh & Mayyas, 2017). Thus, students struggle with writing as it is considered one of the productive skills in the language (Brown, 2001; Hyland, 2003). The usage of cohesive devices is one of the numerous challenges and difficulties that EFL students encounter while learning English as a foreign language. (Dastjerdi & Samian, 2011). Moreover, from the researchers' own experiences as university professors of TEFL, they observed that students face difficulties in writing, especially in using cohesive devices. This difficulty could be attributed to students' lack of understanding and using cohesive devices as well as the lack of vocabulary. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of using input enhancement to teach

cohesive devices as an attempt to develop EFL university students' knowledge of cohesive devices and improve their writing skill. The current study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. *Does input enhancement affect students' acquisition of conjunctions?*
2. *Does input enhancement affect students' writing skills?*

III. SIGNIFICANCE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is most likely one of the first to look into input enhancement's possible efficacy in the setting of Jordanian EFL. Its conclusions could provide educators and learners with fresh approaches to teaching writing in English language classes. Since this study is among the first to use a particular approach to examine certain components of language competency, it is hoped that the findings may open up new avenues for future research in the field of EFL. Further research may look at different techniques with different student levels, as this study's scope and sample are restricted to evaluating the impact of one (input enhancement) out of eleven FFI techniques on cohesive devices and writing development of a convenient sample of fifty students from an EFL writing course. The presentation of this study is further constrained since it only addresses cohesive devices that embody a single category of knowledge.

IV. PREVIOUS STUDIES

The review of the empirical studies shows the effectiveness of using different techniques of FFI in developing various language learners' skills. It reflects also the importance of teaching cohesive devices to improve L2 learners' writing skills. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this is the first study that uses input enhancement to teach conjunctions in the Jordanian context.

Bataineh and Bani Younis (2016) studied the effect of dictogloss as one of the FFI techniques on Jordanian teachers' instructional practices and students' writing performance. The results of the study reflected the effectiveness of dictogloss in improving students' writing.

Ramadan (2019) investigated the effect of teaching cohesive devices in context in improving Libyan EFL students' writing. The researcher contrasted teaching cohesive devices within context against teaching them separately. The results showed that teaching cohesive devices develop students writing especially when taught in context.

Safdari (2019) conducted a study to find out how Iranian EFL learners' writing is affected by input flooding and input enhancement. To conduct the study, Sixty EFL students were divided into three groups of twenty. Two experimental groups and one control group made up the study's sample. A pre-post exam was given to each group. The results pointed out that the two strategies had a great effect on the participants' writing.

The effectiveness of improving the reading-based input data in EFL students' written restatements was examined by Fakhzadeh and Yazdanjoo (2020). The study's sample consisted of sixty intermediate EFL students, both male and female, enrolled in Tehran's Attar Language Institute. They were arbitrarily split into 30 individuals for the experimental and control groups. Under augmented input, instruction was supplied to the experimental group. On the other hand, the control group was trained conventionally. The results showed that when students in the experimental group were given enriched texts to read, their scores were much higher than those of the control group.

Salehi et al. (2020) studied the impact of different input approaches on conjunction output. To conduct the study, 40 Iranian students participated in the study. The participants were divided into two groups: an experimental and a control one. The results indicated the importance of input strategy in developing the learners' conjunctions.

Lestari et al. (2023) examined the challenges that students faced in the use of cohesive devices in writing. Twenty learners, in the basic stage, participated in the study. The participants' writings were analyzed and it was found that the participants used conjunctions rarely because they did not know the use of them in a proper way.

Reyes (2023) studied the effect of contrastive FFI on developing 11th-grade L2 vocabulary skills. The study focused on developing students' synonyms, antonyms, multiple meanings of words, prefixes, and lexical chunks. An 11th- grade class from a public school was conveniently chosen to participate in the study. The results indicated that contrastive FFI improved students' vocabulary skills.

Meng and Yin (2023) sought to determine how input enhancement affected the linguistic performance of Chinese EFL learners as indicated by complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) in continuation writing tasks. The sample of the study consisted of 80 Chinese high school students. The findings showed that while input enhancement had a little effect on accuracy, it had a large influence on complexity and fluency, which helped the participants write more proficiently overall.

Woyimo et al. (2024) studied the effect of integrating FFI in communicative language teaching. The researchers used FFI to teach pronunciation and grammar to improve Ethiopian 11th-grade students. The results of the study emphasized the effectiveness of FFI in developing the grammar and pronunciation of the students.

V. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A. Design and Sampling

The current study has a quasi-experimental design. Two intact paragraph writing classes were chosen conveniently at Isra' University, Jordan for the purpose of the study. The classes took place in the first semester of the academic year 2023/2024. Then, the classes were divided randomly into a control group of 24 students and an experimental group of 26 students.

B. Instrumentation and Data Collection

Two pre-posttests were designed by the researchers for data collection purposes. The first one is the acquisition of conjunctions test which comprised 41 items about the conjunctions under focus (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so). The other test is a writing test in which students are asked to write two meaningful, well-organized, and coherent paragraphs. The validity of the instruments (the pre-posttests and the instructional material) was ensured by asking a jury of university professors of applied linguistics, linguistics, TEFL, and measurement and evaluation. The jury evaluated the instruments in terms of their appropriateness for the purpose of the study. The comments of the jury were used to improve the quality of the instruments.

The reliability of the instruments was also established. The pre-posttests were administered twice to 13 students of a paragraph writing course in a preceding semester with a time-lapse of three weeks. The reliability coefficient of the conjunctions test was 0.78 and for the writing test 0.83.

C. Instructing the Two Groups

Two groups were used for the purpose of this study. The experimental group was taught using instructional material that was designed to support the original material with input enhancement instruction and exercises to teach students conjunctions. On the other hand, the control group was taught conventionally per the guidelines of the coursebook "Effective Academic Writing 1" (Savage & Shafiei, 2007). According to the course description, it aims at teaching university students paragraph writing. The course provides students with the basics of writing a paragraph and shows them the diverse types of academic writing. However, it does not provide them with an adequate illustration of cohesive devices.

At first, the pre-tests were administered to the participants to find any potential differences among them. To ensure equivalence between the two groups, an independent sample t-test was used. According to the values of Levene's Test of Variance, the groups are considered equivalent because the values were greater than $\alpha=0.05$ (0.45 for the acquisition of conjunctions test and 0.86 for the writing test). The experimental group received instruction from the first researcher while the control group received instruction from the original course instructor. The two instructors have a Ph.D degree in TEFL and have similar teaching experience. The instruction of the control group followed these steps:

1. A warm-up exercise was introduced to the students. This exercise included asking a question or presenting a picture related to the topic of the lesson.
2. The students discussed and shared opinions about the topic of the lesson and the instructor organized the discussion.
3. The students read the example paragraph aloud and answered the questions related to it.
4. The instructor highlighted the structure of the paragraph by identifying the topic sentence, the supporting sentences, and the concluding sentence.
5. The instructor explained the language focus on each type of paragraph which illustrated some linguistic features that help students in improving their writing.
6. At the end of the lesson, the instructor asked the students to write a paragraph about the type and topic of the paragraph discussed. The instructor read the writings of the students and provided them with feedback.

On the other hand, the experimental group was taught the conjunctions through an eight-week, researcher-designed, input enhancement-based instructional treatment. The content of the treatment was based on the course book, "Effective Academic Writing 1". The lessons proceeded as follows:

1. A warm-up exercise was introduced to the students. This exercise included asking a question or presenting a picture related to the topic of the lesson.
2. The students discussed and shared opinions about the topic of the lesson and the instructor organized the discussion.
3. A conjunction and its use were highlighted and explained in each lesson. The examples included conjunctions used in sentences and highlighted to students using italics, bolding, enlargement, and underlining; which directed the learners' attention to the conjunction under focus. The goal was to enable students to notice each conjunction and its meaning through input enhancement tasks (White, 1998).
4. Then, a paragraph that included the conjunctions under focus, was presented per the input enhancement technique to draw the participants' attention to the conjunction (Long & Robinson, 1998).
5. The participants were then asked to write their paragraphs on a selected topic to use the conjunctions under focus. The instructor read the writings of the students and provided them with feedback.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the first research question “Does input enhancement affect students’ acquisition of conjunctions?”, the means and standard deviations of students’ scores on the acquisition of conjunctions pre-and post-tests of the control group and the input enhancement (IE) group were calculated according to the teaching method (IE vs. course book), as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS’ SCORES ON THE ACQUISITION OF CONJUNCTIONS PRE- AND POST-TESTS OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE IE GROUP

Group	N	Pre		Post		Adjusted Mean	St. Error
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Control	24	19.08	6.48	21.21	6.23	21.66	0.61
IE group	26	20.34	5.09	34.73	3.47	34.31	0.59

Table 1 shows an observed difference in the mean (and the adjusted mean) of the control and the IE groups, with close values of means on the pre-test and higher mean and adjusted mean scores of the IE group on the post-test. It indicates a development in participants’ knowledge of conjunctions due to IE instruction. Thus, to ascertain the potential significance of these differences, ANCOVA was used, as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2
ANCOVA OF THE IE GROUP PARTICIPANTS’ SCORES ON THE ACQUISITION OF CONJUNCTIONS POST-TESTS

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Pre	773.18	1	773.18	86.13	0.000*	0.64
Way	1972.22	1	1972.22	219.71	0.000*	0.82
Error	421.88	47	8.98			
Corrected Total	3477.12	49				

N=50 significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

Table 2 shows statistically significant differences in participants’ scores on the acquisition of conjunctions post-test at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in favor of the IE group ($F= 219.71$, $df=1$ and 49 , $P= 0.000$) which seems to indicate that IE instruction developed participants’ knowledge of conjunctions. The analysis of the data shows that the participants in the experimental group outperformed the participants in the control group. The experimental group received instruction on the conjunctions under focus using input enhancement in which the conjunctions are highlighted in many different ways using authentic contexts. This FFI technique has drawn the participants’ attention to these conjunctions and their use since input enhancement exercises involve the use of italics, bolding, enlargement, and underlining, which direct the learners’ attention to forms as White (1998) demonstrated.

To answer the second question “Does input enhancement affect students’ writing skills?”, the means and standard deviations of students’ scores on the writing pre-and post-tests of the IE group were calculated, as shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PARTICIPANTS' SCORES ON THE WRITING PRE- AND POST-TESTS OF THE IE GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

G	Item	PRE		Post		Adjusted Mean	Std. Error
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Control	Title	2.50	1.14	2.83	1.09	2.95	0.19
	Topic sentence	2.46	1.06	2.92	1.02	3.02	0.20
	Supporting sentences	1.88	0.85	2.29	0.91	2.37	0.20
	Spelling	2.29	1.00	2.79	1.06	2.80	0.19
	Word choice	2.04	0.95	2.75	1.19	2.82	0.26
	Verb tense and form	2.67	1.34	2.67	1.34	2.72	0.19
	Punctuation	1.96	1.00	2.17	0.92	2.20	0.26
	Capitalization	2.08	0.97	2.67	1.20	2.78	0.23
	Sentence structure	1.96	1.00	2.63	1.28	2.63	0.25
	background information	2.04	0.95	2.50	1.06	2.44	0.23
	Use of conjunctions	1.58	0.65	2.08	0.97	2.01	0.24
	Conclusion	1.79	0.93	2.13	1.08	2.10	0.22
	The number of conjunctions used in the paragraph	1.88	0.90	2.21	1.02	2.24	0.23
	Variety of the conjunctions used in the paragraph.	1.58	0.65	2.04	1.12	2.04	0.23
	The correct use of conjunctions	1.50	0.59	2.17	1.24	2.29	0.24
	Unity and coherence	1.50	0.59	2.17	1.01	2.15	0.24
	All	31.71	5.25	39.00	4.29	39.54	0.88
IE group	Title	2.46	1.17	3.65	0.85	3.55	0.18
	Topic sentence	2.27	1.12	3.73	0.87	3.64	0.20
	Supporting sentences	1.85	0.83	3.69	0.88	3.62	0.19
	Spelling	2.08	1.06	3.38	1.02	3.38	0.18
	Word choice	2.08	0.93	3.35	1.13	3.28	0.25
	Verb tense and form	2.42	1.30	3.46	1.07	3.42	0.18
	Punctuation	1.96	0.92	3.35	1.23	3.32	0.24
	Capitalization	2.08	0.93	3.46	1.21	3.36	0.22
	Sentence structure	1.92	0.89	3.50	1.10	3.50	0.24
	background information	2.00	0.94	3.58	1.06	3.63	0.22
	Use of conjunctions	1.73	0.72	3.62	1.10	3.69	0.23
	Conclusion	2.00	1.02	3.38	1.20	3.41	0.21
	The number of conjunctions used in the paragraph	2.04	1.04	3.46	1.21	3.43	0.22
	Variety of the conjunctions used in the paragraph.	1.69	0.79	3.19	1.17	3.20	0.22
	The correct use of conjunctions	1.69	0.79	3.35	1.13	3.23	0.23
	Unity and coherence	1.69	0.79	3.46	1.03	3.48	0.23
	All	31.96	5.16	55.62	6.39	55.12	0.84

Table 3 shows observed differences in the mean and the adjusted mean scores of the two groups which seem to suggest a development in the participants' writing skill in favor of the IE group. For further examination of the results, ANCOVA was used to analyze participants' scores in the tests as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
ANCOVA OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND IE GROUP SCORES ON THE WRITING SKILL POST-TEST

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
way	3399.90	1	3399.90	130.66	0.000*	0.73
Error	1222.98	47	26.02			
Corrected Total	4891.52	49				

Source	Source	Sum Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Title	Way	3.72	1	3.72	4.94	0.03*	0.13
	Error	24.11	32	0.75			
	Corrected total	53.62	49				
Topic sentence	Way	4.00	1	4.00	4.39	0.04*	0.12
	Error	29.16	32	0.91			
	Corrected total	51.22	49				
Supporting sentences	Way	16.34	1	16.34	19.31	0.000*	0.38
	Error	27.09	32	0.85			
	Corrected total	62.98	49				
Spelling	Way	3.52	1	3.52	4.61	0.04*	0.13
	Error	24.43	32	0.76			
	Corrected total	56.50	49				
Word choice	Way	2.25	1	2.25	1.57	0.22	0.05
	Error	46.10	32	1.44			
	Corrected total	68.82	49				
Verb tense and form	Way	5.12	1	5.12	6.54	0.02*	0.17
	Error	25.06	32	0.78			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
Punctuation	Way	13.04	1	13.04	9.18	0.01*	0.22
	Error	45.43	32	1.42			
	Corrected total	74.58	49				
Capitalization	Way	3.50	1	3.50	3.17	0.08	0.09
	Error	35.30	32	1.10			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
Sentence structure	Way	7.79	1	7.79	5.65	0.02*	0.15
	Error	44.10	32	1.38			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
background information	Way	14.72	1	14.72	13.09	0.001*	0.29
	Error	35.99	32	1.13			
	Corrected total	68.82	49				
Use of conjunctions	Way	29.29	1	29.29	22.80	0.000*	0.42
	Error	41.10	32	1.28			
	Corrected total	81.28	49				
Conclusion	Way	17.71	1	17.71	16.31	0.000*	0.34
	Error	34.74	32	1.09			
	Corrected total	82.58	49				
The number of conjunctions used in the paragraph	Way	14.80	1	14.80	12.88	0.001*	0.29
	Error	36.77	32	1.15			
	Corrected total	80.02	49				
Variety of the conjunctions used in the paragraph.	Way	13.89	1	13.89	12.18	0.000*	0.28
	Error	36.49	32	1.14			
	Corrected total	79.52	49				
The correct use of conjunctions	Way	9.25	1	9.25	7.13	0.01*	0.18
	Error	41.50	32	1.30			
	Corrected total	84.58	49				
Unity and coherence	Way	18.24	1	18.24	14.27	0.001*	0.31
	Error	40.92	32	1.28			
	Corrected total	70.72	49				
All	Way	2522.65	1	2522.65	149.84	0.000*	0.82
	Error	538.74	32	16.84			
	Corrected total	4891.52	49				

N=50 significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

Table 4 shows statistically significant differences in participants' scores on the writing skill post-test at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in favor of the IE group ($F= 130.66$, $df=1$ & 49 , $P= 0.000$) which indicates that IE instruction developed participants' writing skill. To show which one of the writing skill criteria has been affected by the using IE, MANCOVA was used as shown in Table 5:

TABLE 5
MANCOVA OF THE CONTROL GROUP AND IE GROUP SCORES ON THE WRITING SKILL POST-TEST

Source	Source	Sum Square	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Squared
Title	Way	3.72	1	3.72	4.94	0.03*	0.13
	Error	24.11	32	0.75			
	Corrected total	53.62	49				
Topic sentence	Way	4.00	1	4.00	4.39	0.04*	0.12
	Error	29.16	32	0.91			
	Corrected total	51.22	49				
Supporting sentences	Way	16.34	1	16.34	19.31	0.000*	0.38
	Error	27.09	32	0.85			
	Corrected total	62.98	49				
Spelling	Way	3.52	1	3.52	4.61	0.04*	0.13
	Error	24.43	32	0.76			
	Corrected total	56.50	49				
Word choice	Way	2.25	1	2.25	1.57	0.22	0.05
	Error	46.10	32	1.44			
	Corrected total	68.82	49				
Verb tense and form	Way	5.12	1	5.12	6.54	0.02*	0.17
	Error	25.06	32	0.78			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
Punctuation	Way	13.04	1	13.04	9.18	0.01*	0.22
	Error	45.43	32	1.42			
	Corrected total	74.58	49				
Capitalization	Way	3.50	1	3.50	3.17	0.08	0.09
	Error	35.30	32	1.10			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
Sentence structure	Way	7.79	1	7.79	5.65	0.02*	0.15
	Error	44.10	32	1.38			
	Corrected total	77.68	49				
background information	Way	14.72	1	14.72	13.09	0.001*	0.29
	Error	35.99	32	1.13			
	Corrected total	68.82	49				
Use of conjunctions	Way	29.29	1	29.29	22.80	0.000*	0.42
	Error	41.10	32	1.28			
	Corrected total	81.28	49				
Conclusion	Way	17.71	1	17.71	16.31	0.000*	0.34
	Error	34.74	32	1.09			
	Corrected total	82.58	49				
The number of conjunctions used in the paragraph	Way	14.80	1	14.80	12.88	0.001*	0.29
	Error	36.77	32	1.15			
	Corrected total	80.02	49				
Variety of the conjunctions used in the paragraph.	Way	13.89	1	13.89	12.18	0.000*	0.28
	Error	36.49	32	1.14			
	Corrected total	79.52	49				
The correct use of conjunctions	Way	9.25	1	9.25	7.13	0.01*	0.18
	Error	41.50	32	1.30			
	Corrected total	84.58	49				
Unity and coherence	Way	18.24	1	18.24	14.27	0.001*	0.31
	Error	40.92	32	1.28			
	Corrected total	70.72	49				
All	Way	2522.65	1	2522.65	149.84	0.000*	0.82
	Error	538.74	32	16.84			
	Corrected total	4891.52	49				

Table 5 shows that IE has affected participants' acquisition of most of the criteria used to examine the participants' acquisition of writing skill. This positive effect of IE can be attributed to Schmidt's (1990) consciousness-raising by noticing which states that students' awareness of a certain form can be improved by providing them with the forms under focus in an explicit way. So, students can learn and retain the forms and then use them appropriately.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions are drawn from the current study. First, teaching conjunctions using input enhancement raised the participants' awareness of them and their importance in maintaining paragraph coherence. Second, instruction of conjunctions has potentially provided the participants with new options that helped them join the ideas within the paragraph. Third, input enhancement worked on improving the participants' overall writing skill by engaging them in many cognitive processes such as consciousness-raising.

Students are more likely to feel inspired and involved in the writing process when they get feedback and direction using input enhancement strategies. Students' confidence may be increased and they can be inspired to keep improving their writing abilities by providing them with focused help and positive reinforcement.

As shown in the previous section, the results of this study are completely consistent with the studies mentioned previously, such as Ramadan (2019), Safdari (2019), Fakhrzadeh and Yazdanjoo (2020), Reyes (2023), Meng and Yin (2023), and Woymo et al. (2024) which pointed out that applying the input enhancement technique had a positive effect in improving students' writing skill. The results of other studies - that were conducted by Salehi et al. (2020), and Lestari et al. (2023) - were in complete harmony with the results of this paper, as it proved that using the technique of input enhancement had a great and positive effect to acquire and master learning the conjunctions.

Based on the findings of this study, many recommendations can be presented. First, instructors need to teach conjunctions in their writing courses because of the positive impact of teaching them on students' writing skill. Second, EFL instructors are recommended to utilize input enhancement in their teaching practices due to its proven effectiveness in this study.

Third, Further research on FFI techniques on other language skills and other cohesive devices is also recommended. Fourth, other samples and longer instruction are recommended for better generalization of results.

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From Globalization to Localization: Promoting EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Using GFOS Model Based on Collaborative Learning Approach

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Abstract—Learning English has always been valued highly in Thailand at all educational levels. Supporting students' reading comprehension ability is crucial when studying English, particularly for undergraduate degrees. Although Thai students have been learning English for years, they are kept from meeting the curriculum goals and obtaining high grades. The study included 24 students from the Faculty of Education at Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University, Thailand, and their English reading comprehension ability was investigated. The study examines the effects of employing a GFOS (Grouping, Foreseeing, Obtaining, Summarizing) model based on Collaborative Learning (CL), built for the GFOS teaching process, considering literal, interpretive, critical, and creative comprehension levels. The research findings show that the models' processes and theories are beneficial in encouraging EFL students to improve their reading comprehension. It is an effective way for English educators to improve learners' reading comprehension at the same or different levels.

Index Terms—collaborative learning approach, reading comprehension, EFL student

I. INTRODUCTION

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL), mastering practical reading skills presents a prominent challenge for learners. Reading comprehension is essential not only for language mastery, but also for cognitive growth. Nevertheless, ESL/EFL students frequently struggle with reading and understanding English texts, which may result in aversion and a disheartened attitude towards English reading. This predicament necessitates that educators delve into the causes of reading difficulties within the EFL context and develop and apply efficacious strategies to bolster reading skills (Clarke et al., 2014). For EFL students, comprehending reading material in their curriculum can often be a stumbling block that hampers the advancement of their reading comprehension abilities (Alkhalwaldeh, 2012). Weaver (2002) emphasizes the importance of students' pre-existing knowledge or schema as a foundational element in understanding texts. The work of Alderson (2000) also underscores the pivotal role of such prior knowledge in aiding EFL students' reading comprehension. Hence, greater familiarity with the subject of a text can lead to easier comprehension. Additionally, reading materials that align with students' cultural backgrounds can influence various aspects of reading, including post-reading performance, pace (with students reading faster through culturally familiar texts), recall accuracy, and overall comprehension (Lin, 2010). In this vein, culturally or topically unfamiliar texts can obstruct EFL students' comprehension. For instance, Thai students may find understanding and articulating the Loy Krathong festival concept easier than Easter. Thus, when teachers introduce topics that are not culturally familiar, like Easter, to Thai students, linking the new information with what students already know is beneficial, drawing from schema theory. The teaching methodologies that activate this prior knowledge are also critical (Al-Jahwari & Al-Humaidi, 2015). Educators must consider students' experiences and knowledge about the assigned reading (Chen, 2006). The pursuit of reading comprehension is vital for EFL undergraduates. However, they face substantial challenges, as Hezam et al. (2022) identified, reporting difficulties with complex sentence structures that impede the understanding of central concepts and the derivation of text meaning. Yun (2021) notes that a limited vocabulary can obstruct comprehension as students grapple with unfamiliar terms that affect their understanding of the text's broader context. Furthermore, cultural discrepancies can create barriers, as Ortiz-Zambrano and Montejó-Raéz (2020) found, with students struggling to connect with culturally nuanced content in reading materials. College students' academic success depends on their reading comprehension, particularly for those learning English as a foreign language and experiencing language barriers. Recognizing English terms is essential for reading text in nations like Thailand, where the language is not commonly spoken. Any weakness in this area can result in serious comprehension problems (Satriani, 2018). The increasing

difficulty of reading materials at advanced education levels may further impact students' academic results. According to Alderson (2000), proficient reading involves more than just linguistic abilities; it also calls for using prior information, maintaining strong motivation, employing strategic reading techniques, and managing the many mental reading processes needed to tackle the array of reading comprehension difficulties EFL undergraduates' typically encounter. Therefore, students must address these issues to overcome hurdles to their reading growth and improve their general reading abilities.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section describes 1) overview of reading comprehension theory, 2) collaborative learning approach and theories employed in the study, 3) localization of reading materials employing the GFOS model levels of reading comprehension, and 4) the link between collaborative learning and the GFOS model.

A. Overview of Reading Comprehension Theory

1. Reading Comprehension: Reading comprehension involves several critical processes, such as decoding, syntactic analysis, and inferencing, to derive meaning from texts, as described by Willingham (2019). It also requires integrating new knowledge with existing understanding, and applying critical thinking, as highlighted by Cain and Oakhill (2019). Techniques like prediction and visualization significantly improve this capability (Miller & Veatch, 2021). Early development is vital and progressive to discerning deeper elements in texts. Motivation is essential for engaging with and understanding texts, which is fundamental for academic achievement and effective interaction in the world (Guthrie et al., 2019).

2. Types of Reading Comprehension Skills: Akan et al. (2023) detail various reading comprehension strategies, including scanning for specifics such as dates, surveying to grasp the main ideas, skimming to find critical points, intensive reading for detailed comprehension, and extensive reading for a broader understanding often linked to pleasure or professional development. These strategies also require mastering text structures, meanings, references, and complex vocabulary. These approaches range from extracting factual data to comprehensive analysis, enhancing understanding and personal engagement with texts.

3. Levels of Reading Comprehension: According to Heilman et al. (1990), reading comprehension can be categorized into four levels—literal, interpretative, critical, and creative—corresponding with Bloom's (1966) cognitive behavior classifications. The literal level deals with straightforward fact reproduction. The interpretative level involves delving deeper than the surface text. The critical level focuses on critiquing the text and understanding the author's intentions. The creative level encourages the integration of the reader's thoughts. Assessments in reading comprehension are vital for educational diagnostics and must be adaptable across various languages and abilities (Cain & Oakhill, 2019). Practical instruction in reading adjusts to these levels, recognizing that higher levels demand more sophisticated skills.

4. Evaluation of Reading Comprehension: Evaluation frameworks in reading comprehension are essential for identifying specific abilities and obstacles for research and diagnostic goals (Cain & Oakhill, 2019). These evaluations should encompass more than just decoding; they should address various components of reading to achieve a complete understanding (Perfetti, 2007). They should also be appropriate for developmental stages and adaptable to different writing systems. Furthermore, a comprehensive assessment approach should include abilities like syntactic comprehension and memory functions to ensure a thorough and tailored evaluation. Assessments designed for reading comprehension, such as cloze activities, evaluate the continuity of text and grasp of context, reducing the emphasis on decoding to prioritize understanding. Sentence Verification Tasks (SVTs) test the ability of readers to identify sentences that fit with the text, assessing their semantic knowledge and proficiency in reading. Multiple-choice questions assess recognition and the ability to retrieve information, engaging the working memory. In contrast, open-ended questions necessitate drawing inferences and a deeper level of engagement from the reader, which demonstrates their working memory and existing knowledge (Cain & Oakhill, 2019). The careful selection of the appropriate assessment tools is essential for precisely evaluating reading comprehension, considering both decoding skills and spoken language comprehension.

5. Thai EFL Reading Abilities: In the Thai EFL setting, reading proficiency encompasses decoding, understanding, and interpreting the text, which is essential for language and analytical thinking development. Research indicates that technological tools can bolster reading comprehension, and extensive reading practices can enhance fluency (Nalathphol & Sripattanadilok, 2019). Challenges in vocabulary acquisition have been noted alongside the benefits of content-based instruction (CBI) (Chinnawong et al., 2019). The use of authentic materials is reported to increase motivation for reading, emphasizing inclusion in teaching methods (Pinsuntia et al., 2021). However, Thai EFL university students may need help with complex sentence structures, vocabulary variety, cultural nuances, and practical text comprehension strategies. Therefore, customizing the curriculum and ensuring supportive educational environments is necessary to address their needs.

B. Collaborative Learning Approach and Theories Employed in the Study

1. Constructivism Theory: Constructivism Theory posits that individuals construct knowledge through experiences, as supported by theorists like Dewey (1929), Vygotsky (1978), and Wadsworth (1971). Teachers facilitate this process,

guiding learners through self-paced and cooperative learning. The concepts of scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) are central to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), emphasizing the teacher's role in mediating learning. From this viewpoint, reading comprehension involves making meaning through interaction with texts and incorporating prior knowledge. The ZPD's role in scaffolding is considered critical, but interpretations vary. Muntasir and Akbar (2023) describe scaffolding as a practical implementation of the ZPD involving dialogue, activity significance, and artifact mediation; all of which serve to transition learners to independence. Critics like Azi (2020) suggest scaffolding may oversimplify the complex, negotiated teacher-learner interactions intrinsic to the ZPD.

2. Collaborative Learning: Evidence from various studies (Rokhaniyah, 2016; Millis, 2010; Thomas & Martina, 2022) highlights the effectiveness of cooperative learning; students work together towards common goals, enhancing motivation and advanced thinking abilities. This collaborative method also increases learner involvement and inter-student communication. Teachers' support in cooperative settings empowers students to apply knowledge autonomously, which is beneficial in language studies that are focused on improving reading comprehension and linguistic skills (Krashen, 1998). Our study aims to analyze how this collaborative dynamic, particularly in a literature circle using the GFOS model, can cultivate communication strategies essential for optimal text understanding.

3. Literature Circles: Literature Circles (peer-led reading groups) have been recognized for their effectiveness in boosting reading comprehension and participation more than conventional teaching methods (Daniels, 2002; Soleha, 2022). These groups nurture critical literacy skills such as predicting and evaluating, helping to transition the learning dynamic from teacher-centered to student-directed, and thus promote independent reading strategies (Karatay, 2017). Students assume specific roles within the circles, such as Discussion Director or Illustrator, and become more immersed in the texts. They gradually take charge of their learning, which helps to foster a passion for reading and hone their language and critical thinking skills for application beyond the classroom.

C. Localization of Reading Materials Employing the GFOS Model

In English language education, integrating language with culture via authentic resources that resonate with learners' experiences is proposed and discussed by Aminullah et al. (2019). Reading as an active exchange, where readers incorporate textual information with their previous knowledge, is a perspective endorsed by Nunan (2003). Including cultural elements in language teaching fosters cultural awareness and competence, which is vital for effective learning and motivation, as Alptekin (2020) and Aiken et al. (2021) have noted. The advocacy for authentic and localized reading resources by Peacock (2021), Yunis and Khusniati (2020) aligns with this, as such materials reflect the natural use of the language and meet specific learner needs. Evidence suggests that materials to which learners can culturally relate improve understanding and engagement (Mahabadi, 2013; Rodliyah et al., 2014). Hence, balancing genuine materials with culture-specific content in EFL education is essential to sustain interest and elevate educational outcomes.

D. The Link Between Collaborative Learning and the GFOS Model

This study employs Collaborative Learning and the GFOS Model. The GFOS model is designed to improve EFL students' reading comprehension, encapsulating principles from Thailand's education policies, 21st-century skills, and various pedagogical theories. It includes four main stages—Grouping, Foreseeing, Obtaining, and Summarizing—incorporating collaborative learning, sociocultural, and literature circle methodologies. Students work in diverse groups to brainstorm and activate preexisting knowledge, collectively deduce central ideas from texts, and summarize key points. Roles such as Discussion Director, Word Wizard, Connector, and Summarizer are designated to enhance in-depth comprehension and textual analysis. Figure 1 illustrates the link between related theories and the GFOS model.

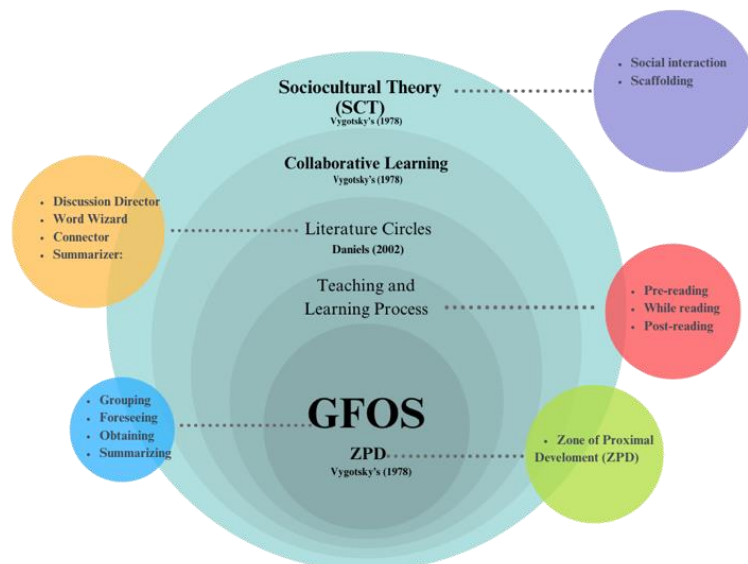


Figure 1. The Link Between Related Theories and The GFOS Model

Therefore, combining Constructivism, Collaborative Learning, and the GFOS model is a promising approach for enhancing students' reading comprehension. Constructivist theory emphasizes active knowledge construction from student experiences, which are guided by teachers. Students use self-paced learning techniques with cooperative learning opportunities within ZPD scaffolding. This results in independent text interaction and meaning creation. Collaborative Learning increases motivation while fostering critical thinking skills, which are crucial for autonomy in language acquisition and reading proficiency. Sociocultural theories support literature circle methodologies, as demonstrated through the diverse group interactions facilitated by GFOS. It allows for the collective summarization of key points extracted from texts, which activates preexisting knowledge among participants and improves engagement and educational outcomes. This approach is explicitly tailored to the students' local cultural contexts, particularly when incorporating authentic resources. This elevates interest levels and leads to optimal engagement. Such structured methodologies align perfectly with various pedagogical models, and integrate these approaches into broader academic applications.

Following the literature review and related research, the current study aimed to investigate the effects of using the GFOS Model to promote EFL students' reading comprehension.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

This study employed a quantitative research method using a quasi-experimental design. The sample consisted of 24 second-year university students, who were selected by purposive sampling, and the study was conducted over nine weeks with one 3-hour session per week, totaling 27 hours. The reasons for selecting second-year students as the experimental group are as follows: 1) The researcher has teaching experience in English reading, which is included in the curriculum for second-year English majors in the Faculty of Education. 2) The second-year students who participated in the study took the TOEIC test in the 2022 academic year. According to the CEFR language proficiency levels, 93% were classified as Basic Users and 7% as Independent Users. Participants were selected based on varying levels of English proficiency (high, fair, and low) to encourage collaborative group work during the teaching process (Harianingsih & Jusoh, 2022).

B. Materials and Instruments

(a). Lesson Plans

The researcher developed lesson plans for reading activities using the GFOS model, aligned with the course syllabus. The GFOS model's teaching steps—grouping, foreseeing, obtaining, and summarizing—were integrated into each phase of the reading instruction process, including pre-reading (grouping) while reading (foreseeing and obtaining) and post-reading (summarizing). The lesson plans were refined with input from three specialists to ensure their quality before implementation.

(b). Reading Achievement Tests (Pre-Test and Post-Test)

The study utilized a custom-designed test comprising 30 multiple-choice questions to assess four levels of reading comprehension: literal, interpretive, critical, and creative. The pretest, which had a time limit of 40 minutes for completion, aimed to determine the participants' initial understanding of the reading materials. Following the instructional period, the same test, which had been previously piloted, was administered as a posttest to evaluate the impact of the teaching strategies on the students' comprehension abilities.

(c). Reading Materials

The instructional designs utilized for the study were based on articles published online by the Bangkok Post authored by Boyle (2022). Seven articles were selected for their relevance to contexts familiar to the students, such as locales, festivals, political circumstances, and cultural topics. Each article was scrutinized to ensure correspondence with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) at the B1 proficiency level (The Council of Europe, 2020).

(d). Data Collection Procedures

The data collection for the study was meticulously planned to gauge the students' reading comprehension abilities. It began with informing the participants about the study's objectives and securing their consent through signed forms. The GFOS model was then implemented by the researcher over nine weeks at KPRU, Thailand, during the second semester of 2023. This period included seven instructional units, interspersed with orientation sessions for pretest and posttest in the first and final weeks respectively. In the first week, the students undertook the pretest, after which they were engaged with the GFOS teaching model. Each of the seven units comprised 3 hours of weekly instruction, with assessments at the end of each unit to track progress. The study concluded with the posttest in the final session. The results were statistically analyzed and compared with the pretest scores to evaluate the impact of the instruction on the student's reading comprehension. Figure 2 illustrates the teaching process of the GFOS model.

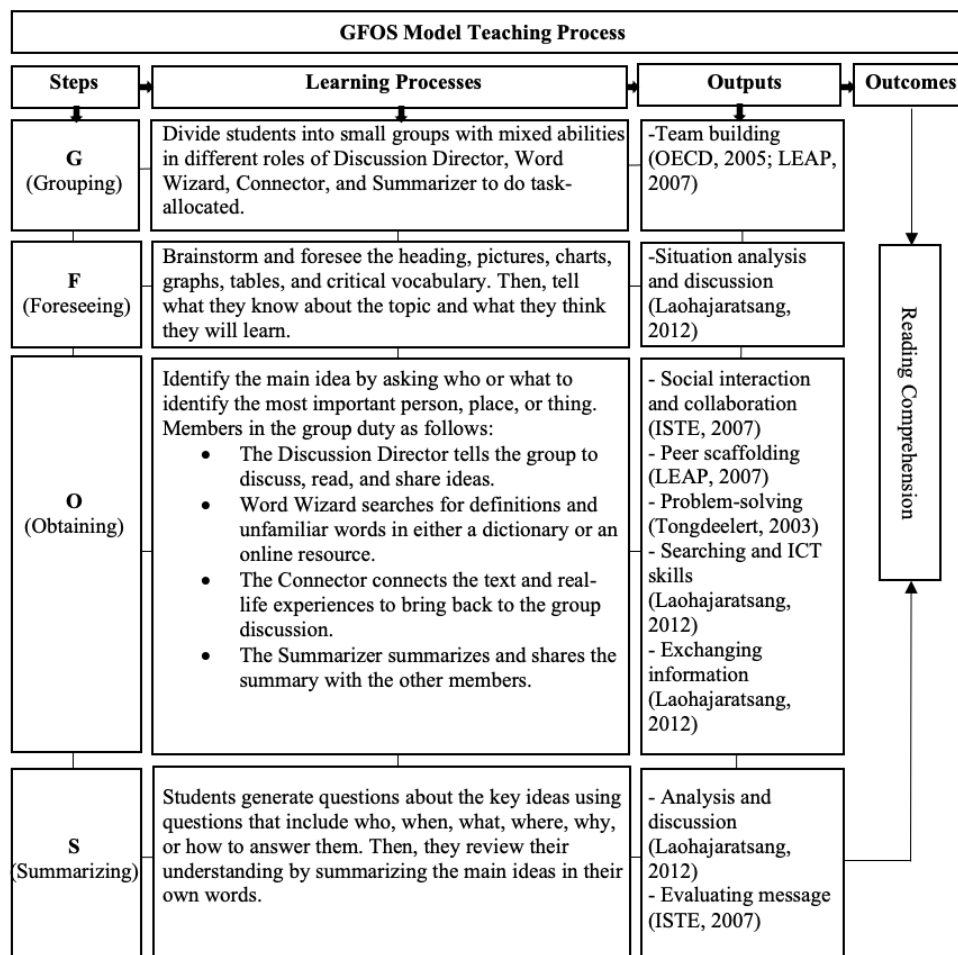


Figure 2. The Teaching Process of the GFOS Model

(e). Data Analysis

The following procedures were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were utilized to compute the mean scores and standard deviations. The Cronbach alpha formula was applied to determine the tests' consistency and reliability. Furthermore, a dependent samples t-test was conducted to address the research question and evaluate any significant differences in the mean scores under study.

IV. RESULTS

The reading comprehension test was administered to 24 EFL students. The effectiveness of the GFOS Model in promoting EFL students' reading comprehension was evident from the substantial disparity between the average scores of the pre-test and post-test, details of which are depicted in Table 1.

TABLE 1
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EFL STUDENTS' PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SCORES

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig.(1-tailed)
Pre-test	24	14.96	2.01			
Post-test	24	25.42	2.06	1.86	27.48	0.0000

According to Table 1, in the pre-test, the average score was 14.96, with a standard deviation of 2.01, indicating the spread of the scores around the mean. The standard error of the mean, which estimates the precision of the mean, was not provided for the pre-test. In the post-test, the average score increased to 25.42 with a similar standard deviation of 2.06. The standard error of the mean for the post-test was 1.86. The t-value for the significance test is 27.48, which measures the difference between the pre-test and post-test means in units of the standard error. The accompanying significance value (Sig. (1-tailed)) is 0.0000, less than the standard alpha level of 0.05, suggesting that the increase from the pre-test to the post-test is statistically significant. Overall, the table shows a significant improvement in the students' scores after the intervention.

When examining the different aspects of reading comprehension at the four levels—literal, interpretative, critical, and creative, Tables 2-5 present the results of this analysis.

TABLE 2
ILLUSTRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE LITERAL LEVEL

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig.(1-tailed)
Pre-test	24	4.17	1.05			
Post-test	24	7.25	0.74	0.26	11.78	0.0000

The results presented in Table 2 indicate a substantial enhancement in the literal reading comprehension of participants, as reflected by an increase in average scores from 4.17 on the pre-test to 7.25 on the post-test. The standard deviations for each test were recorded at 1.05 and 0.74, respectively, indicating less variability after the intervention than before. The t-statistic value was significant (11.78) with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.00, strongly implying that this improvement is due to the effective interventions implemented rather than sheer chance. This evidence suggests considerable progress has been achieved in enhancing participants' ability to comprehend text passages literally.

TABLE 3
ILLUSTRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE INTERPRETATIVE LEVEL

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig.(1-tailed)
Pre-test	24	4.13	0.95			
Post-test	24	6.79	1.10	0.29	9.31	0.0000

The results presented in Table 3 indicate a substantial enhancement in the interpretative reading comprehension of participants, as reflected by an increase in average scores from 4.13 on the pre-test to 6.79 on the post-test. The standard deviations for each test were recorded at 0.95 and 1.10, respectively, indicating less variability after the intervention than before. The t-statistic value was significant (9.31) with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.00, strongly implying that this improvement is due to the effective interventions implemented rather than sheer chance. This evidence suggests considerable progress has been achieved in enhancing participants' comprehension of text passages interpretatively.

TABLE 4
ILLUSTRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CRITICAL LEVEL

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig.(1-tailed)
Pre-test	24	3.88	1.30			
Post-test	24	6.42	1.10	0.18	14.09	0.0000

The results presented in Table 4 indicate a substantial enhancement in the critical reading comprehension of participants, as reflected by an increase in average scores from 3.88 on the pre-test to 6.42 on the post-test. The standard deviations for each test were recorded at 1.30 and 1.10, respectively, indicating less variability after the intervention than before. The t-statistic value was significant (14.09) with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.00, strongly implying that this improvement is due to the effective interventions implemented rather than sheer chance. This evidence suggests considerable progress has been achieved in enhancing participants' critical comprehension of text passages.

TABLE 5
ILLUSTRATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CREATIVE LEVEL

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	Sig.(1-tailed)
Pre-test	24	2.79	1.10			
Post-test	24	4.96	0.20	0.23	9.40	0.0000

The results presented in Table 5 indicate a substantial enhancement in the creative reading comprehension of participants, as reflected by an increase in average scores from 2.79 on the pre-test to 4.96 on the post-test. The standard deviations for each test were recorded at 1.310 and 0.20, respectively, indicating less variability after the intervention than before. The t-statistic value was significant (9.40) with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.00, strongly implying that this improvement is due to the effective interventions implemented rather than sheer chance. This evidence

suggests considerable progress has been achieved in enhancing participants' ability to comprehend text passages creatively.

V. DISCUSSION

The study's discussion can be outlined concerning its research objective: to investigate the effects of using the GFOS Model to promote EFL students' reading comprehension.

After employing the GFOS model, students' performance in reading achievement tests significantly improved, as indicated by a comparative analysis between pretest and posttest results. The average mean score increased from 15.75 to 23.38, demonstrating noteworthy advancement in their comprehension abilities. Statistical significance ($P < .05$) was confirmed through T-test analysis, indicating that observed changes were not due to mere chance factors alone, and suggesting that this enhancement may be present within the GFOS model itself.

Firstly, the GFOS model prioritizes collaborative learning through diverse grouping, which aligns with established educational theories and empirical research. This demonstrates the positive impact of cooperative learning on academic achievement, especially in reading comprehension. Encouraging students to exchange insights and perspectives fosters a deeper understanding and application of strategies for comprehending what they read. Galappaththy and Karunaratne (2022), prominent educational theorists, who have extensively researched the effects of cooperative learning strategies on improving performance outcomes, endorse such efforts.

According to Galappaththy and Karunaratne (2022), collaborative learning can significantly improve academic performance in various subjects, including reading. When implemented effectively, this teaching method encourages social interaction that increases student engagement and motivation, which are factors crucial for cognitive tasks like comprehending written text. As individuals interact with one another through collaborative exercises, they are exposed to diverse perspectives. This in turn broadens their understanding, enhances the critical thinking skills necessary for problem-solving activities and requires them to negotiate meaning with peers until a consensus is reached.

The GFOS model promotes cooperative learning strategies which foster the growth of vital social skills, including communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. Such learning skills facilitate practical and collaborative activities that create a positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere. The diversified approach adopted by this model ensures that students gain access to various perspectives, resulting in thorough debates and better insights into reading materials.

Moreover, Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory highlights the significance of social interaction in cognitive growth—an aspect that cooperative learning complements well. Based on Zhang's (2023) research, it is evident that knowledge acquisition involves collaborative efforts with peers and tutors. The GFOS model appropriately puts this concept into practice through team-based activities, facilitating meaningful engagement between learners, ultimately leading to the co-construction of ideas and enhanced understanding.

Therefore, the GFOS model is backed by research, such as Galappaththy and Karunaratne's (2022) study on collaborative learning through diverse grouping strategies. Zhang's (2023) findings also support the positive impact of cooperative learning on student achievement. Promoting an atmosphere that encourages students to exchange varied perspectives and insights enriches reading comprehension while bolstering essential educational objectives, such as critical thinking abilities, social competencies, and a conducive classroom climate.

Secondly, the structured approach to reading instruction in the GFOS model involves specific steps, such as Grouping, Foreseeing, Obtaining, and Summarizing. This method aligns with existing research that suggests explicit and systematic reading instruction can improve overall outcomes. Research studies conducted by Rastle et al. (2021) propose a transparent instructional methodology for teaching students how to read effectively, which can significantly enhance their achievement levels. This type of training helps learners better understand complex concepts through an accessible learning process, leading to increased proficiency in reading skills.

According to Aitssi (2021), education research cautiously supports the idea that explicit and systematic instruction for reading can result in marked enhancements in reading outcomes. Such an approach comprises direct teaching of step-by-step skills and strategies, improving students' phonemic awareness, decoding abilities, and comprehension tactics. By following this methodical procedure when learning how to read, crucial components will not be left up to inference or discovery by students themselves; hence, confusion will be reduced while efficiency in terms of grasping new knowledge will be increased.

Astawa and Purnami (2023) have stated that providing explicit instruction could considerably enhance students' reading comprehension. The questionnaire data corroborated this claim, showing favorable student responses towards this teaching methodology. By integrating crucial elements of effective reading instruction within its structured steps, it is plausible for the GFOS model to provide a framework that enhances overall performance gains observed among readers.

One should remember that despite evidence pointing to a favorable correlation between direct, structured teaching of reading and better results, progress can fluctuate due to various determinants. These could include the quality of instruction, its continual application, and each student's particular requisites. Consequently, although the GFOS model's organized method coincides with findings endorsing precise and systematic pedagogy, it remains indispensable to account for the intricacies involved in learning and instructing reading before arriving at any conclusions about this approach.

Thirdly, the GFOS model emphasizes comprehension skills, such as literal, interpretative, critical, and creative, aligning with the educational consensus on teaching various reading strategies to improve reading instruction. It mirrors Sari's (2020) view of incorporating multiple comprehension techniques to enhance effective reading education. While this comprehensive approach may facilitate diverse student abilities in understanding readings, it is vital to recognize its varying impact among different learner populations.

In Roomy's (2022) study, it was discovered that critical reading skills significantly improve students' comprehension of texts. The study showed how these abilities facilitate a more thorough understanding of the material and encourage an active approach to reading, prompting individuals to employ higher-order thinking and relate what they read to personal experiences. Additionally, by utilizing various strategies for effectively decoding text, students are better equipped to navigate obstacles when interpreting implicit meanings and explicit content within literature. This comprehensive method leads to nuanced interpretations, refining overall proficiency in reading, and highlighting its importance as part of student development toward becoming well-rounded life-long readers.

Fourthly, another factor contributing to the improvement in posttest scores is the model's emphasis on fostering personal engagement and creative expression. This aligns with previous research, such as Gao's (2022) studies, which suggest that nurturing students' interests and involvement can positively affect their reading motivation, comprehension skills, and overall academic performance. According to this hypothesis, when learners feel a sense of ownership or connection towards what they are learning or how they approach it, they tend to be more actively interested in exploring its content—leading to more excellent abilities for grasping material effectively.

According to Pramadanti (2022), students' level of interest and motivation toward their education directly impacts their engagement in learning activities, ultimately influencing academic performance. Results suggested that students who are enthusiastic about studying and develop strong aspirations, are more likely to participate actively during classes or lessons. Increased participation is linked with improved educational achievements; hence, creating an environment fostering focus and enthusiasm among students is pivotal in enhancing future academic accomplishments.

Additional research by Mishra (2023) indicates that the constructivist learning theory supports the idea that students learn best when actively constructing their own understanding through personal experiences and interests. Educational models can enhance this process by integrating elements designed to foster individual engagement and creative expression, potentially leading to more significant and motivating student learning outcomes.

The study by Chowdhury et al. (2022) suggests that collaboration should be considered in this approach to learning. When students work together and share their insights, they enhance the learning environment for themselves and others, while gaining a deeper understanding of the material through diverse perspectives and challenging discussions. However, it is essential to exercise caution based on these findings since many factors can influence how personal interest, engagement level, and educational outcomes are linked—such as differences between individual learners or teaching methods employed within various environments. While fostering involvement may positively boost reading motivation, comprehension, and academic performance overall, its effectiveness varies depending on certain aspects unique to specific situations faced by different learner groups, or particular classroom settings used in schools and universities worldwide today.

Lastly, The GFOS model utilizes a collaborative and supportive framework, which is supported by the research of Wang et al. (2023) explored social cognitive theory and found that group-based interactions can significantly improve individual learning outcomes. The GFOS approach promotes active participation and knowledge-sharing through peer support and discussion, providing an optimal environment for effective learning.

Nahardiya et al. (2022) conducted research that supports collaborative learning in a co-located setting. Face-to-face interaction enhances coordination during physical tasks, especially during the initial stages of training. The study emphasizes how feedback integration and collaboration play an integral role in mastering physical skills, demonstrating significant benefits through this approach.

Leiß and Rasche (2022) elaborated that social learning can influence individual learning outcomes in various ways—both positively and negatively. Consequently, there is a range of accuracy levels for this type of learning. According to them, additional mechanisms must be implemented beyond mere observation and imitation for social learning to benefit students consistently. Furthermore, their research highlights the importance of understanding how independent and communal educational processes interact as cultural patterns develop over time. These studies reveal that collaborative teaching methods are complex yet integral aspects that directly affect students' education and depend on interactions between peers. The GFOS model emphasizes collaboration by giving specific importance to peer support, creating an optimal space for effective group-based knowledge acquisition among learners.

To summarize, the GFOS model has been empirically confirmed to enhance EFL students' reading comprehension through collaborative learning, as discussed by Galappaththy and Karunaratne (2022), and social constructivist theory, according to Zhang (2023). The collaborative environment facilitated by this approach resulted in significant improvements compared to pretest scores. Additionally, research by Rastle et al. (2021), Aitssi (2021), Astawa and Purnami (2017) reinforces that the structured approach of GFOS can advance reading proficiency significantly due to stringent guidance on instruction. Moreover, integrating a wide range of qualified comprehension techniques displayed effectiveness and contributed to deepening text comprehension. Personal engagement supported creatively demonstrated tangible results for improving motivation levels along comprehensive education progress plans, as

reviewed earlier, with satisfactory outcomes mirrored in studies conducted by Gao (2000) and Pramadanti (1995). Furthermore, collaboration between learners, besides individual investment, was found to be a paramount intrinsic aspect fostering active participation. Knowledge exchange plays a central role in determining the efficacy of outcomes. Mishra's (2023) observations last year, alongside Chowdhury et al. (2022), mention transculturalism's subtle ramifications of promoting unitarian objectives and adapting methods to global class structures. These findings outline a comprehensively appreciated long-term impact with potential sustainability crucial for the future movement of the entire industry. Finally, it ought to be accentuated that Wang et al. (2023), Nahardiya et al. (2022), and Leiß and Rasche (2022) affirm the relevance of the social cognitive concept relating to enhanced individual learner development. This reiterates the importance of attaching significance to mutuality during teaching exchanges, highlighting its contribution to the dynamism of the educational atmosphere within classrooms. These studies support assertions regarding the far-reaching implications of collective benefits of implementing the latest instructional methods. These methods protect the essence of immersive platforms appealing to today's audience demographic, whose attention is naturally inclined towards fleeting distractions. Encouraging virtues of cooperative behavior transcends context and hallmarks wisdom grounded in civilizations that have lasted centuries.

VI. CONCLUSION

The GFOS model has significantly impacted students' reading comprehension, leading to marked improvements in test scores. This approach aligns with collaborative learning and interactive teaching methods by using meticulous instruction techniques that enhance fundamental skills while supported by theoretical and empirical research findings. In addition to strengthening core competencies, the GFOS model encourages personal involvement and inventive expression - critical factors for inspiring academic achievement among learners. Its communal learning structure adheres to social cognitive theory's tenets wherein peer interaction is central to effective educational outcomes. Moreover, the use of localized reading text, tailored to align with students, cultural and contextual backgrounds, markedly improved EFL students' reading comprehension. These enhancements of schema activation link content to familiar cultural elements and societal norms, thus reducing cognitive load and improving comprehension speed and accuracy. They also increased student motivation and engagement by resonating with their personal experiences, which is crucial for sustained learning efforts. Furthermore, integrating cultural content with language learning bolstered linguistic skills and enhanced cultural awareness, supporting diverse learning needs through customizable texts that address different reading levels and preferences.

To optimize its effectiveness going forward, it will be necessary first to consider limitations such as potential monotony arising from repetitive tasks, material variety required for more diverse skill development and understanding group dynamics like composition diversity, or the need for impartial feedback, then refine accordingly. Educators should conduct longitudinal research to enhance comprehension of the GFOS model's long-term impact on students' reading skills. It will establish whether short-term improvements culminate into sustainable benefits. Moreover, by gauging the outcome of diverse teaching models among varying levels of proficiency in learners, educators can customize instructional approaches based on specific learning needs. Delving deeper into cultural influences affecting student attitudes towards teamwork and structured instruction and their interpretation and comprehension skills is necessary for comprehensive knowledge about when and how best to apply the GFOS model in unique settings within education systems. Through these studies, a more nuanced understanding regarding effective integration is quintessential for optimal results gleaned from its application during classes provided through educational institutions worldwide.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research paper publication was funded by the University of Phayao.

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Acquisition of EFL During the Critical Period and Its Impact on L1 Arabic

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Abstract—Language development in children occurs without the explicit teaching of their rules, prompting parents to introduce languages in addition to their native language. This study examines whether extensive exposure to English as a foreign language (EFL) detrimentally impacts children's syntactic proficiency in their primary language (L1). The study involves Saudi Arabian children attending international schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from grades one to six, who were learning English as a foreign language. An elicited imitation task containing sentences demonstrating syntactic functions was used. The results showed a gradual difference in grade levels. Initially, the lower grades performed well in Arabic, whereas with each advancing grade, there was an improvement in English proficiency, accompanied by a slight decline in Arabic proficiency. This pattern suggests that younger students might have had limited exposure to English, whereas older students had more time to become acquainted with the language, thus influencing their linguistic abilities. This may imply a correlation between the amount of exposure to a foreign language and proficiency in one's native language. While this study provides valuable insights, it lacks detailed individual information on students' language backgrounds and exposure outside educational settings, limiting comprehensive insights.

Index Terms—critical period hypothesis, first language acquisition, EFL, Arabic

I. INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of the native language (L1) has long captured human interest. Despite decades of inquiry, the challenge remains with the critical period hypothesis suggesting limitations in language learning beyond a certain age (Kroll & Groot, 2005). This hypothesis, which has been explored in various disciplines (Oyama, 1979; Colombo, 1982), highlights the time in life when individuals are more sensitive to external stimuli than to any other time in their lifespan (Colombo, 1982). Applied to second language (L2) and foreign language (FL) learning, studies such as Vanhove (2013) assert that adult learners are less receptive than children are, providing the latter with a more efficient L2 acquisition advantage (Tran, 2009).

Various countries incorporate one or two additional languages into compulsory education alongside the first language, with 84% of primary students in select European Union Member States, such as Cyprus, Malta, Spain, and Austria learning English as a mandatory subject (Foreign language learning statistics - Statistics Explained, 2023). Globally, this trend is evident in Saudi Arabia, where English is implemented as a foreign language in all primary schools (Aljohani, 2016). However, international schools often adopt English as their primary language of instruction (Al-Jarf, 2020). Nevertheless, some studies report that bilingual education hinders students' ability to learn the target language (Porter, 1998), while others support its benefits (Al-Amri, 2013). Bilingualism, according to research, may enhance cognitive and sensory processing and improve information processing in the environment (Marian & Shook, 2012).

Early education is often considered crucial for a child's long-term success in academics and beyond (Aljabreen & Lash, 2016). International schools have recognized this and introduced early childhood education at approximately the age of four. The development of a child's language is unique and involves building a foundation for phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and vocabulary (Zheng, 2022). Syntactic development, a fundamental literacy skill, begins as early as two years, with toddlers capable of parsing speech into grammatical units (Hawthorne & Gerken, 2014). Children typically start using grammar rules before preschool, forming sentences and adapting word forms (e.g., adding an s in plurals or an ed in the past tense). As children grow, they show dramatic growth in language understanding, notably the meanings and relationships of words as well as grammar (Scarborough, 2001).

A. Problem Statement

The repercussions of extensive exposure to English as a foreign language on the syntactic development of Saudi Arabian international students in their native language, Arabic, remain unexplored. This research gap prompts the need to investigate how bilingualism affects syntactic awareness among these students and subsequently influences their

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primary language. Addressing this issue is imperative in today's increasingly globalized world. This is to ensure that the students can successfully navigate the world with the language skills they need. Developing policies and practices tailored to specific needs in language education enables teachers to provide the best support to students, leading to improved language proficiency and academic performance.

B. *Questions of the Study*

1. How does extensive exposure to EFL affect the grammar of L1 Arabic among Saudi international students?
2. Is there an optimal age or grade for introducing EFL to Saudi Arabian children?

C. *Objectives of the Study*

1. To investigate the effects of extensive exposure to English on the grammar of L1 Arabic among Saudi international students.
2. To determine the optimal age or grade for introducing English to Saudi Arabian children.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature explores human language acquisition, tracing from behaviorism to generative grammar, and delves into the critical period hypothesis in relation to second-language acquisition and bilingualism. It draws on prior studies to offer insights into the impact of second language acquisition on a child's cognitive and verbal development in their primary language.

A. *Language Development*

Human connection hinges on language, which is a unique cognitive ability. Unlike other species, humans express thoughts, ideas, and emotions through language, which is a key indicator of cognitive capacity (Fromkin et al., 2003). Studying human language, as Chomsky (2006) notes, allows us to delve into "the essence of man," understanding distinctive qualities of the mind essential to personal and social existence (p. 88).

According to the Language-Hearing Association (1982; as cited in Turnbull & Justice, 2013), language is defined as "a system of conventional symbols that are dynamic, complex, and used as a means of thought and communication." In just a few years, newborns transform into young children capable of expressing themselves in their community's language. This development unfolds gradually, starting with crying, progressing to cooing, babbling, and eventually comprehending their names. Toddlers begin uttering simple phrases like "bye-bye" and label objects in their environment. As vocabulary expands, children combine words, initially forming short sentences like "all gone juice" and "read me." With maturation, these immature sentences evolve into longer and more complex ones. As children learn to talk, their brains form new pathways that enable them to comprehend increasingly sophisticated languages (Keller-Cohen, 1978; as cited in Kennison, 2013). The development of language and the acquisition of our First Language (L1) have intrigued researchers for decades, leading to various theories proposing different approaches to language learning, some emphasizing environmental influence, and others focusing on the biological nature of humans.

B. *The Behaviourist Approach*

The behaviorist approach outlined by Skinner (1957) posits that language acquisition occurs through reinforcement. The environment reinforces verbal behaviors, such as word repetition or sentence formation, facilitating language acquisition. Skinner viewed language acquisition as similar to any other behavior, emphasizing the fundamental role of the environment. Conversely, Chomsky (1959) challenged the behaviorist perspective by asserting that L1 acquisition is more intricate and involves an innate mechanism in the human mind. This perspective introduces Generative Grammar.

C. *Generative Grammar*

The concept of Universal Grammar (UG) encompasses an innate mechanism called the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that allows for the rapid development of language skills with minimal input. Chomsky contends that language is not merely a learned behavior but a complex process rooted in innate ability. Universal Grammar (UG) posits that all languages share common properties and that infants are inherently predisposed to language acquisition regardless of their environment (Kennison, 2013). Additionally, the generative approach aligns with the hypothesis of critical developmental periods in language, which is the central focus of this study (Kennison, 2013).

D. *Critical Period Hypothesis*

(a). *Definitions*

During a critical period, external influences can profoundly impact an organism more than at other times in its life (Colombo, 1982). This heightened environmental input can be specific, as observed in the development of orientation specificity in the visual cortex (Daw & Wyatt, 1976; Berman & Daw, 1977), or less specific, such as substances affecting embryonic development during certain prenatal periods (e.g., Stockard, 1921). In behavioral development research, external stimuli during critical periods can lead to either a smooth continuation of development or the creation of an irreversible effect that persists into subsequent developmental stages (Scott, 1962).

(b). The Development of the Critical Period Hypothesis

The critical period hypothesis proposed by Penfield and Roberts (1959) posits that language development is most rapid in early childhood, becoming increasingly challenging and rarely successful after this period (Penfield & Roberts, 1959). Lenneberg (1967) asserted that language acquisition is confined to a critical period extending from early infancy to puberty, beyond which it becomes nearly impossible. This period considered the window for first language acquisition, lasts from infancy to puberty (Schouten, 2009). Lenneberg's theory suggests a mechanism involving decreased brain flexibility and reorganizing ability after puberty owing to reaching maturity (Ying, 2017).

Behavioral studies since Lenneberg, such as the case of Genie, a 13-year-old abuse victim, have approached a direct test of the critical period hypothesis for acquiring a first language (Curtiss, 1977). Genie, who was deprived of language and social interaction until age 13, was offered an opportunity to examine whether a nurturing environment can compensate after age 12 for language deprivation (Ying, 2017). Despite seven years of rehabilitation, she remained linguistically incompetent, particularly in syntax, supporting the critical period theory (Johnson & Newport, 1989). Curtiss's evaluation of Genie's case aligns with Lenneberg's interpretation of cerebral dominance, reinforcing the strong correlation between laterality and the critical period (Lenneberg, 1967; Curtiss, 1977).

(c). Second Language Acquisition

Initially applied to first language acquisition, critical period theory was expanded to encompass second language learning. The proposition is that the brain reaches adult capacity around puberty, losing plasticity and reorganization ability (Gürsoy, 2011). Second language learning with its distinctive characteristics is said to become more challenging after this critical developmental phase (Johnson & Newport, 1989). Controversy surrounds the critical period hypothesis when applied to second language acquisition. Johnson and Newport evaluated the English grammar proficiency of 46 Korean and Chinese speakers arriving in the USA between the ages of 3 and 39 years and indicated a proficiency decline with age and varied achievement after puberty (Johnson & Newport, 1989). Other researchers highlighted confounding factors influencing these results, such as the correlation between age at arrival and variables impacting second language acquisition, such as the quantity and quality of input etc. (VanPatten et al., 2019).

Critical period hypothesis research has progressed since the early 1990s; however, fundamental challenges persist. Researchers have established criteria for inclusion, necessitating that participants be perceived as native speakers, along with measures such as length of residence (as opposed to age of arrival) and aptitude scores (VanPatten et al., 2019).

(d). Bilingualism

Bilingualism is the ability to communicate in more than one language (Liddicoat, 1991). This can be achieved through simultaneous bilingualism, in which multiple languages are acquired simultaneously, or sequential bilingualism, in which one language is learned first, followed by another (Liddicoat, 1991). Learning a second language can have both positive and negative consequences. Encouraging the use of both languages results in additive bilingualism and enhanced proficiency. Conversely, emphasizing only one language may lead to subtractive bilingualism, where proficiency in non-emphasized languages diminishes (Collazo, 2021). Cummins (2001; as cited in Cummins, 2017) defines additive bilingualism as the addition of a second language, allowing progress in both languages, while subtractive bilingualism, as per Baker and Jones (1998; as cited in Cummins, 2017), involves acquiring a second language at the expense of the first language, potentially impacting language ability and cultural identity (Nguyen & Hamid, 2017).

E. Previous Studies

The literature presents conflicting findings regarding how a second language influences a child's cognitive and verbal development in their first language. Studies, such as those conducted by Bialystok et al. (2003), and Bialystok et al. (2005), proposed that bilingualism can have varied effects on cognitive and verbal development. They suggested that bilingual individuals, particularly those with similar writing systems in both languages, exhibited better performance in certain cognitive and verbal tasks.

Oberhofer (2008) compared bilingual and monolingual children at English immersion kindergartens and demonstrated the benefits of early multilingualism. Bilingual children attended an English-based kindergarten and underwent testing at five years and six months of age. Participants followed an immersion program for several months to two years. Ricciardelli (1993), Bialystok (1986), and Ianco-Worrall (1972) influenced metalinguistic tasks including word order repetitions, word renaming, and syntactic error detection. The results showed bilingual excellence in all tasks except for word-order repetitions. Early bilingual exposure positively affects metalinguistic skills, suggesting benefits for both bilingual and limited second-language-exposed children, even starting later.

In a similar study by Hussien (2014), students learning English as a second language demonstrated enhanced accuracy in reading and spelling Arabic, their first language. Bilingual students outperformed their monolingual counterparts in literacy measures, supporting the concept of multi-competence and the impact of second language learning on cognitive development (Cook, 2002, 2003; Kecskes, 2010) leading to improved language skills (Kecskes, 2008). Alternatively, Cross-linguistic literacy transfer may contribute to bilingual students' superior performance (e.g., Cho et al., 2011).

In contrast, earlier research contended that bilingualism may have negative cognitive impacts, claiming that monolinguals outperform bilinguals (Sear, 1923; Holm & Dodd, 1999). In the 1920s, Sear (1923) asserted that speaking both languages hinders children's cognitive skills. Using the Stanford-Binet intelligence scale, Sear compared Welsh English bilingual and monolingual children and found that monolingual Welsh English children scored notably higher. Additionally, Holm and Dodd (1999) found that English phonology impacted Cantonese-speaking children (2.5–3.5 years old), with the initial Cantonese sound patterns changing after English exposure. Both languages displayed atypical patterns, including initial consonant deletions and voicing, suggesting interactions between the phonological systems. Jia and Aaronson (2003) found that Chinese immigrants under nine shifted to English proficiency within a year, excelling in a richer L2 environment. The older participants maintained their L1 proficiency while being exposed to enriched L1 environments, highlighting the roles of cognitive, social, and cultural factors in language acquisition and proficiency. Furthermore, Gildersleeve-Neumann et al. (2008) found phonological influences of Spanish on bilingual Spanish/English children who exhibited more spirantizations and final consonant deletions than their English monolingual peers. Gildersleeve-Neumann et al. (2009) observed changes in Spanish phonological development owing to English exposure. However, not all aspects of phonology are equally affected by cross-linguistic transfer. As language becomes more intricate, challenges such as negative transfers may arise. For instance, transitioning from Spanish's system of five vowels to English's system of eleven vowels requires reorganizing existing systems. Researchers argue that children develop distinct and complete phonological systems because of interactions between different phonological systems (Holm & Dodd, 1999; Goldstein, 2004).

In a more complex manner, early foreign language learning is associated with the loss of children's first language, as indicated by previous research. Merino (1983) conducted a study of 41 bilingual Spanish-English children, revealing a significant decrease in Spanish usage as they progressed from kindergarten to the fourth grade. A follow-up two years later showed improved English skills, but a decline in Spanish proficiency, particularly for children using both languages with the same speaker. Similarly, Orellana (1994) tracked three children who had initially spoke Spanish. Despite having native English-speaking parents, their use of English initially revolved around superheroes. By the age of three, Spanish diminished, making it challenging for them to express themselves. Within three years, all three children shifted to favor English. This study highlights how exposure to languages impacts language dominance and emphasizes that children's language adoption is intrinsically linked to their individual identities. In a different context, Hansen-Strain (1990) studied eight American children in Japan learning Japanese for two and a half years. Younger children lost their native language more rapidly without an educational environment in their native language (English), emphasizing the vital role of nurturing settings for young children to maintain and enhance their native languages.

In the Arabic context, Al-Jarf (2004; as cited in Al-Jarf, 2020) studied 40 students in Saudi Arabia's international schools, where English is the primary language. This study found that English proficiency surpassed Arabic proficiency in reading and writing. Among respondents, 35% used English exclusively, 25% mixed Arabic and English, and 40% used a colloquial blend of English terms. Challenges in expressing themselves in Arabic were noted, with 35% being unable to write Arabic and 65% facing difficulties in reading and writing. Some King Saud University students found studying Arabic challenging, particularly in courses on Islamic culture. At home, 10% communicated in English with their fathers, whereas the mothers predominantly spoke Arabic. Respondents preferred to respond in English and avoid Arabic even though they understood the questions in Arabic.

Finally, some studies challenged the idea that learning other languages affects a student's first language, including (e.g., Eassa & Al Mutawa, 1998; Abu-Rabia & Siegel, 2002; Anderson, 2004; Aljohani, 2016; Aldosari & Alsultan, 2017). Anderson's (2004) case study of bilingual preschoolers found limited transfer of consonant properties between languages, suggesting distinct phonological systems for each language. Aljohani (2016) observed no noticeable impact on students' Arabic language performance when English was introduced, attributing it to traditional teaching methods, predominantly centered on traditional language teaching approaches, such as grammar translation and audio-lingual methods. These methods offer limited opportunities for learners to actively practice the language, contributing to what Krashen (1985) termed "a poor acquisition environment." Focusing on literacy skills, Aldosari and Alsultan's (2017) study of early bilingual education in Saudi Arabia showed no negative effects on Arabic reading or writing skills when English was introduced at the beginning of formal schooling. These findings challenge the notion that learning other languages hinders proficiency in one's first language.

While there is a considerable body of research on various facets of language development in bilingual children, exploration of how the syntax of a second language influences a child's first language remains relatively limited. This study investigates how students' exposure to intensive English within an educational setting influences their proficiency in Arabic, their primary language. It utilizes an elicited imitation task to test the study's hypothesis by comparing how native Arabic speakers construct sentences in response to English and Arabic stimuli.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The study included 107 Arabic native Saudi children of both genders aged 6–12 years from two international elementary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Purposive sampling ensured that criteria, such as age, language proficiency, and cultural background, were met. By deliberately selecting these participants, this study aimed to obtain a

representative sample with similar characteristics, including having at least one native Saudi parent and having acquired English as a foreign language in an academic setting.

B. Instrument

An elicited imitation task (EIT) was employed to assess the accuracy and fluency of language repetition in both English and Arabic ("Saudi Arabic"), providing valuable insights into the bilingual language development of the participants. Similar to Smith's approach (1973; as cited by Hamayan et al., 1977), this study utilized Smith's method for both English and Arabic sentences, with adaptations made by Hamayan et al. (1977) for English sentences. These adaptations were incorporated into the study of Arabic sentences. According to Hamayan et al., Smith's sentences are notably short and easily repeatable. To enhance the memory challenge, a brief explanation was added to each target sentence. The correct repetition assessment focused solely on the first sentence, whereas explicit sentences were kept approximately at the same length for fairness. The sentence structure includes three A structures (conjunctions, complements, and numbers) and three B structures (relative clauses, verb auxiliaries, and adjectives). Within each structural type in both languages, half of the stimulus sentences contained grammatical errors while the other half were grammatically correct.

TABLE 1
EXAMPLES OF THE ENGLISH AND ARABIC GRAMMATICAL AND UNGRAMMATICAL SENTENCES OF THE SIX STRUCTURES

Area of Structural Complexity	A structures (English)	A structures (Saudi Arabic)
Conjunction:	"The man and the cat are in the house." **"The book and the pencil is on the table."	الرجال والقطة في البيت. *الكتاب و قلم الرصاص الى الطاولة*
Complement:	"The girl likes to eat chocolate." **"The student began read the book."	البنيت تحب إنها تاكل الشوكولاتة *الطالب بدأ قرأ الكتاب*
Number:	"One of the apples fell off the table." **"Two of the ball rolled away."	وحدة من التفاحات طاحت من الطاولة *ثنتين من الكوره تدرجوا بعيد*
	B structures (English)	B structures (Saudi Arabic)
Relative Clause:	"The man who is driving is a policeman." **"The girl is smiling is happy."	الرجال اللي يسوق شرطي *البنيت تضحك هي فرحانة*
Verb Auxiliary:	"The mouse may have eaten the cheese." **"The kid should have take the toy."	يمكن الفار هو اللي أكل الجبن *الطفل لازم هو لازم ياخذ اللعبة*
Adjective:	"The small grey cat drank the milk." **"The woman tired old helped the man."	القطة الرمادية الصغيرة شربت الحليب *التعبانة الكبيرة الحزمة ساعدت الرجال*

C. Procedure

The researcher conducted the test individually with each participant and recorded it on tape. To familiarize the child with the recording process, they were informed beforehand and showed how to operate the recorder. The child was encouraged to initiate the recording by stating their name, after which the researcher provided the following instructions, "I would like you to watch me say something now and try to say exactly what I am saying." The participants were given the first test sentence only if they had completed the sequence, which included a practice sentence.

This approach aimed to create a comfortable environment for children, allowing them to concentrate on the task without being distracted by unfamiliar test-taking procedures. Additionally, it ensured the consistent and standardized administration of the test across all participants.

D. Data Analysis

The scoring procedure closely mirrored Smith's study (1973; as cited by Hamayan et al., 1977), albeit with a few adjustments. Utterances that were incomprehensible or contained false starts were disregarded, with an emphasis placed on scoring the corrected versions whenever they appeared. Errors in syntax and function words were noted within each sentence type, synonyms were deemed correct, and lexical errors were overlooked. "Peripheral errors," such as repetition or misuse of pronouns, were grouped together with "accurate repetitions," following the approach adopted by Smith. The response categories included three common aspects for both grammatical and ungrammatical sentences: (a) Accurate repetitions, (b) Syntax deviations (without altering the sentence's meaning, yet containing a syntactic error), and (c) Inadequate responses (altering the sentence's meaning). In addition, the study introduced a fourth category, (x) Correct substitution, specifically for categorizing grammatical sentences. Ungrammatical sentences can also fall under the fourth category, (d) Normalization, in which participants rectified ungrammatical sentences.

As part of the study's main objective, a descriptive analysis was conducted to assess the syntactical proficiency of Saudi International School students in Arabic and English. Under each syntactic function scoring label, the students' answers were coded with numbers (1). Data from each area of structural complexity were entered into Excel sheets with

isolated columns for six syntactic categories (conjunctions, complements, numbers, relative clauses, verb auxiliaries, and adjectives). These categories were grouped horizontally using four scoring labels. The total responses for each function were calculated in a separate column. A calculation was then made for the average of all items addressing the same function. Finally, for each grade in both languages, the percentage of each target function was calculated based on the six functions.

IV. FINDINGS

The findings of this study are presented and compared to answer the research questions. The results are presented in Tables 2-5 and Figures 1-3. Tables 2,3, showed the scores of accurate repetition and correct substitution of English and Arabic grammatical sentences, while Tables 4,5 showed the scores of accurate repetition and normalization of English and Arabic ungrammatical sentences. Figure 3. Presents and compares the proportion of accurate repetition and normalization of structures A and B by Saudi students in the first to sixth grades.

A. Findings of the Grammatical Sentences

Tables 2 and 3 present the overall accurate repetition and correct substitution scores of the syntactic functions of the English and Arabic languages.

According to Tables 2 and 3, the English scores ranged from 50% to 93%, whereas the Arabic scores ranged from 61% to 85%. In both ranges, grade six had the highest level of accurate repetition, followed by English G4 and G5 with scores of 86% and 84%, respectively, while Arabic G4 had 73% and Arabic G5 had 67%. The English G3 had a score of 80%, whereas the Arabic G3 had a score of 67%. For English G2, the score was 68%, and for Arabic G2, the score was 66%. Finally, the lowest level of repetition accuracy was exhibited by English G1, scoring 50%, lower than Arabic G1, which scored 61%. The students achieved an overall accuracy rate of 77% in English and 70% in Arabic.

TABLE 2
ENGLISH GRAMMATICAL SENTENCES

Description	Conjunction		Complement		Number		Relative Clause		Verb Auxiliary		Adjective		Total grade value	
	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x
G1	47%	5%	84%	5%	53%	11%	47%	0%	5%	11%	63%	11%	50%	7%
G2	71%	0%	88%	6%	65%	12%	53%	0%	29%	24%	100%	0%	68%	7%
G3	82%	12%	100%	0%	76%	6%	82%	0%	53%	6%	88%	0%	80%	4%
G4	94%	0%	94%	6%	82%	0%	94%	0%	59%	6%	94%	0%	86%	2%
G5	96%	4%	100%	0%	57%	39%	87%	0%	74%	9%	91%	4%	84%	9%
G6	100%	0%	100%	0%	79%	21%	93%	0%	86%	14%	100%	0%	93%	6%
Total						41%							77%	6%

In terms of correct sentence substitution in both languages, students tended to substitute sentences less frequently than merely repeating them. In English, the average substitution rate was 6%, whereas in Arabic, it was notably higher at 19%, resulting in a total difference of 13% between the two languages. When comparing the scores between English and Arabic, it became evident that G5 had the highest substitution accuracy in English, achieving 9% in English and 23% in Arabic, similar to G1, with a difference of 18%. G1 and G2 exhibited the next highest values at 7% and 21% for Arabic for G2. G3 achieved a 4% accuracy in English and 17% accuracy in Arabic. Notably, G4 had the lowest rate in English (2 %), whereas it scored 17% in Arabic. Conversely, G6 scored the lowest in Arabic at 12% but performed slightly better with 6% in English.

TABLE 3
ARABIC GRAMMATICAL SENTENCES

Description	Conjunction		Complement		Number		Relative Clause		Verb Auxiliary		Adjective		Total grade value	
	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x	a	x
G1	68%	26%	32%	37%	74%	0%	79%	5%	63%	21%	47%	47%	61%	23%
G2	59%	35%	53%	24%	82%	0%	88%	0%	71%	18%	41%	47%	66%	21%
G3	65%	12%	71%	18%	76%	0%	88%	6%	53%	29%	47%	35%	67%	17%
G4	82%	18%	65%	29%	71%	0%	94%	6%	53%	29%	71%	18%	73%	17%
G5	74%	26%	57%	39%	78%	4%	78%	0%	65%	26%	52%	43%	67%	23%
G6	79%	21%	93%	7%	93%	7%	93%	7%	86%	7%	64%	21%	85%	12%
Total						44%							70%	19%

B. Findings of the Ungrammatical Sentences

Tables 4 and 5 show the students' overall accuracy in the repetition and normalization of ungrammatical sentences in English and Arabic, respectively. In the context of students' performance in repeating ungrammatical sentences in both English and Arabic, G1 attained a higher score in English at 45% than in Arabic at 41%. G2 had the most pronounced difference between the two languages, with 70% accuracy in English and notably exceeding 47% accuracy in Arabic. G3 also demonstrated better accuracy in English (59%) than in Arabic (51%). G4 achieved accuracies of 66% in Arabic and 61% in English. G5 showed substantial variation with 65% accuracy in English and 50% accuracy in Arabic. Finally, G6 achieved a 69% accuracy in Arabic and a slightly lower accuracy of 67% in English. When comparing the students' overall scores for normalizing ungrammatical sentences in English and Arabic across various grades, several notable trends emerged. G1 achieved the highest score for Arabic (37%); however, their English performance was notably lower (21%). Similarly, G2 showed a higher score in Arabic than in English, scoring 33% versus 13%, respectively. G3 performed slightly better in Arabic, with a score of 27%, and outperformed their English score by 24%. In contrast, G4 exhibited a significant difference with a score of 33% in English and 22% in Arabic. G5 demonstrated consistent performance, with 31% in both languages. G6 achieved a higher score in English (32%) than in Arabic (23%).

TABLE 4
ENGLISH UNGRAMMATICAL SENTENCES

Description	Conjunction		Complement		Number		Relative Clause		Verb Auxiliary		Adjective		Total grade value	
	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d
G1	42%	33%	33%	42%	75%	8%	67%	8%	17%	17%	25%	17%	43%	21%
G2	50%	30%	70%	20%	90%	10%	90%	0%	40%	30%	60%	0%	67%	15%
G3	50%	38%	50%	50%	100%	0%	75%	0%	25%	25%	13%	13%	52%	21%
G4	56%	33%	44%	56%	89%	11%	89%	11%	44%	44%	56%	22%	63%	30%
G5	42%	58%	42%	58%	67%	33%	67%	25%	75%	17%	75%	0%	61%	32%
G6	63%	25%	63%	38%	75%	25%	75%	25%	63%	38%	63%	0%	67%	25%
Total							41%						59%	24%

TABLE 5
ARABIC UNGRAMMATICAL SENTENCES

Description	Conjunction		Complement		Number		Relative Clause		Verb Auxiliary		Adjective		Total grade value	
	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d	a	d
G1	21%	68%	37%	47%	68%	0%	53%	37%	11%	63%	58%	5%	41%	37%
G2	18%	53%	53%	35%	82%	0%	47%	35%	18%	76%	65%	0%	47%	33%
G3	41%	41%	82%	6%	65%	0%	41%	47%	18%	47%	59%	18%	51%	27%
G4	59%	29%	71%	24%	94%	0%	53%	41%	35%	35%	82%	0%	66%	22%
G5	39%	52%	52%	39%	74%	0%	43%	43%	22%	48%	70%	4%	50%	31%
G6	57%	36%	79%	29%	86%	0%	79%	21%	29%	36%	86%	14%	69%	23%
Total d						29%							54%	29%

C. Proportion of Accurate Repetition and Normalization of A, and B Structures

As illustrated in Figure 3, younger grades demonstrated a greater difference in the B structure, with Arabic performing 16% better. In terms of A structure, the difference between the two languages is not as significant as that between the B structures; however, there is a noticeable 6% difference in favor of English. Conversely, A structure differed significantly between high grades, performing better in English by 14%, whereas B structure showed only a 5% difference. Interestingly, low-grade Arabic performed equally well in the B structure, as higher grade Arabic. In English, high grades performed better in Structures A and B by a difference of 13% and 21%, respectively.

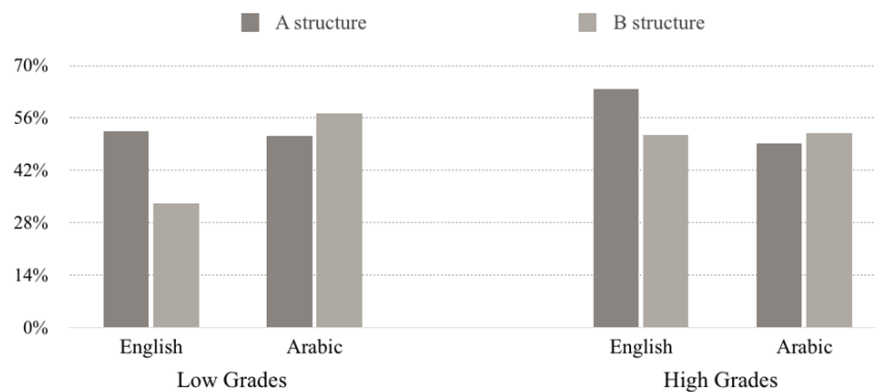


Figure 1. Proportion of Accurate Repetition and Normalization of A, and B Structures

V. DISCUSSION

The study objectives were reviewed to determine whether prolonged use of English affects L1 Arabic grammar. In addition, it determined the optimal age or grade for introducing English to Saudi Arabian children.

According to the general findings across Arabic and English, students had little difficulty imitating sentences in either language, except first graders. However, there was a difference in performance between the first and sixth grades, favoring the sixth grade, suggesting that as students progressed through the grades, their language skills likely improved. This improvement might be owing to various non-linguistic factors, such as memory span, attentiveness, and motivation, as noted by Hamayan et al. (1977). Interestingly, although English proficiency increased, Arabic imitation slightly declined as students learned more English. This suggests a growing influence of English in educational settings, possibly leading to a shift in preference from Arabic to English after extensive exposure to English in school. This aligns with Merino's (1983) research in which students' use of their first language, Spanish, decreased significantly by the fourth grade, while their English improved two years later. It is significant to note that the students in this study were still required to take Arabic classes and live in an Arabic-dominated society. Furthermore, this study does not necessarily indicate that students prefer English over Arabic. Instead, their Arabic proficiency may have decreased because of their increased English exposure at school. Despite this exposure, students' performance in creating original Arabic sentences indicates a strong command of the language, likely owing to exposure outside school. Orellana (1994) argues that language patterns at home, school, and in society greatly influence language dominance.

Based on the analysis and normalization of ungrammatical sentences, patterns similar to those observed in imitating correct sentences emerged. In Arabic, the performance of 4th and 6th graders showed a slight decrease compared to English, marking a 10% drop in grade 4 and 9% in grade 6, while grade 5 remained steady. In contrast, lower grades displayed better performance in Arabic, including a 16% improvement in grade 1, 21% in grade 2, and 3% in grade 3. Accordingly, there is a nonrandom pattern in the consistency of performance across grades, suggesting that higher grades may have a better grasp of English language structures, whereas lower grades may have a better understanding of Arabic language structures. Oberhofer (2008) argued that bilingual individuals demonstrate an improved ability to detect and rectify syntactic errors. This suggests that early immersion in a bilingual environment benefits metalinguistic skills but appears contradictory to the study findings, while immersion in a bilingual environment helps children learn a second language at a critical age, excessive emphasis on the second language may negatively affect the first, this conclusion resonates with Al-Jarf's research (2004; as cited in Al-Jarf, 2020).

Smith (1973; as cited in Hamayan et al., 1977) attributes the difference between the two classes of stimuli A and B structures to several theories. Smith introduced a variable called "compression." It refers to "the way semantic information is presented in a sentence." The NPs and VPs with balanced information distributions are said to have low compression, whereas NPs and VPs with concentrated information are said to have high compression. According to Smith, increased amounts of compression of information units in sentences account for the increased difficulty with sentence imitation (p. 517). However, Hamayan et al. (1977) argue that the compression hypothesis may have several limitations, including difficulty in determining the meaning of the term "semantic information," according to conventional information theory (Cherry, 1966; as cited by Hamayan et al., 1977), a semantic unit's information value varies inversely with its probability of occurrence. Nevertheless, Hamayan et al. argue that the imitation difficulty is, at best, the result of several factors, including compression. Thus, the differences between the types of sentences that are easy and difficult to repeat cannot be explained by a single factor.

This study highlights the consistent differences in difficulty between the two stimuli. When focusing solely on the A structure, these differences could be linked to age-related developmental variances observed in younger versus older students, aligning with Brown's (1973) longitudinal study, indicating an invariant development of grammatical structures over time. However, the results for the B structure suggest an alternative explanation. The lack of improvement in Arabic may be a result of varying exposure intensities between Arabic and English. This may account for the limited improvement observed among students in higher grades in Arabic.

In response to the second research question, it appears that it may be possible to answer this question by introducing English to children as early as possible. In addition, they ensured that their mother tongue was taught with the same intensity and enthusiasm. Introducing English early gives them a headstart in learning a foreign language, while teaching them their mother tongue ensures that they have a solid foundation in both languages. This allows them to become proficient in both languages, and gives them the skills to communicate effectively in any language.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is an undeniable fact that the English language is a global language used in numerous different fields, such as business, science, technology, and education. It is also the language of communication for the majority of the world's population. Knowing English opens up several opportunities and provides access to a wealth of information and resources that would otherwise be inaccessible. However, learning a foreign language should not be viewed as a replacement for our mother tongue, but rather as a complement to it. Knowing both languages can open up numerous opportunities in life. Therefore, it is critical to maintain a balance and strive for excellence in both languages. In the present study, international students with little exposure to Arabic studied in an educational environment with a strong focus on English. Throughout grades one and six, the study employed an imitation task to measure students' English and Arabic syntactic proficiency during the critical period. The results indicate that students' proficiency in English had improved over time. The study also revealed a slight decline in students' Arabic proficiency at higher grades. This may suggest that while exposure to English over an extended period of time had a positive effect on students' English proficiency, it had a slightly negative effect on their Arabic proficiency. However, students still had somewhat of a solid base in Arabic, which indicates that the overall effect of exposure to English was not overly detrimental. Owing to the focus on mostly one language in the educational environment of those students, we may attribute this decline to differences in exposure intensity between the two languages. Nevertheless, we are uncertain whether intensive exposure to one language rather than the other will have long-term effects.

A. *Limitations*

The lack of detailed information about each student's individual language background and their exposure outside the educational environment can make it difficult to accurately assess their language proficiency. Understanding students' language use beyond the school setting can offer a more comprehensive picture of its influence on their language proficiency.

B. *Practical Implications and Ethical Consideration*

The practical implications of our research suggest that bilingual students should strive to maintain a balance between both languages to maximize the benefits of bilingualism. Our research also emphasizes the importance of providing students with adequate exposure to both languages in an educational environment. For this purpose, schools should strive to provide a learning environment in which both languages are given equal importance and utilized to their fullest potential. Additionally, our study emphasized the importance of providing ample support and resources for students to maintain their proficiency in both languages.

As language expresses culture and holds values and morals, parents and communities should encourage and reinforce the use of the native language. This helps keep the language alive and strengthens the sense of identity. It also helps create a deeper connection between generations and can be a source of pride for the community.

Ethical considerations were considered after obtaining approval from The Institutional Review Board before conducting the research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and their guardians. The researcher also ensured that the participants were not exposed to harm or discomfort. Additionally, the study provided the participants with the option of withdrawing their data at any time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to colleagues and students, for their encouragement, patience, and invaluable academic guidance and comments. We would also like to thank my anonymous reviewers for their careful and insightful comments and suggestions. This Publication was supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia project number (PSAU/2024/R/1445).

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Cases of Women's Hate Speech Due to the Use of Taboo Language on Social Media

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Abstract—Cases of hate speech linked to Indonesian women using taboo language on social media have risen, leading to many Indonesian women being subjected to criminal penalties. Therefore, research on taboo language must be conducted to resolve cybercrimes. This study discloses the type, category, and adverse effects of using taboo language from a legal perspective. The data were verdicts downloaded from the Supreme Court's directory. Data were analyzed using the intralingual equivalence method to examine linguistic features such as meaning, information, and speech context. Linguistic forensics was also applied to focus on the language that generates legal cases based on the Indonesian cultural environment according to Jay's classification of taboos. The results of the study revealed that the women on social media utilized prohibited language, including hate speech in Indonesian and indigenous languages. The taboo languages used by women on social media categorized as cases of hate speech were: 1) sexual references, 2) profane or blasphemous, 3) animal names, 4) ethnic-racial-gender slurs, and 5) references to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations. The negative impact of using taboo language by women on social media from a legal perspective is a hate speech crime that violates the Indonesian Electronic Information and Transactions Law. This research contributes to handling legal cases by imposing language, gender stereotype theory, and taboo language as potential evidence in hate speech cases.

Index Terms—taboo language, woman, social media, cases, hate speech

I. INTRODUCTION

A study by Robin Lakoff in 1973, "Language and Women's Place," compiled in a book of the same title in 1975 and focused on women's linguistic inequity in society, inspires the present study. Lakoff's analysis reveals that women face language discrimination in two main ways: firstly, in the way they are instructed to communicate, and secondly, in the way language portrays women overall. Lakoff asserts that women are portrayed as being in a disadvantageous position about language. Women are expected to speak kindly and courteously, a trait associated with femininity. He believes women's language reflects their powerlessness and dependency. Communicating in a manner not typical of their gender may lead to criticism of being unfeminine. When they express themselves based on their characteristics, they are considered weak, lacking clear thinking, and unable to think clearly. Moreover, they are supposed to speak about serious things (Kuntjara, 2003). From 2016 to February 2020, the Civil Society Coalition collected statistics indicating 744 criminal cases involving women's language use, with 676 cases resulting in incarceration (Putri et al., 2021). From 2018 to 2021, some Indonesian women faced criminal penalties for hate speech offenses due to their languages on social media. The case is documented in the court's decision in the Supreme Court directory (Mahkamah Agung Republik Indonesia, 2022).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cases of hate speech occurred during the first modification of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (ITE Law), the initial amendment since its enactment five years ago in 2016. Wainira et al. (2021) report that Indonesia is the country with the fourth-highest number of social media users globally. It corresponds to NapoleonCat's data. In November 2019, Indonesia had 61,610,000 million users, representing 22.6% of the total population. Women were chosen due to their significant presence on social media, representing 76% of women, with 41% accessing social media

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through mobile phones. Furthermore, women spend 30 % of their time communicating on social media, whereas men spend 26% (Lubis, 2014).

Pee (2012; in Lia, 2021) explains that using social media goes beyond mere personal expression, encompassing involvement in critical scenarios such as responses to natural disasters, government policies, and similar circumstances. Moreover, social media serves as a platform for disseminating hate speech. Within ten months of its launch, Instagram posts 150 million photos and garners the interest of 7 million new users (Mantan, 2010; Suryani et al., 2021). Waruwu and Vera (2020) note that hate speech is disseminated via Instagram posts, inciting others to repost or use hate speech themselves. Handono (2018) said that people on social media often use derogatory language while criticizing and commenting on others.

A forensic linguistics study analyzes language within a legal context. According to Coulthard et al. (2016), who examined the connection between language and legal cases from a forensic linguistics standpoint, language can be used as evidence in court. The study examines language, social media use, and court cases corresponding to previous research. However, the study focuses on the Indonesian women's language on social media platforms to demonstrate instances of hate speech, distinguishing it from previous research. It studies hate speech cases in terms of language forms, language characteristics, and adverse effects of women's language used on social media from a legal standpoint.

Previous research on language, social media use, and legal cases was conducted by several researchers, notably in criminal and civil cases influenced by a forensic linguistic background (Ariani et al., 2014). Fraser (2014) focuses on phonetic transcription. Colbran (2018) finds out that the growing use of social media has severe consequences for the integrity of crime reporting and democratic practices in the UK. Sousa-Silva (2018) analyzes corpus data with computer applications. Blaya (2019) reveals that through individual empowerment, law, technology, and education can be identified through counter-speech. Hipp et al. (2019) propose perpetrator detection and the location of Twitter users. Lee et al. (2019) state that the vocabulary of crime in the Malay corpus. Jaki (2019) studies culture and youth slang, and he finds out that the language of the Incel. group is interspersed with the language of subcultures and youth slang. The words used focus on physical appearance, sexuality, and gender. Nazifa et al. (2019) study polynomial kernel functions that exhibit superior gender recognition and prediction rates compared to linear and Gaussian kernel functions. Chatzakou et al. (2019) focus on cybercrime in the form of bullying and attacks on social media. Clarke (2019) argues that linguistic variation has two main dimensions: 'interactive versus noninteractive' and 'challenging versus non-curious.' Baror and Venter (2019) examine cybercrime research. Seyari and Bagheri (2019) study forensic linguistics in classical Iran, where the legal system inadequately protects people's legal rights, and forensic linguistics study programs need more application in Iran. Boucher and Perkins (2020) describe forensic linguistics cases in five fictional detective novels by Sherlock Holmes. Habiburrahim et al. (2020) analyze Aceh's implementation of Islamic Shari'a. Curiel et al. (2020) focus on Twitter user groups based on uploaded content trends. Lev-On and Steinfield (2020) find that social media is a valuable and effective platform for justice activists to challenge state authority and decisions made by the criminal justice system. Gierth and Bromme (2020) study on attacks on science through social media. Susanto and Deri Sis Nanda (2020) converge on the dimensions of language analysis in forensic linguistics related to two types of data: spoken and written. Zhuravel (2020) presents the concepts and terminology of criminal language.

The distinction between this linguistic-forensic research and previous studies is significant. It is expected to provide a new perspective on Lakoff's notion of women's gender stereotypes, stating that women are linguistically marginalized in comparison to men. Moreover, the new research shows that women's language on social media is considered hate speech.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This literature study began with classifying verdicts in the Supreme Court directory downloaded from <https://ujungan3.mahkamahagung.go.id/direktori.html> from 2018 to 2021. The chosen verdicts for this study must have met three criteria: involving hate speech cases, being committed by women, and occurring on social media. The selected verdicts were downloaded in PDF format. There were 108 verdicts in total, distributed as follows: 14 cases in 2018, 16 cases in 2019, 34 cases in 2020, and 42 cases in 2021. However, this article focused on cases of taboo language use as evidence of cases of hate speech committed by Indonesian women on social media.

Women's use of taboo language on social media was analyzed using forensic linguistic analysis to identify hate speech cases in verdicts. The verdicts included both written and spoken language data. The data on hate speech cases was displayed through quotations containing offensive language. Forensic linguistic analysis was performed to examine the evidence and understand the cultural context associated with ITE Law. Intralingual equivalent analysis was used, which explores the meaning, information, speech context, and impact of language on the ITE Law, among other language characteristics. The linguistic components are analyzed in multiple and single languages (Mahsun, 2017).

Forensic linguistics analyzed data at the outset to determine the meaning of words in their given context. Next, classification was to uncover the meaning and aim of the data based on the context and decision. This article limited the analysis to taboo language according to Jay's classification. The data analysis findings were displayed with detailed language excerpts as examples and explanations. The results of forensic linguistic analysis led to general conclusions.

IV. CASE OF HATE SPEECH ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In this article, twelve quotes containing hate speech are found. The quotations are displayed in the source language and translation. The following is language evidence of hate speech cases by women on social media.

Evidence 1

“Perempuan **lonte** yg **kegatalan**, suruh datangin aku dirumahku, karangrejo rt 12 nomor 55 pas dibelakang sd 018. Jangan berani dikandang aja, jangan sampai aku yg ke kandangmu mita cantik yah, yg harganya 150ribu” (An itchy whore! Tell her to come to my house, Karangrejo RT 12, Number 55, behind SD 018. Don’t only dare at your own turf! Don’t let me go to your place, lovely Mita. Huh, whose cost is 150 thousand rupiah.)

Evidence 2

“**PELAKOR**. Dia cerai sama suaminya krn brapa kali di dpt selingkuh Sm suaminya Astagfirullah mmng ini **Perempuan** rusak yahhh **tidak puas dgn 1 kontol**.” (PELAKOR is an abbreviation for *perebut suami orang* or a woman who snatches somebody’s husband or a homewrecker.). She divorced her husband because he found her cheating on him several times. Astagfirullah! I seek forgiveness from God. It is genuinely a **nefarious woman; she is not happy with just one dick**.)

Evidence 3

“Alhamdulillah lah Chika Hot ni dari zaman agik gadis imang dak inggin dak kek pol tu, dak, amit-amitku tanteku rumah e tempet nampung die, urang tempet kos-kosan die, urang la ku pada misal peng ku pu deng kek yang name e pol ok ku mandi aik tatung, alung ku **pekpek** ku buntu, agik e dak usah kawin, mending mun ku ade anak gadis mun pudeng kek die urang, ku sumpah ku anak gadis ku alung suruh **gadis tue** mun dak **dijual anak** dirik alung jadi **kinet** daripada kawin kek die urang jagok meres urang jagok selingkuh waw najis muah ku ningok e amit-amit ku cabang bayi, minta lilit minta lindung engak pulik petir siang yang ade matahari tu ngetet die urang macam satria baja hitam dak takut disumpah urang dak takut mati dak sadar diri ngeri ku ninggok die, urang die urang la bandit e die urang la sinnyu weww...” (“Alhamdulillah! Praise be to God. Chika Hot has disliked the police since she was a child. Oh, no, my goodness! My aunt owns the house where the cop temporarily lives. I told you I’d bathe in a ditch if I fall in love with a cop. It’s better if my **vagina** is without a hole. It will be better for me not to get married. I swear my daughter will be a **spinster** if she falls in love with a policeman. I’ll **sell** it or become an old maid. It will be better for her to be a **prostitute** than to marry a police officer. They are experts in extortion and fraud. It was disgusting to watch. I ask God for protection.)

Evidence 4

BANSA NA KAU YESUS TUHAN NU, BUKAN ALLAH KA KODI SIPA NU SANNA SIKALI KODINA”. (People like you. **Jesus** your lord... not **Allah**... because of your ugly nature... so ugly”.)

Evidence 5

Hahahhaaa khadir halid ibarat **iblis** pemangsa yang sangat ingin menghancurkan Gubernur NA, sampai melupakan dirinya sebagai Anggota dewan wakil rakyat, untung saja tak OPPO’makoo hadir Khalid kelaut Mao saja berenang sama hiiu!!!” Hahahhaaa, Khadir Halid is **like a predatory demon** who is obsessed with destroying the Governor of NA to the point that he forgets his role as a member of the people’s representative council. Luckily, Hadir Khalid is not selected again. Go to the Mao sea and swim with the sharks.

Evidence 6

“Sial ge **asuk cina** ni ok, jukir to urg saro gale dipersulit e urg Yaa ALLAH Pak... ikak manusie ap babi nya, dk de aben hati nurani e urang to nyarik makan, ukan nyarik kayo” (“Damn, poor parking attendant. Traffic police, **Chinese purebred dogs!** I am a poor man; you make things difficult, Sir. Are you a human or a pig? Have no conscience! I work to earn a living, not to become rich.)

Evidence 7

Ini **babi** yg ngana p komen se oleh2b singgung pa kt, krn kt dlu prnh bku inbox dgn ngana, ad bl;ng so apa nou bkng sombong p ngans, kt sja dr p buka mata orang tua kse sanang kt nda sombong, ngana dlu cmn hidop dgn b harap klpa jga ciri p sombong, jd ngana **babi** kt cmn kse inga jgn asal2 b komen **babi** Sastin Tangahu”. (“This **pig**, your comment offends me. I once messaged you, and you replied, what is wrong? It is not arrogant; I always keep my eyes open. I have made my parents happy, but I am not arrogant. Compared to you, who, in the past, only depended on coconuts, it was even arrogant. So, you, O, **pig!** I am just reminding you. Be careful with your reckless comments. O **pig**, Sastin Tangahu.)

Evidence 8

Eh, **anjing** jangan kau pikir aku bodoh ya, aku bukan anak kecil yang bisa kau gibuli dengan statusmu itu. Jangan sempat aku datangin kau kerumahmu ya gara-gara statusmu ini. Jangan kau pikir aku takut dengan mamakmu yang sok galak itu.” (Eh, **dog!** Do not think I am stupid, okay? I am not a child who can be lied to by your posted status. Do not let me come to your house because of that. Please do not assume that I am afraid of your mother just because she might be pretentious.)

Evidence 9

Eh, **Babi** kau nya yang ga tau sopan santun. Kalau memang kau punya etika dan sopan santun kenapa kau berani melawan guru dan kepekmu berarti kau kan yang ga pernah diajari si lon itu etika ia kan kan.” (Uh, **pig**, who does not know manners.). If you have ethics and manners, why dare you fight your teacher and headmaster? It means that you are the one who has never been taught by the whore, right?

Evidence 10

“Adooh ng ibu guru Meity Lusje Mamahit... kyp ba **saksi dusta** dang... anak kmg dri dpe mami meninggal oma els n opa ruddi yg jaga komaan. kyp ng ba saksi dsni rentje deng merklin yang jaga dang, **seorang guru model bagini**, kong ba saksi le di pengadilaann.. sejak kapan kasiang ???” (Uh, you are teacher MEITY LUSJE MAMAHIT; why **false witness**)? Mami’s son died, Oma Els and Opa Ruddy took care; why do you testify here whether Rentje and Merlin did it, (**A teacher with this model** testifies falsely in court, poorly since when?)

Evidence 11

“Kyp ngana rupa stel jga bku komen b singgung p kita? Apa ngana p maksud nou? Suka mo suru kase ciri ngana p **gigi palsu** itu? Kita ini biar bgni bkn 1 laki2 mai anak jga bku ganti akn, mangarti ngana nou Sastin Tangahu kt so brsaha b diam dg sabar sampe2 kt klu ada yg kt lia rupa laeng kt cmn jga inbox cmn kykx ngana tdk puas, ngana suka biar kt umbar di sosmed stau?” Why do you often make comments that offend me? What exactly do you mean, Nou? Please show me your imitation teeth! I am loyal to my husband, and so are my children. Do you understand Nou Sastin Tangahu? I have tried to be quiet and patient. If there is anything else I just messaged, you are not satisfied. Would you like me to share it on social media?

Evidence 12

*jang bicara orang lain pung pribadi. nanati orang lain bale bicara nyonya pung pribadi, nyonya seng kuat angka muka. Taru muka di tanah.. mau ungkit balas budi? Hujan sehari lupa panas setahun. Bt pernah tolong nyonya pung hidup waktu dirumah tiga sana. Seng tau se tinggal dimana yang batul. Ingat masa lalu ka, karena masa lalu itu yang membentuk katong punya pribadi saat ini. Bicara orang pung pribadi sama saja nyonya tunjukkan nyonya pung **karakter buruk** tu, Bt seng perlu bicara secara detail nanti se Malu. Beta tutup rapat se pung aib tu. Beta tar kelas deng ose. Barang sapa seng tau se pung pribadi di negri ini ??? SE HUTANG BUDI SECARA PRIBADI DI BETA. TAPI BETA SENG PERNAH HUTANG BUDI DI SE. **TAU MALU SADIKI !! MINTA TRIMA KASIH JUA BALOM. JANG PERNAH INKARI BT PUNG KEBAIKAN PAR SE DEWI DEWANTI ROLOBESSY. INGAT AKAN SAMPE MATI.**” (Do not discuss other personalities! Others later turn to discuss your personality, but the mistress could not lift her face. Place your chin on the ground. Did you return the favor? A day’s rain washes away the heat of the year. I once assisted the lady in Rumah Tiga. I do not know which one your lives are true. Remember the past because it shapes who we are today. The lady talks about somebody’s personality; it reflects your bad character. I will not go into detail because you will be embarrassed later. I will save your shame. I am not on par with you. In this country, who does not know who you are? YOU OWE ME PERSONAL DEBT, BUT I NEVER. KNOW A LITTLE SHAME!! SAY THANK YOU IS ALSO NOT. NEVER DENY MY KINDNESS, GODDESS COUNCIL ROLOBESSY! DO NOT FORGET TO DIE!”)*

V. USE OF TABOO LANGUAGE

This study discusses the use of taboo language by women on social media, a practice that may be classified as hate speech. The language used in this case is presented as evidence of transcription of written or spoken communications directed at a different person. The posts can be directed by the defendant or in response to another user. According to Jay’s (2009) classification of taboo language, the following categories include 1) sexual references, 2) profanity or blasphemy, 3) animal names, 4) ethnic, racial, or gender slurs, and 5) references that insult anything considered taboo, including psychological, physical, or social deviation. The findings of a forensic linguistic analysis about women who have been implicated in hate speech on social media platforms concerning the ITE Law are presented in this article.

A. Sexual References

The words *lonte* and *kegatalan* are taboo sexual references. Lexically the word *lonte* means ‘bitch, slut, or whore’. The word *kegatalan* means being itchy. However, in conversational language, it has a figurative meaning of ‘like to have sex.’ In the context of these words, the words *lonte* and *kegatalan* refer to a woman named Mita. The woman in the context of the speech is accused of being a prostitute who likes to have sex with the husband of the woman who uploads the comment at a rate of only 150 thousand rupiah. So, the woman, Mita, is accused by the woman who uploaded the commenting evidence 1 prostituting her husband. In the Indonesian context, the words *lonte* and *kegatalan* are taboo languages. The taboo words are rude and unworthy of being uploaded on social media. The words are intended as an insult or defamation against Mita. Evidence 1, about the ITE Law, violates Article 27A by making public accusations that harm another individual’s reputation or good name.

Pelakor is an acronym for *perebut laki orang*. In conversational language, it means ‘woman snatching men, seducers and snatching someone’s husbands, or homewrecker.’ *Kontrol* is a word that has the lexical meaning ‘male genitalia or

penis'. As for the clause *tidak puas dengan 1 kontol*, it refers to the grammatical meaning of 'like to switch partners.' In the context of the speech, it refers to a woman mentioned by the woman who posted it. The woman is accused of being a woman usurping someone's husbands. In the Indonesian cultural context, they are taboo languages. It is considered rude and not worthy to post in public. The word is intended as an insult and/or defamation against the woman mentioned. Regarding the ITE Law, evidence 2 violates Article 27A. *Pelakor* and *kontol* are taboo words and group sexual references.

Pekpek, *gadis tue*, *dijual anak*, and *kinet* are taboo words, group sexual references. *Pekpek* is a word in the vernacular that has the lexical meaning of 'female pubic, vagina. *Gadis tue* phrases mean 'old and unmarried girl, spinster'. The word *kinet* is a word in the regional language that has the lexical meaning 'whore'. In the context of the speech, a woman expresses antipathy toward a man as a policeman. According to her, all police members are of bad character. Therefore, she considered that her daughter better off as a dead-end vagina, a spinster, or a prostitute than marrying a policeman. In Indonesian culture, the words are taboo languages. Taboo words are impolite and inappropriate for sharing on social media. The words are intended to insult and defame the police. Evidence 3 violates Article 28 paragraph (2) about instigating, inviting, or influencing others to generate feelings of hatred or hostility towards individuals and/or groups in certain societies.

B. Profane or Blasphemous

Jesus and *Allah* are names that refer to God. In the quotation, it is unclear if the two names refer to the name of God in the same or different religions. It becomes clear that the name God is used for a distinct faith based on the verdict statement. *Jesus* is the name of God for Christians/Catholics, while *Allah* is the name of God for Muslims. It states that they have different Gods that also make them different. Besides, the sentence continues that the person mentioned has a gruesome nature. The labeling of repulsive traits is repeated and accompanied by adding adverbs 'very and too.' One's faith is associated with these negative traits. In Indonesian tradition, the names of God, *Jesus*, and *Allah* as curses are considered prohibited due to the offensive terms associated with them that can provoke rage. The taboo word is a *blasphemous category* because it is more directed to insult God. Regarding Article 28, paragraph (2) of the ITE Law, evidence 4 can cause hatred/hostility toward individuals and/or specific groups of people based on religion.

The word *Iblis* denotes an invisible, evil creature. Lexically, the word is defined as a spirit creature that constantly attempts to mislead humans from God's guidance, namely Satan. Grammatically, *Iblis* refers to 'an evil person'. In the quotation, Khadir Halid is a council member who loses his composure and is compared to a demon. He is regarded as a predator and destroyer of the NA (Nurdin Abdullah) governor. The phrase suggests that the individual mentioned possesses a profoundly evil personality. Evil traits are labeled with successive words: devils, predators, and destroyers. In Indonesian culture, the term evil falls into the profane category due to its association with supernatural phenomena. When connected to Article 28, Paragraph 2 of the ITE Law, evidence 5 could incite feelings of hatred/hostility towards individuals and/or specific groups of people due to their religion.

C. Ethnic-Racial-Gender Slurs

Asuk cina in evidence 6 denotes a Chinese breed of dog commonly used as a guard animal in Chinese culture. However, in the speech, referring to traffic police officers of Chinese ethnicity as being servants is considered an insult. This usage is derogatory and defamatory. It promotes hatred and hostility towards Chinese people and law enforcement agencies. In Indonesian culture, using such language is considered taboo as it contains offensive words that can provoke anger. Evidence 6, if used in the context of the ITE Law, can incite racial hatred or hostility towards specific individuals or groups based on ethnicity, as outlined in Article 28 paragraph (2) of the ITE Law.

D. Animal Names

Instances of hate speech using derogatory terms for pigs and dogs can be found in evidence 7, 8, and 9. The compound *asuk cina* in evidence 6 means 'Chinese breed dog' lexically and grammatically signifies 'Chinese ethnic guard animal.' In the speech, the words *asuk China* refer to the police controlling traffic as if he has become a servant to the Chinese ethnicity. The speech also juxtaposes the police with pigs. In Indonesian culture, the use of dog and pig names as swear words is a taboo language because it includes vile words that can cause anger. When related to the ITE Law, evidence 6 can cause hatred/hostility of individuals and/or specific groups of people based on their professions/institutions, namely the police. Such speech may be subjected to Article 28, paragraph 2 of the ITE Law.

E. Insulting References to Perceived Psychological, Physical, or Social Deviations

Using the terms *false witness* and *teacher in this model* is taboo because they are associated with insulting the soul of a woman known as teacher Meity Lusje Mamahit. The expression *false witness* refers to someone who actively provides false information rather than doing so mistakenly. Lexically, the term refers to someone who gives false testimony in court. The words *teacher in this model* represent a teacher but grammatically convey the opposite meaning of 'unfit to be a teacher.' The woman is labeled untrustworthy or unsuitable to teach because she lacks verifiable evidence for her testimony. About the ITE Law, evidence 10 violates Article 27A.

Gigi palsu is a taboo word associated with remarks against someone's physical appearance. The phrase *gigi palsu* translates to 'artificial teeth,' but grammatically, it means 'toothless or disorderly teeth, so they must be camouflaged

with artificial teeth.' *Nou Sastin Tangahu*, the person named in Evidence 11 is labeled as having an unattractive appearance. Furthermore, the physical condition is associated with the contrasting behavior of a woman who posts the content. She claims to be a good woman loyal to a partner (never switching men). The woman who uploads the content believes that Sastin Tengahu has a physically unattractive appearance and is unfaithful. Evidence 11, if related to the ITE Law, violates Article 27A.

Evidence 11 is labeled as having an unattractive appearance. Furthermore, the physical condition is associated with the contrasting behavior of a woman who posts the content. She claims to be a good woman loyal to a partner (never switching men). The woman who uploads the content believes that Sastin Tengahu has a physically unattractive appearance and is unfaithful. Evidence 11, if related to the ITE Law, violates Article 27A.

The phrases *karakter buruk* and *tahu malu sedikit* are considered prohibited words referring to the slur concerning a woman's soul mentioned in evidence 12. The phrase of *karakter buruk* lexically and grammatically signifies 'a negative psychological disposition'. The phrase *tahu malu sedikit* means 'have a little shame,' but grammatically, it means 'have no shame.' The person named in evidence 12 has a malevolent demeanor and conduct. It can be seen from the supporting words in evidence 12 by mentioning behaviors such as gossiping, avoiding eye contact, feeling ashamed of prior actions being vogue about residence, and owing a debt of gratitude to the woman who posted the speech. She said that Dewi Dewanti Rolobessy has a negative character, lacks shame, disobeys good deeds, and enjoys spreading rumors. Dewi Dewanti Rolobessy believes that her reputation is humiliated and tarnished by the speech on social media. Evidence 12, concerning ITE Law, violates Article 27B paragraph (2) related to debt provision.

VI. DISCUSSION

The language women use on social media needs to be studied, considering gender stereotype theory. Using taboo language on social media can serve as evidence of legal cases. Posting hate speech by women on social media violates the ITE Law. Legal cases involving women's language use on social media provide new perspectives on language use and gender stereotypes. Statistical analysis showed that gender does not affect the selection of civility strategies (Sharqawi & Anthony, 2020). Women are no longer restricted in language. Women may not always use polite language when giving compliments and may like other people's social media posts. Many women reject gender norms regarding language use proposed by Lakoff, which lack legal awareness and digital literacy. As a result, many women are subjected to legal sanctions for posting taboo language and engaging in hate speech.

Women engaging in hate speech violate Article 27A, 27B paragraph (2), and Article 28 paragraph (2) of the ITE Law. In Indonesian culture, using this term is considered disrespectful because it is prohibited. The forensic linguistic study supports the findings of Subyantoro and Apriyanto's (2020) research, which identifies a strategy of positive incivility, impolite language, and satire in expressing hate speech using polite language. Hate speech can manifest in various linguistic forms, such as words, phrases, clauses, sentences, and forms of discourse. Civility can be interpreted differently depending on the context, culture, or language. Polite delivery is required, but the meaning can vary depending on the context (Idemaru et al., 2020).

Research indicates that intimidating and aggressive social media users tend to use various hashtags to link their speech to specific topics discussed in hashtags. The study discovers the use of words from an Indonesian regional language in hate speech. Regional languages are used as a means of communication, even though Indonesian has largely replaced them in several domains (family domain, work domain, neighborhood environment) (Mardikantoro, 2016). Putri et al. (2021) developed a dataset for detecting abusive language and hate speech in regional languages.

Language considered taboo should not be used on social media. Women in Indonesia are facing hate speech charges for using taboo language in social media posts. Meanwhile, the ITE Law regulates the use of social media. Taboo is the sacred prohibition against touching, mentioning, or seeing objects or individuals and refraining from performing specific acts. Furthermore, if this ban is broken, it poses a risk (Resticka & Nurdianto, 2020). Taboos can be examined from different angles, including as a social ritual for obedience, restrictive behaviors in dangerous situations, a means of protecting individuals in danger and safeguarding society from those who pose a threat (Brodersen, 2019).

Sexual references are taboo languages associated with sex, sexuality, and sexual organs. Profane or blasphemous falls under a category related to religion. Profane pertains more to the supernatural, while blasphemous is more about insulting God. Animal names used are considered taboo words associated with harmful deeds. Ethnic-racial-gender slurs are derogatory terms that target ethnicity, race, and gender. Insulting references to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations are taboo words relating to perceived psyche, physical, and social insults.

According to Jay (2009), taboo words are forbidden because they can cause harm. There are nine categories of taboo language: 1) sexual references, 2) profane or blasphemous language, 3) scatological references and disgusting objects, 4) animal names, 5) ethnic-racial-gender slurs, 6) insulting references to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations, 7) ancestral allusion, 8) substandard vulgar terms, and 9) offensive slang. Consequently, the word taboo is restricted in its use by individuals and institutions. There are five taboo words in this article, according to Jay's category: 1) sexual references, 2) profane or blasphemous, 3) animal names, 4) ethnic-racial-gender slurs, and 5) insulting references to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations. In contrast, Affini (2017), on the other hand, divides taboo words into seven categories based on Jay's statement. 1) Cursing is an attempt to harm others emotionally. 2) Profanity is the term used to describe the abuse of everything considered sacred. 3) Blasphemy is used as a severe

criticism of the church and religious figures. 4) Infidelity, once considered as obscenity in America, refers to as fuck. 5) Sexual harassment encompasses comments on an individual's performance, sexual conduct, or sexual orientation, references to bodily parts, derogatory remarks based on gender, or suggestive and unwelcome remarks. 6) Vulgar language is powerfully shaped by cultural factors such as intelligence, economic conditions, and values prevalent in the community.

Ningjue (2010) divided taboos into verbal and nonverbal categories. Verbal categories are taboos involving partial or complete violations in using certain words, expressions, and topics in social interactions. Nonverbal taboos, also called behavioral taboos, refer to communal daily behaviors restricted because of traditional values or social norms deeming them taboo. Based on Ningjue's perspective, the study centers on verbal taboos of words or word combinations used on social media.

Taboo language is a cultural phenomenon. Research on taboo words in the Kubitn Dayak language focuses on lexical, grammatical, and cultural implications. The study also explores euphemisms related to various aspects, such as circumstances, animals, spirits, body parts, kinship, and activities. Additionally, the research examines the roles of cursing, insulting, swearing, and jokes. Besides, the study analyzes how these taboo words are integrated into the Indonesian junior high school curriculum 2013 (Yunita et al., 2022). The article also finds that the cultural background and language of the commenter influence the use of regional languages.

VII. CONCLUSION

The taboo language used by women on social media is hate speech in the form of regional languages and Indonesian. Both languages are in the form of standard languages, and some are in the form of nonstandard languages. The form of Indonesian nonstandard acronyms is commonly used in conversational language. Cases of language used by women uploaded on social media in court rulings are categorized as hate speech related to insults and defamation, tribes, religions, races, and intergroups (SARA). The taboo language used as hate speech is group *sexual references, profane or blasphemous, animal names, ethnic-racial-gender slurs, and Insulting references to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations*. The results of this study can prove that women's language as a gender stereotype proposed by Lakoff is no longer relevant. Women's social media users are entangled in hate speech cases with the use of taboo language.

This research can be followed up by research on the tendency of choosing social media to carry out hate speech. Further research that is no less important is digital literacy. This research is expected to increase social media users' understanding of speaking wisely and avoid cases of hate speech.

Women's use of taboo language on social media, specifically in regional languages and Indonesian, constitutes hate speech. Both languages are standardized, whereas others are nonstandard. Indonesian nonstandard acronyms are frequently utilized in informal conversations. Instances of language used by women on social media that appear in verdicts are classified as hate speech involving insults and defamation based on tribes, faiths, races, and intergroups (SARA). Hate speech includes prohibited language such as *sexual references, profanity, blasphemy, animal names, ethnic, racial, and gender insults*, and insulting comments to perceived psychological, physical, or social deviations. This study's findings demonstrate that Lakoff's gender stereotype of women's language is no longer applicable. Female social media users are involved in hate speech incidents using offensive words.

Subsequent research could investigate the inclination to use social media for hate speech. Another crucial area of research is digital literacy. This study aims to enhance social media users' comprehension to communicate judiciously and prevent hate speech.

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A Comparative Study on the Quality of English-Chinese Translation of Legal Texts Between ChatGPT and Neural Machine Translation Systems*

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Abstract—This study conducts a comparative analysis of the quality of English-to-Chinese (E-C) and Chinese-to-English (C-E) translation of legal texts between Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT) and four online Neural Machine Translation (NMT) systems. The analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative evaluations. The results suggest that both ChatGPT and the NMT systems achieve satisfactory performance in translating legal texts from Chinese to English. Although the quality of ChatGPT's C-E legal translation is slightly lower than that of the NMT systems, the difference is not statistically significant. However, neither ChatGPT nor the NMT systems meet a passing standard for E-C translation of legal texts, with the NMT systems showing better overall performance. Overall, ChatGPT and the NMT systems perform better at translating legal texts from Chinese to English compared to E-C translation. For E-C legal translation, ChatGPT's quality is lower compared to the NMT systems. While the types of errors are similar in both systems, ChatGPT tends to exhibit more errors, some of which are more severe. This study serves as a reference for those choosing translation tools for E-C and C-E legal texts.

Index Terms—ChatGPT, legal translation, Neural Machine Translation

I. INTRODUCTION

Chat Generative Pre-trained Transformer (ChatGPT) is a sophisticated AI chatbot created by OpenAI, an American research laboratory specializing in artificial intelligence. Launched in November 2022, ChatGPT integrates a variety of natural language processing features, including answering questions, telling stories, writing emails, debugging code, and translating texts. This raises the question: How effective is ChatGPT in translation tasks? Specifically, when compared to Neural Machine Translation (NMT) systems, which are also based on AI technology, does ChatGPT offer better performance in specialized translation areas, such as legal translation?

Several scholars have investigated the translation quality of ChatGPT from different perspectives. Khoshafah (2023) compared ChatGPT's accuracy in translating texts from various fields such as media, literature, science, religion, and law. She found that while ChatGPT typically provides precise renditions, it exhibits limitations for certain types of texts, including legal papers, medical records, scientific researches, and literary creations. In another study, Jiao et al. (2023) conducted a comparison between ChatGPT and commercial machine translation services. They discovered that ChatGPT performed on par with commercial offerings such as Google Translate in resource-rich European languages but lagged significantly behind in resource-poor languages. Sanz-Valdivieso and Lopez-Arroyo (2023) demonstrated that ChatGPT produced fewer terminology errors compared to Google Translate. Cady et al. (2023) aligned sentences derived from samples sourced from a vast Chinese-English bilingual patent collection and various references. Their results indicated that although ChatGPT exhibited superior performance overall, it did not surpass NMT in every aspect. Hendy et al. (2023) reported that ChatGPT offers high translation quality for high-resource languages but only mediocre quality for low-resource languages. Additionally, Grimm et al. (2024) conducted research on GPT-4 and discovered its ability to generate precise, comprehensible, and practical results in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. Lee (2023) highlighted that although Large Language Models, such as ChatGPT, were not primarily developed for translation tasks, they have demonstrated a level of technical advancement capable of producing renditions that compete with or surpass specialized translation platforms available in the market, such as Google Translate and DeepL.

Several scholars have undertaken comparisons between the translation efficacy of ChatGPT and NMT. Yang (2023) employed ChatGPT to translate Vietnamese legal texts, concluding that ChatGPT exhibited no discernible superiority when juxtaposed against other machine translations and human counterparts. Likewise, Zhao et al. (2023) acknowledged the commendable strides ChatGPT has made in natural language processing, problem comprehension, and user interaction. Yu (2024) found that the syntactic complexity of ChatGPT translation is on par with both human

* This article was supported by the 2023 Student Scientific Research Innovation Project of Southwest University of Political Science and Law under Grant 2023XZXS-321.

translation and DeepL translation. However, it excels beyond human translation in terms of the frequency of coordinate phrases and the intricacy of verb phrases, while also surpassing DeepL translation in average T-unit length.

In recent years, numerous scholars have delved into research on NMT, striving to enhance machine translation (MT) quality through technological advancements. The research findings of Feng and Zhang (2022) highlight that NMT has transitioned into a large-scale practical phase. Particularly in English-Chinese translation, the accuracy rate for general texts has surpassed 90%, effectively meeting the demands for translating everyday materials such as news reports, product instructions, and traffic information. Li (2021) observed that while the translation quality of the five online machine translation (OMT) systems based on neural network technology reached an acceptable threshold, it fell short of achieving a superior or excellent level. These studies collectively underscore the significant strides made in the quality of translating commonplace texts from English to Chinese through NMT.

The above research demonstrates that the performance of ChatGPT and NMT in translation is indeed impressive. However, the corpora used by the researchers were general corpora, and the translation directions involved mutual translation into multiple languages. So far, no one has focused on ChatGPT's performance in English-Chinese legal translation, nor has there been a comparison between ChatGPT and NMT regarding the quality of legal translation.

As globalization progresses, the demand for legal translation between English and Chinese is on the rise. ChatGPT and NMT are among the most advanced translation technologies available today, and conducting a comparative analysis of their respective strengths and weaknesses can offer insights and recommendations for improving translation systems. Moreover, by comparing the quality of their translations, one can gain a clearer understanding of these technologies' capabilities, providing legal translators with useful information for selecting and utilizing translation tools.

This study will compare the performance of ChatGPT-4, with four NMT systems—Youdao Translate, Baidu Translate, Google Translate, and DeepL Translate—to assess their effectiveness in translating legal texts between English and Chinese. The research aims to answer the following questions:

- (1) Which system—ChatGPT or NMT—delivers better performance in translating legal texts between English and Chinese?
- (2) Using the same evaluation metrics, do ChatGPT and NMT systems perform better in English-to-Chinese (E-C) or Chinese-to-English (C-E) legal translation?
- (3) What are the differences in the types of errors typically produced by ChatGPT and NMT systems?

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. *Source Texts*

This study aims to carry out a comprehensive and systematic evaluation of the performance of NMT and ChatGPT in legal text translation. To ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings, the selection of source texts adheres to the following principles:

- (1) comprehensiveness: Texts spanning various legal subfields, such as civil law, criminal law, commercial law, and administrative law, are included to ensure the research results are universally applicable and representative.
- (2) timeliness: Only current and valid legal texts are chosen to reflect the real-world needs and challenges of legal translation accurately.
- (3) diversity: Legal texts with different structures, levels of difficulty, and contextual nuances are selected to comprehensively assess the translation quality of legal texts by NMT and ChatGPT.
- (4) authenticity: Selected laws and regulations are sourced from publicly available documents to facilitate peer review and verification of the research findings.
- (5) referentiality: The chosen texts have official or authoritative translations available for reference, enabling the automated evaluation of the translation quality of NMT and ChatGPT.

Following the principles outlined above, 15 Chinese texts, each ranging from 500 to 550 characters, were selected from 14 different Chinese laws as the source texts (ST) for C-E translation (see Table 1). To ensure translation accuracy and authority, the English versions of these laws, provided by Chinalawinfo Database, were used as the standard reference translations for the target texts (TT). Similarly, to facilitate comparison with the ST, 15 corresponding English legal texts, also 500 to 550 words in length, were selected from the electronic version of Hong Kong Laws (available on legislation.gov.hk) as the ST for E-C translation (see Table 1). The official Chinese versions of these texts, also obtained from the electronic version of the Hong Kong Laws, served as the TT standard reference translations.

TABLE I
SOURCE TEXTS

No.	C-E		E-C	
	Law Titles in Chinese	Word Count	Law Titles in English	Word Count
1	《中华人民共和国宪法》	517	<i>The Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China</i>	535
2	《中华人民共和国民法典》 第五编 婚姻家庭	520	<i>Matrimonial Causes Ordinance</i>	549
3	《中华人民共和国刑法》	514	<i>Offences against the Person Ordinance</i>	541
4	《中华人民共和国企业破产法》	508	<i>Bankruptcy Ordinance</i>	504
5	《中华人民共和国民法典》 第六编 继承	540	<i>Inheritance (Provision for Family and Dependents) Ordinance</i>	530
6	《中华人民共和国反洗钱法》	531	<i>Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorist Financing Ordinance</i>	530
7	《中华人民共和国著作权法》	521	<i>Copyright Ordinance</i>	509
8	《中华人民共和国证券法》	503	<i>Securities and Futures Ordinance</i>	525
9	《中华人民共和国劳动法》	511	<i>Employees' Compensation Ordinance</i>	515
10	《中华人民共和国刑事诉讼法》	501	<i>Costs in Criminal Cases Ordinance</i>	528
11	《中华人民共和国野生动物保护法》	525	<i>Wild Animals Protection Ordinance</i>	525
12	《中华人民共和国道路交通安全法》	500	<i>Road Traffic Ordinance</i>	529
13	《中华人民共和国印花税法》	536	<i>Stamp Duty Ordinance</i>	525
14	《中华人民共和国法律援助法》	533	<i>Legal Aid Ordinance</i>	528
15	《中华人民共和国教育法》	516	<i>Education Ordinance</i>	527
Total		7776		7877

B. Machine Translation Systems

This study selects ChatGPT and mainstream NMT systems as research subjects. ChatGPT is among the most widely used large language models in the world. According to Dai and Liu (2023), NMT is the primary focus of machine translation research. The four translation systems—Youdao Translate, Baidu Translate, Google Translate, and DeepL Translate—are all based on NMT technology. Of these, Google Translate is the most extensively studied NMT globally, while DeepL Translate claims to be “the best machine translation in the world.” Youdao Translate and Baidu Translate are the most popular NMT systems in China.

C. Automated Evaluation Methods

In 2001, IBM introduced BLEU (Bilingual Evaluation Understudy) as a metric to evaluate the quality of machine translation. According to Wang and Wen (2010), BLEU has become a widely used index in the international machine translation evaluation system, with higher BLEU scores indicating better translation quality. This study will utilize the Translation Evaluation Tool provided on Shiyibao (<https://www.shiyibao.com>) to calculate BLEU scores for assessing translation quality.

D. Procedure

Firstly, I imported 30 source texts into Youdao Translate, Baidu Translate, Google Translate, and DeepL Translate, and then translated them using ChatGPT-4¹. Secondly, the target texts generated by the NMT systems and ChatGPT-4 were copied into a Word document. Then, the BLEU scores of the target texts were calculated using the “Shiyibao - Translation Evaluation Tool”. Finally, the BLEU values of the target texts were analyzed using SPSS 27 statistical software.

III. RESULTS

A. Comparison of C-E Translation Quality of Legal Texts Between ChatGPT and NMT

¹ The translations from the four NMT systems and ChatGPT-4 for this study were collected on December 8, 2023.

In this section, I will first compare the BLEU scores of ChatGPT with those of each NMT system for the C-E translation of legal texts, and then compare the BLEU scores of the NMT systems as a whole with those of ChatGPT.

(a). *Comparison Between ChatGPT and Each NMT*

Between ChatGPT and the four NMT systems, ChatGPT had the lowest average score and the highest standard deviation. This suggests that ChatGPT's C-E legal translations are comparatively lower in quality and less consistent. Among the four NMT systems, Youdao Translate achieved the highest average score with 70.07 points, followed by Google Translate with 66.52 points, while DeepL Translate and Baidu Translate had nearly identical scores. This analysis provides the descriptive statistics of BLEU scores for C-E translations, as presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF OVERALL SCORES FOR C-E TRANSLATION

Translation Systems	Number of Scores	Mean	Standard Deviation	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean	
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit
ChatGPT	15	64.47	6.58	60.82	68.11
Youdao Translate	15	70.07	6.47	66.48	73.65
DeepL Translate	15	65.85	6.65	62.17	69.54
Baidu Translate	15	65.53	5.04	62.74	68.32
Google Translate	15	66.52	4.92	63.79	69.25
Total	75	66.49	6.13	65.08	67.90

To determine whether there are significant differences among the five translation systems in translating legal texts from Chinese to English, this study used SPSS 27 to test the normality of the BLEU scores for each system. The results indicated that the absolute values of kurtosis and skewness for all five datasets were less than 1.96. Additionally, the p-values for the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were both greater than 0.05, suggesting that the BLEU scores in all five groups followed a roughly normal distribution.

Subsequently, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the five groups of data to identify any significant differences among the translation systems. The analysis showed that there was no statistically significant difference among the five systems, with $p = 0.119$ (as seen in Table 3).

TABLE 3
VARIANCE TEST FOR OVERALL SCORES IN C-E TRANSLATION

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
Between Groups	273.26	4	68.31	1.91	0.119
Within Groups	2507.35	70	35.82		
Total	2780.61	74			

Multiple comparison tests revealed a significant difference between ChatGPT and Youdao Translate among all translation systems. Within the NMT group, a significant difference was also observed between Baidu Translate and Youdao Translate, while the differences among the other translation systems did not reach statistical significance, as shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF OVERALL SCORES FOR C-E TRANSLATION

	Translation Systems	Translation Systems	Mean Difference. (I-J)	Standard Error	Significance	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean	
						Lower Limit	Upper Limit
LSD	ChatGPT	Youdao Translate	-5.59933*	2.18538	0.013	-9.95794	-1.24072
		DeepL	-1.38467	2.18538	0.528	-5.74328	2.973945
		Baidu Translate	-1.06067	2.18538	0.629	-5.41928	3.297945
		Google Translate	-2.05333	2.18538	0.351	-6.41194	2.305278
Youdao Translate	ChatGPT	ChatGPT	5.59933*	2.18538	0.013	1.240722	9.957945
		DeepL	4.2146667	2.18538	0.058	-0.14394	8.573278
		Baidu Translate	4.53867*	2.18538	0.041	0.180055	8.897278
		Google Translate	3.546000	2.18538	0.109	-0.81261	7.904611
DeepL Translate	ChatGPT	ChatGPT	1.38467	2.18538	0.528	-2.97394	5.743278
		Youdao Translate	-4.21467	2.18538	0.058	-8.57328	0.143945
		Baidu Translate	0.32400	2.18538	0.883	-4.03461	4.682611
		Google Translate	-0.66867	2.18538	0.761	-5.02728	3.689945
Baidu Translate	ChatGPT	ChatGPT	1.060667	2.18538	0.629	-3.29794	5.419278
		Youdao Translate	-4.53867*	2.18538	0.041	-8.89728	-0.18006
		DeepL	-0.32400	2.18538	0.883	-4.68261	4.034611
		Google Translate	-0.99267	2.18538	0.651	-5.35128	3.365945
Google Translate	ChatGPT	ChatGPT	2.05333	2.18538	0.351	-2.30528	6.411945
		Youdao Translate	-3.54600	2.18538	0.109	-7.90461	0.812611
		DeepL	0.66867	2.18538	0.761	-3.68994	5.027278
		Baidu Translate	0.99267	2.18538	0.651	-3.36594	5.351278

*. The significance level for the mean difference is 0.05

In the C-E translation of legal texts, there is a significant difference between ChatGPT and Youdao Translate, but no significant difference between ChatGPT and the other three NMT systems. Among the four NMT systems, Baidu Translate has the lowest average score, showing a significant difference when compared to Youdao Translate, which has the highest average score. Additionally, DeepL Translate has a slightly higher average score than Baidu Translate.

(b). Overall Comparison Between ChatGPT and NMT

To compare the overall quality of C-E translations produced by ChatGPT and NMT systems, this study calculated the average BLEU scores for the four NMT systems across 15 legal texts. SPSS 27 was then used to assess the normality of the average BLEU scores in the 15 groups of C-E translations. The results showed that the absolute values of kurtosis and skewness were both less than 1.96, while the p-values for both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were greater than 0.05. This indicates that the BLEU scores for C-E translations by NMT systems follow a normal distribution.

Next, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean BLEU scores for the C-E translation of legal texts by ChatGPT with the average scores for the four NMT systems. The analysis found no significant difference between the mean scores of ChatGPT and the NMT systems, with a p-value of 0.258 (as shown in Table 5).

Combining the mean value of ChatGPT (64.47) and the overall mean value of NMT (66.99), it is evident that the quality of C-E legal translations by ChatGPT is slightly lower than that of NMT, but there is no significant difference.

TABLE 5
VARIANCE TEST FOR OVERALL SCORES IN C-E TRANSLATION BY CHATGPT AND NMT

	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Significance
Between Groups	47.855	1	47.855	1.334	0.258
Within Groups	1004.248	28	35.866		
Total	1052.103	29			

B. Comparison of E-C Translation Quality of Legal Texts Between ChatGPT and NMT

(a). Comparison Between ChatGPT and Each NMT

Based on the descriptive statistics for English-to-Chinese translation scores in Table 6, ChatGPT has the lowest

average score, while Youdao Translate has the highest. DeepL Translate comes next, followed by Baidu Translate and Google Translate.

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF OVERALL SCORES FOR E-C TRANSLATION

Translation Systems	Number of Scores	Mean	Standard Deviation	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean	
				Lower Limit	Upper Limit
ChatGPT	15	29.55	11.67	23.09	36.01
Youdao Translate	15	43.43	13.73	35.83	51.03
DeepL Translate	15	42.88	15.32	34.39	51.36
Baidu Translate	15	41.12	10.92	35.07	47.16
Google Translate	15	37.66	13.59	30.13	45.18
Total	75	38.93	13.77	35.76	42.09

Since the absolute values of kurtosis and skewness for the scores of ChatGPT and the four NMT systems are all greater than 1.96, it can be inferred that the score distributions for ChatGPT and the four NMT systems are not normal. To determine whether there were significant differences among these systems, I employed the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test. The results indicated that there are indeed significant differences among the scores of the five systems, with $p < .001$ (see Table 7).

TABLE 7
KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST STATISTICS FOR OVERALL E-C TRANSLATION SCORES ^{A,B}

	CE
Kruskal-Wallis H	23.050
Degrees of Freedom	4
Asymptotic Significance	<.001
A. Kruskal-Wallis Test	
B. Group Variable: Translation Systems	

Subsequently, I conducted a pairwise comparison of the five translation systems and found that at the significance level of .050, there were significant differences between ChatGPT and the four NMT systems, while there were no significant differences between the four NMT systems (see Table 8).

TABLE 8
PAIRWISE COMPARISON OF THE FIVE TRANSLATION SYSTEMS

Translation Systems	Test Statistics	Standard Error	Standard Inspection Statistics	Significance	Adj. Significance ^a
ChatGPT-Google Translate	-18.100	7.958	-2.274	0.023	0.229
ChatGPT-DeepL Translate	-28.867	7.958	-3.627	0.000	0.003
ChatGPT-Baidu Translate	-29.767	7.958	-3.740	0.000	0.002
ChatGPT-Youdao Translate	-33.100	7.958	-4.159	0.000	0.000
Google Translate-DeepL	10.767	7.958	1.353	0.176	1.000
Google Translate-Baidu Translate	11.667	7.958	1.466	0.143	1.000
Google Translate-Youdao Translate	15.000	7.958	1.885	0.059	0.594
DeepL Translate-Baidu Translate	-0.900	7.958	-0.113	0.910	1.000
DeepL Translate-Youdao Translate	4.233	7.958	0.532	0.595	1.000
Baidu Translate -Youdao Translate	3.333	7.958	0.419	0.675	1.000

Each row tested the null hypothesis that the distribution of translations by Translation System 1 is the same as that of Translation System 2. The results indicate asymptotic significance (two-tailed test) with a significance level of .050.

a. The significance values have been adjusted for multiple tests using the Bonferroni correction method.

By analyzing the average scores presented in Table 6, it becomes evident that ChatGPT's proficiency in legal translation falls significantly behind that of the NMT systems. Among the four NMT systems evaluated, Youdao Translate demonstrates the highest standard in legal E-C translation, closely followed by DeepL Translate and Baidu Translate. In contrast, Google Translate exhibits the least satisfactory performance in legal E-C translation.

(b). Overall Comparison Between ChatGPT and NMT

To compare the quality of ChatGPT and NMT in E-C translation of legal texts, this study first computed the average BLEU scores for 15 legal documents across four NMT systems. Subsequently, SPSS 27 was employed to assess the normality of the BLEU scores for the 15 groups of E-C translations. The findings indicate that the absolute values of the mean kurtosis and skewness for the BLEU scores of the four NMT systems exceed 1.96, suggesting a lack of normal distribution in NMT English-to-Chinese translation scores. Next, this study utilized the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test to ascertain the presence of significant differences between the mean scores of ChatGPT and the NMT systems. Results indicate a significant difference between ChatGPT and NMT scores, with $p < .001$ (see Table 9).

In Table 6, ChatGPT's average score of 29.55 is markedly lower than the overall average score of 41.27 for NMT. Consequently, in E-C legal text translation, NMT demonstrates a notably higher quality of translation compared to ChatGPT.

TABLE 9
KRUSKAL-WALLIS TEST STATISTICS FOR OVERALL E-C TRANSLATION SCORES ^{A,B}

	EC
Kruskal-Wallis H	14.094
Degrees of Freedom	1
Asymptotic Significance	<.001

A. Kruskal-Wallis Test

B. Group Variable: Translation Systems

C. Comparison of Legal Text Translation Between E-C and C-E

The above analysis delves into the BLEU scores of ChatGPT and the four NMT systems in legal text translation between English and Chinese. In which direction of translation—E-C or C-E—do they excel when translating legal texts? Firstly, this study aggregates the scores of these five translation systems and conducts independent sample T-tests on their scores for both E-C and C-E translations, aiming to discern significant differences between them. The outcomes are detailed in Table 10 and Table 11.

As evident from Table 11, there are significant differences between ChatGPT and the four NMT systems in both E-C and C-E translations of legal texts (p [2-tailed] $< .001$). Moreover, the score for C-E translation ($M = 66.49$, $SD = 6.13$) significantly surpasses that of E-C translation ($M = 38.93$, $SD = 13.77$). Therefore, both ChatGPT and NMT exhibit superior performance in translating legal texts from Chinese to English.

TABLE 10
T-TEST GROUP STATISTICS

Translation Direction	Number of Scores	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Standard Error
C-E	75	66.49	6.13	0.71
E-C	75	38.93	13.77	1.59

TABLE 11
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		Equality of Means T-test						
		F	Significance	t	Degrees of Freedom	Significance (Two-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval for the Mean	
									Lower Limit	Upper Limit
BLEU 评分	Homogeneity of Variance	11.512	<.001	15.832	148	<.001	27.56133	1.740823	24.12125	31.00141
	Heterogeneity of Variance			15.832	102.208	<.001	27.56133	1.740823	24.10850	31.01416

IV. DISCUSSION

The preceding section presented a quantitative analysis to compare the overall translation quality of ChatGPT and NMT. In this section, a case study methodology is employed to closely examine the types of errors exhibited by each system. This study delineates the primary error categories in the translation of legal texts by ChatGPT and NMT as follows: terminology translation errors, grammatical and syntactic structure errors, and style and format errors. Subsequently, examples will be provided from both E-C and C-E translation perspectives.

A. Comparative Analysis of ChatGPT and NMT in C-E Translation of Legal Texts

This study randomly selected one paragraph from each of the 15 Chinese source texts. Subsequently, ChatGPT, Youdao Translate, DeepL Translate, Baidu Translate, and Google Translate were employed to translate these paragraphs. A comparative analysis of the translation results was then conducted.

Source Text

Example (1): 第二百三十四条 故意伤害他人身体的，处三年以下有期徒刑、拘役或者管制。

犯前款罪，致人重伤的，处三年以上十年以下有期徒刑；致人死亡或者以特别残忍手段致人重伤造成严重残疾的，处十年以上有期徒刑、无期徒刑或者死刑。本法另有规定的，依照规定。
(<https://flk.npc.gov.cn/detail2.html?ZmY4MDgxODE3OTZhNjM2YTAxNzk4MjJhMTk2NDBjOTI%3D>)

Reference Translation

Example (1): Article 234. Whoever intentionally injures the person of another is to be sentenced to not more than three years of fixed-term imprisonment, limited incarceration, or probation.

Whoever commits the crime in the preceding paragraph and causes a person's serious injury is to be sentenced to not less than three years and not more than 10 years of fixed-term imprisonment; if he causes a person's death or causes a person's serious deformity by badly injuring him with particularly ruthless means, he is to be sentenced to not less than 10 years of fixed-term imprisonment, life imprisonment, or death. Where this Law has other stipulations, matters are to be handled in accordance with such stipulations. (https://www.pkulaw.com/en_law/39c1b78830b970eabdfb.html)

ChatGPT-4 Translation

Example (1): Article 234: Whoever intentionally injures another person's body shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention, or public surveillance.

Whoever commits the crime mentioned in the preceding paragraph and causes serious injury to a person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years but not more than ten years; if he causes the death of a person or causes serious disability to a person by particularly cruel means, he shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than ten years, life imprisonment, or death. Where this law provides otherwise, such provisions shall apply.

Youdao Translate Translation

Example (1): Article 234 Whoever intentionally injures another person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention or public surveillance.

Whoever commits the crime mentioned in the preceding paragraph, thereby causing serious injury to another person, shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years but not more than 10 years; If he causes death to another person or causes serious injury to another person by especially cruel means, resulting in serious disability, he shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than 10 years, life imprisonment or death. Where this Law provides otherwise, such provisions shall prevail.

DeepL Translate Translation

Example (1): Article 234 Whoever intentionally inflicts bodily harm on another person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention or control.

Whoever commits the crime in the preceding paragraph and causes serious injury to a person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years and not more than ten years; whoever causes death or causes serious injury to a person by particularly cruel means resulting in serious disability shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than ten years, life imprisonment or the death penalty. Where this Law provides otherwise, it shall do so in accordance with the provisions.

Baidu Translate Translation

Example (1): Article 234 Whoever intentionally harms another person's body shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention, or public surveillance.

Whoever commits the crime mentioned in the preceding paragraph and causes serious injury to a person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years but not more than ten years; Those who cause death or serious injury to a person through particularly cruel means, resulting in serious disability, shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than ten years, life imprisonment, or death. If there are other provisions in this Law, they shall prevail.

Google Translate Translation

Example (1): Article 234 Anyone who intentionally harms the body of another person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not more than three years, criminal detention or public surveillance.

Whoever commits the crime in the preceding paragraph and causes serious injury to another person shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than three years but not more than ten years; whoever causes death or serious injury and severe disability by particularly cruel means shall be sentenced to fixed-term imprisonment of not less than ten years but not more than ten years, or life imprisonment or death. If this law provides otherwise, the provisions shall prevail.

Using manual translation as a reference, the translations generated by ChatGPT and the four NMT systems were compared against it.

Overall, both ChatGPT and the four NMT systems manage to convey the fundamental information of Example 1 with relatively accurate expressions. However, several issues arise, primarily stemming from terminology translation errors, grammatical and syntactic structure errors, as well as style and format errors.

The first issue concerns the accuracy of terminology translation. Example (1) involves several legal terms, such as “有期徒刑、拘役、管制、无期徒刑、死刑”. ChatGPT and the four NMT systems generally provide accurate translations

for these terms. Both ChatGPT and the four NMT systems render “有期徒刑” and “无期徒刑” as “fixed-term imprisonment” and “life imprisonment” respectively, which aligns with the reference translation and is correct. Similarly, ChatGPT and the other NMT systems consistently translate “死刑” as “death”, which is consistent with the reference translation. However, DeepL’s translation of “死刑” as “the death penalty” appears somewhat cumbersome.

In addition, there are discrepancies in the translation of “拘役”. ChatGPT and the four NMT systems translate “拘役” as “criminal detention”, which differs from “limited incarceration” in the reference translation. Yet, this translation is also accurate. DeepL translates “管制” as “control”, which lacks precision and may lead to ambiguity. Both ChatGPT and other NMT systems translate “管制” as “public surveillance”, which differs from the reference translation. However, from the perspective of legal terminology, this translation is also accurate. Overall, in terms of terminology translation, both ChatGPT and NMT perform comparably, exhibiting very high accuracy levels that make it difficult to distinguish clear differences in their performance.

The second problem concerns the translation of grammar and sentence structures. In the first sentence of Example (1), Google Translate uses the sentence “Anyone who intentionally harms the body of another person shall be sentenced to,” whereas other NMT systems and ChatGPT utilize the sentence pattern “Whoever intentionally... shall be sentenced to.” Although the two sentence patterns differ slightly, they both conform to the standards of legal English expression.

However, when translating “十年以上有期徒刑” in the second sentence of Example (1), Google Translate made an obvious error by stating “not less than ten years but not more than ten years,” which is contradictory and may lead to ambiguity, confusing readers. As for the translation of “致人死亡或者以特别残忍手段致人重伤造成严重残疾的,” ChatGPT’s rendition, “if he causes the death of a person or causes serious disability to a person by particularly cruel means,” is concise and clear. However, there is ambiguity in the NMT’s translation of this sentence. For example, Youdao Translate renders it as “if he causes death to another person or causes serious injury to another person by especially cruel means, resulting in serious disability.” This sentence consists of two conditions: “if he causes death to another person” and “or causes serious injury to another person by especially cruel means, resulting in serious disability.” These two conditions specify two possible outcomes: “death” or “serious disability”. Understanding this sentence requires considering the relationship between the two conditions. Specifically, if someone causes the death of another person (condition 1), then the “or” in condition 2 can be deemed not to apply because the first condition has already been met. But if someone does not cause death, but rather causes someone else to be severely disabled by particularly cruel means (condition 2), then “serious disability” will eventually result. Although this sentence is understandable, it may in some cases require careful thought by the reader to ensure that the relationship between the conditions is properly understood. This complexity can lead to some potential ambiguities, especially in legal texts, where the law requires clear and accurate expression.

The third problem pertains to errors in style and format. Both ChatGPT and NMT exhibit no apparent formatting errors, and their translation structures align with the original texts, adhering to the typical format of legal documents. They predominantly employ standard legal English terms and sentence patterns to ensure accuracy and legal precision. However, there are instances where translations deviate from legal English norms. For instance, DeepL’s phrase “intentionally inflicts bodily harm” appears slightly blunt, and Baidu Translate’s use of “those who...” is not very common in legal English.

Overall, while the translations of legal texts by NMT and ChatGPT are relatively accurate in terms of style and format, there is still room for improvement, particularly in maintaining sentence consistency and avoiding obvious translation errors. By incorporating these enhancements, the translation quality can be elevated, making legal texts more precise and understandable.

B. Comparative Analysis of ChatGPT and NMT in E-C Translation of Legal Texts

This study randomly selected one text from each of the 15 English source texts. Subsequently, ChatGPT, Youdao Translate, DeepL Translate, Baidu Translate, and Google Translate were employed to translate these texts. A comparative analysis of the translation results was then conducted.

Source Text

Example (2): 11. Destroying or damaging building with intent to murder

Any person who, by the explosion of gunpowder or any other explosive substance, destroys or damages any building with intent to commit murder shall be guilty of an offence triable upon indictment, and shall be liable to imprisonment for life.

(Amended 30 of 1911 ss. 2, 4 & 5; 50 of 1991 s. 4)

[cf. 1861 c. 100 s. 12 U.K.] (<https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap212>)

Reference Translation

Example (2) : 11. 意图谋杀而摧毁或破坏建筑物

任何人意图谋杀而藉火药或任何其他爆炸品的爆炸以摧毁或破坏建筑物，即属犯可循公诉程序审讯的罪行，可处终身监禁。

(由 1911 年第 30 号第 2、4 及 5 条修订；由 1991 年第 50 号第 4 条修订)

[比照 1861 c. 100 s. 11 U.K.] (https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap212!sc?INDEX_CS=N)

ChatGPT-4 Translation

Example (2) : 11. 故意破坏或损坏建筑物以谋杀

任何人通过爆炸火药或任何其他爆炸物破坏或损坏任何建筑物，意图谋杀，应被视为犯有可被起诉的罪行，并可能面临终身监禁。

(修订于 1911 年第 30 号法案第 2、4 和 5 条；1991 年第 50 号法案第 4 条)

[参考 1861 年英国法案第 100 号第 12 条]

Youdao Translate Translation

Example (2) : 11. 蓄意毁坏或破坏建筑物的

任何人因爆炸火药或任何其他爆炸性物质而意图谋杀而毁坏或损坏任何建筑物，即属犯罪，可经检控审讯，并可处终身监禁。

(由 1911 年第 30 号第 2、4 及 5 条修订；1991 年第 50 条第 4 款)

[参见 1861 年，约 100 年，英国 12 年]

DeepL Translate Translation

Example (2) : 11. 意图谋杀而摧毁或损坏建筑物

任何人意图谋杀而藉爆炸火药或任何其他爆炸物质毁坏或损坏任何建筑物，即属犯可循公诉程序审讯的罪行，可处终身监禁。

(由 1911 年第 30 号第 2、4 及 5 条修订；由 1991 年第 50 号第 4 条修订)。

[比照 1861 c. 100 s. 12 U.K.] 12.

Baidu Translate Translation

Example (2) : 11. 意图谋杀而毁坏或损毁建筑物

任何人藉火药或任何其他爆炸性物质的爆炸，意图谋杀而毁坏或损坏任何建筑物，即属犯可循公诉程序审讯的罪行，可处终身监禁。

(由 1911 年第 30 号第 2、4 及 5 条修订；由 1991 年第 50 号第 4 条修订)

[比照 1861 c.100 s.12 英国]

Google Translate Translation

Example (2) : 11. 意图谋杀而毁坏或损坏建筑物

任何人通过火药或任何其他爆炸性物质爆炸，摧毁或损坏任何建筑物，意图实施谋杀，均属犯罪，可经公诉审理，并可判处终身监禁。

(由 1911 年第 30 号第 2、4 及 5 条修订；由 1991 年第 50 号第 4 条修订)

[参见。1861 年 100 秒。12 英国]

The first problem concerns the accuracy of terminology translation. Example (2) involves several legal terms, including “with intent to murder”, “be guilty of an offence triable upon indictment”, and “imprisonment for life”. Both ChatGPT and NMT accurately translate “imprisonment for life” as “终身监禁”. However, NMT provides a better translation for “with intent to murder” and “be guilty of an offence triable upon indictment”. ChatGPT’s translation of “with intent to murder” as “以谋杀” is overly simplified and fails to capture the legal intent conveyed in the original text. The original expression clearly indicates that the intent behind the act was to commit murder, whereas ChatGPT’s translation is relatively vague and may not sufficiently convey the legal rigor of the original text.

Additionally, ChatGPT translates “be guilty of an offence triable upon indictment” as “犯有可被起诉的罪行”, which conveys the general meaning but overlooks the crucial legal step of “indictment” mentioned in the original text. This translation lacks the necessary legal precision and may introduce ambiguity into the legal text by failing to clearly express the trial process.

In general, NMT provides more accurate and precise translations of legal terms between Chinese and English, which can better meet the requirements for translating legal texts into English. The translation of legal texts requires a deep understanding of legal terms and procedures to ensure the accuracy and precision of legal translation.

The second issue pertains to grammar and sentence pattern translation. Overall, NMT outperforms ChatGPT in terms of grammatical accuracy and sentence structure. Example (2) illustrates that ChatGPT sometimes generates expressions that are informal or insufficiently accurate when handling professional legal texts. In contrast, NMT can more precisely convey the meaning of the source text using standardized expressions. For example, DeepL translates “shall be guilty of an offence triable upon indictment, and shall be liable to imprisonment for life” as “即属犯可循公诉程序审讯的罪行，可处终身监禁”. The sentence structure is clear and standardized, directly conveying the meaning of the original text.

In general, NMT excels in grammatical structure, accuracy in literal translation, and formal expression. When tasked with highly professional and normative legal texts, NMT may better ensure the accuracy and professionalism of the translation results.

The third issue pertains to style and format. For instance, when translating “(Amended 30 of 1911 ss. 2, 4 & 5; 50 of 1991 s. 4),” ChatGPT renders it as “修订于 1911 年第 30 号法案第 2、4 和 5 条；1991 年第 50 号法案第 4 条。” However, compared to ChatGPT, NMT’s translation appears more standardized and better aligns with standard Chinese usage.

Consequently, NMT outperforms ChatGPT in terms of handling style and format.

In conclusion, NMT not only provides more accurate term translation but also excels in grammatical structure, literal translation accuracy, and formal expression in E-C legal translation.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study compared the performance of ChatGPT and four mainstream NMT systems in translating legal texts between English and Chinese using both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The results indicate that both ChatGPT and NMT systems meet the basic requirements for Chinese-to-English legal translation. While ChatGPT performs slightly worse than the NMT systems, the difference between them is not statistically significant. However, in the task of translating legal texts from English to Chinese, both systems fail to meet the required standards, with the NMT systems performing relatively better. Overall, ChatGPT and NMT systems demonstrate strong capabilities in translating legal texts from Chinese to English. However, ChatGPT exhibits less accuracy and reliability than NMT when translating legal texts between English and Chinese. Additionally, while both systems exhibit similar types of translation errors, ChatGPT tends to have more frequent and severe errors.

This study provides valuable insights for readers seeking guidance on selecting legal translation tools for English-to-Chinese and Chinese-to-English translations. Furthermore, it highlights the persistent challenges encountered by machine translation systems, especially in specialized fields such as legal translation. This emphasizes the necessity for continuous optimization to attain high standards of translation quality.

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Politeness Strategies in Email Opening and Closing Moves by Saudi Female EFL Students

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Abstract—The current study examined 150 emails sent by Saudi female English as a foreign language (EFL) undergraduate students to their instructor. Greetings (opening moves) and farewells (closing moves) were investigated, exploring how social and interactional factors affected the politeness strategies and language formality employed. The study analyzed the types of opening and closing moves and the students' ability to use formal forms, considering the formality of the context and their awareness of social distance. Most of the emails did not include opening and closing moves, suggesting a low awareness of politeness strategies. Opening moves were used more frequently than closing moves and when greetings were used in the opening moves, formal greetings were more frequent than less formal ones. Moreover, the use of greetings was affected by the students' first language. The paper concludes with recommendations to enhance EFL students' knowledge of politeness strategies.

Index Terms—emails, greetings, opening and closing moves, politeness strategies, sociopragmatics

I. INTRODUCTION

Instructors and university students usually interact outside of classes via email (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2018). Email interaction in academic settings between students and their instructors or professors is an important communication tool. This type of interaction serves several purposes including sending inquiries, making requests, sharing files, providing instructions, and explaining procedures (Briones & Liwanag, 2023). However, users may face challenges in digital discourse. This may be especially apparent with students if they lack familiarity with the appropriate language patterns or genres in digital communications, which can result in interaction failures (Sykes, 2021).

It is customary for formal emails to begin with a greeting (opening move) and end with a farewell (closing move). Greetings in emails are expected to be formal, especially if the emails are intended for formal purposes, such as those sent by students to their instructors, which is the situation under investigation in the current study. However, in certain cases, emails have no greetings at all, especially if they are sent to a group. For instance, the main use of emails within institutions could be to distribute information to staff members, meaning that personalized greetings are not required (Crystal, 2006).

According to Crystal (2006), although the asynchronous nature of emails means that students have sufficient time to write and edit their emails before sending them, they may also be affected by oral discourse and display some of its characteristics. Crystal (2006) attributed this to emails being recognized as a hybrid genre of speech and writing, meaning that they may contain features of written and oral communication. This could cause a problem if non-native students lack sufficient knowledge on how to appropriately address their instructors, potentially leading to impolite behavior if the students do not take into consideration certain variables such as social distance and the status of the interlocutors, especially in face-threatening acts (FTAs) such as requests (Salazar-Campillo & Codina-Espurz, 2019). In this context, Butler (2012) suggested that some professors may simply refuse to reply when faced with inappropriate emails sent by students. This could be attributed to pragmatic infelicities being “judged more harshly than mistakes in syntax, pronunciation, or lexis” (Krulatz, 2014, p. 19). Therefore, writing emails with the appropriate level of politeness etiquette requires both pragmalinguistic (understanding of the appropriate forms) and sociopragmatic (understanding of when these forms are contextually appropriate) knowledge (DiBartolomeo, 2021), which means that it can be a challenging task. Student–instructor communication imposes a high social distance, signifying a high level of formality. Consequently, students need to be aware of politeness strategies to ensure that the learning process is not hampered by unintentional FTAs (Almoaily, 2018). It is important to use the appropriate language in academic contexts, taking into consideration the hierarchical nature of relationships between students and academic staff. Thus, students should use linguistic markers that acknowledge the higher status of academic staff (Biesenbach Lucas, 2007). To ensure e-politeness etiquette, students need to consider pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic factors and choose suitable language. For students who are non-native speakers of English who are sending emails in a second or additional language, this appears to be particularly challenging (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011). Greetings (opening moves) and farewells (closing moves) used by non-native English students could vary according to their awareness of the e-politeness etiquette and formality of the situation, such as addressing their instructors in a university context. Thus, the

aim of this paper is to examine the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic variation in the opening and closing sequences in email communication by addressing the following research questions:

1. How often do Saudi female EFL students use formal greetings and farewells in their emails to their instructors?
2. Do Saudi female EFL students use informal greetings and farewells in their emails to their instructors?
3. What type of opening and closing moves are most commonly used by students?

Moreover, the study examines the impact of Saudi female EFL students' first language and culture on their use of greetings and farewells. The current study will contribute to the body of research on opening and closing moves in email communication in the academic context. It will also add to the literature on gender differences in email communication by comparing the findings with those from previous studies conducted on male participants. The findings of this study might help students to learn how to compose emails appropriately.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. Greetings and Farewells in Emails

The body of emails includes certain components, some of which are obligatory and others optional. According to Crystal (2006), the obligatory element is the message itself and the interesting aspect is the degree "to which it is preceded by a greeting (or salutation, opening) and followed by a farewell (or signature, closing)" (Crystal, 2006, p. 104), which are the optional elements. Although the opening and closing moves are optional, they have important sociopragmatic roles. Opening sequences negotiate and establish the social relationship between the participants, while in closing sequences the participants work to accomplish a joint, negotiated termination of the social event (Albert & Kessler, 1978; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

Greetings in emails can take various forms, ranging from formal to informal to null greetings (Almoaily, 2018; Crystal, 2006). Crystal (2006, p. 106) classified greetings into the following categories:

1. General word such *Hi* and *Hello*.
2. General word followed by the sender ID such as *Hi* from *Janet*.
3. Intimate name alone as in *Janet*.
4. A combination of general word followed by intimate name as in *Hi Louis*.
5. Formal name: *Professor X*, *Professor* but general word followed by formal name is never used.
6. *Dear* followed by the intimate name as in *Dear David* or *Dear Dave*.
7. The whole name.
8. Title and surname as in *Dear Professor X*.

In a study by Almoaily (2018), students' email greetings were classified into three categories: formal greetings, less formal/informal greetings, and null greetings. According to Almoaily (2018), formal greetings consist of religious greetings (RG), time-related greetings (TRG), or *Dear* followed by an intimate name or title and surname (DX). The second type, which is less formal, comprises greetings such as *Greetings* (GR), *Hello* (H1), and *Hi* (H2) (Almoaily, 2018, p. 262).

Regarding farewells in emails, Codina-Espurz and Salazar-Campillo (2019) suggested that closing moves could include a *pre-closing statement* such as gratitude, apology, and appeal; *complimentary closes* such as expressions of regards or thanks, or a holiday greeting; a signature, which could consist of the sender's first name (FL) or both their first name and last name (FN+LN); or null closing \emptyset . The use of both informal or null greetings and null closing indicates a lack of awareness of positive face strategies (Almoaily, 2018).

B. Politeness Strategies and Online Communication

Many research studies on politeness have been conducted from different perspectives in the fields of pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Almoaily, 2018). Among these studies, Leech's (1983) politeness principle and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies are the most well-known approaches. Brown and Levinson's (1978, 1987) popular and highly influential politeness theory, based on Goffman's (1967) face theory, dominates the field of linguistic politeness and consists of two parts: the nature of politeness in spoken interactions and politeness strategies. Linking politeness to face, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) considered politeness to be a strategy for mitigating FTAs as part of a complex system. According to Brown and Levinson, upon entering any social relationship, people have to show awareness of face, a sense of self, public self-image, and the addressee. This model distinguishes between positive and negative face in addition to positive and negative politeness. Positive face is considered a universal goal and comprises a willingness to be respected and desired by others, while negative face involves individuals' desire to be free from imposition in their actions. Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) elaborated that negative face is the notion of a formal politeness that does not impose on others. In contrast, positive face refers to wanting to obtain other people's admiration, as well as their approval. Brown and Levinson (1978) put forward five super-strategies for minimizing threats to face: positive politeness, negative politeness, bald on-record, off-record, and FTAs. Individuals use language that fulfills their need for appreciation and approval from others when employing positive politeness strategies.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), speakers can select from five major strategies, which in ascending order correspond to the increased threat of FTAs. *Bald on-record* is the riskiest strategy, involving direct acts and the imperative mood (Brown & Levinson, 1987). The next strategy is *positive politeness*, which increases the positive face

of the hearer through forms of endearment, as exemplified by Leech (2014, p. 33): *Give me a lift to the station—there's a dear*. Moreover, *negative politeness* involves reducing the threat to face through mitigation of the strength of imposition. While *off-record politeness* does not convey a clear act or a direct order, it uses a hint to give this meaning. This is shown in the example provided by Leech (2014, p. 33): *Oh dear, I'm late for my train again or are you driving to the station, by any chance?* This question is posed with the intention of the hearer giving the speaker a lift despite not being directly asked to do so. The final and least face-threatening strategy is *avoiding all face threats*, which can be achieved by not asking the hearer for anything.

However, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies have been subject to criticism. For example, rather than their politeness theory being universal, researchers have contended that it has a Western bias and so cannot be universally applied to all languages (Leech, 2014). The definition of face (positive and negative face) has also been subject to criticism. However, Brown and Levinson's approach has been widely used in analyses and cross-cultural research, and it is considered applicable to many cultures (Watts, 2003, p. 63).

Politeness in online communication is not achieved easily and it can be more challenging than face-to-face communication (Almoaily, 2018). A notable aspect of online communication, particularly in the context of asynchronous communication (email), is the development of "netiquette" (Zapata, 2003). This is a neologism that refers to etiquette on the network, encompassing rules of interaction and good manners in communication on the internet (Níkleva, 2017).

In online communication, especially in emails, it is important to follow the politeness strategies given that requests and providing information are the most important functions of emails. Most emails sent by students mainly focus on these two functions. Making a request is considered an FTA and places an imposition on the hearer (Brown & Levinson, 1987). However, a number of strategies can be used to minimize the impact of imposition, such as justifying the reason for the request (Waldvogel, 2002). Another function of emails, which has lesser importance than making requests and giving information, is seeking information (Waldvogel, 2002). This function is frequently found in student emails seeking advice, opinions, or information about the content of the course. As in other forms of interactions, opening and closing moves in emails play an important social role, with the presence or absence of a greeting and the greeting type setting the tone for the ensuing email conversation (Waldvogel, 2007). For instance, the absence of a closing move could be perceived as impolite on the recipient's part, especially when the email is a request to a person occupying a higher social position (Salazar-Campillo, 2018). As Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003, p. 138) noted, "Greetings and farewells offer formulas to ease the strain created for face by the beginnings and ends of interactions".

A number of studies have investigated politeness in emails, focusing on opening and closing moves. Some of the most relevant studies will be discussed in the following section.

C. Previous Studies on the Opening and Closing Moves in Emails

Several studies have been conducted to identify the opening and closing moves employed by native and non-native speakers, showing substantial variation in the use of opening and closing sequences. For example, 92% of the emails in Gains' (1998) study in institutional settings had no opening move, while 54% of the emails in Lan's (2000) corpus also lacked an opening move. Murphy and Levy (2006), exploring exchanges among Australian and Korean academics, claimed that opening and closing moves enable the email sender to show politeness and formality. Bou-Franch (2011) examined opening and closing moves in three email exchanges, finding that there was more familiarity and informality in the shift from initial to subsequent emails. As the student-professor interaction developed, the opening and closing moves became less elaborate. These findings provide support for the absence of opening and closing moves potentially being perceived as impolite behavior, due to the asymmetric nature of lecturer-student emails.

Waldvogel (2007) collected email data from two different settings (an educational organization and a manufacturing plant), conducting a detailed examination of greetings and closing moves in relation to sociological variables such as the relative status of participants, their gender, and social distance. In the educational organization setting, the tone of opening and closing moves was more intimate and familiar, contrasting with the greater deference towards the recipient found in the manufacturing plant. In a study by Eslami (2013), Iranian non-native speakers of English were found to overuse opening and closing moves by incorporating small talk and phatic comments. Such features are associated with the Iranian culture but may be viewed as inappropriate in the university setting. Moreover, Salazar-Campillo (2018) examined opening and closing moves in initial emails sent by two groups of graduate students, one group writing in their native language of Spanish and the second group writing in English. Regardless of the language they wrote in, both groups lacked awareness of the required level of formality for opening moves in this type of email. Neither group were able to employ the expected level of deference to the professor, as the opening moves typically consisted of only a greeting or a greeting and the professor's first name. On the contrary, closing moves included status-appropriate politeness and respect regardless of the language used.

In another study, Almoaily (2018) investigated EFL students' awareness and use of greetings as a politeness marker, focusing on academic emails. The students sent the emails as an introduction to their supervisors and so were highly formal in tone due to the high social distance between the students and supervisors. Only a few emails included formal greetings and most contained informal or null greetings. Almoaily suggested that students should be provided opportunities to engage in politeness etiquette training in order to build knowledge of politeness knowledge in formal emails.

In addition, Salazar-Campillo and Codina-Espurz (2019) examined politeness in opening and closing moves in first and follow-up emails to ascertain whether this variable affects students' pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic ability when writing their emails. The opening moves tended to include a greeting and the professor's first name, and so were informal in tone. There were fewer politeness features in the closing moves, with this being particularly noticeable in follow-up emails. This lack of politeness in students' follow-up emails indicates that they may seek to establish a more egalitarian and close relationship, akin to that with family members, which the authors contended reflects a more conversational mode of communication.

Moreover, in a study examining emails sent by higher education students to their professors, Konuk (2021) found that the students had problems with punctuation and spelling, paragraph structure, language formality, contact information, and opening and closing statements.

Finally, Alemi and Maleknia (2023) explored whether non-native English-speaking university students adhere to verbal and structural politeness markers, including opening and closing moves, in academic email interactions. The findings revealed that the university students did not adhere to verbal or structural politeness cues in their emails. The authors attributed this to the students' lack of awareness of netiquette politeness.

The current study aims to analyze opening and closing moves found in emails sent by Saudi female EFL students in the English language and translation department in the College of Languages and Humanities in Ar Rass, Qassim University, Saudi Arabia. The emails will be analyzed to determine the Saudi female EFL students' awareness of politeness strategies when writing formal emails to their instructors, focusing on the appropriateness of opening and closing moves; to my knowledge, this has not been addressed before. The findings will be compared to those of male students in Almoaily (2018) and other previous studies.

III. METHOD

In order to examine potential differences in email communication between students and their instructors, with a particular focus on greetings and farewells, 150 emails were collected to analyze the greetings and farewells (i.e., opening and closing moves) used by Saudi female EFL undergraduate students in the Department of English Language and Translation, College of Languages and Humanities, in Ar Rass, Qassim University. The students were in the sixth and seventh levels, corresponding to junior and senior university students. The students were expected to have adequate English language proficiency, considering their advanced academic levels and the fact that they were about to graduate. These 150 emails, which constitute the corpus of the study, were sent to me as their course instructor. The emails were either requests for information or seeking permission or else included information about course-related tasks, such as submitting assignments. The data gathered for the current study were hence spontaneous and naturally occurring, with the potential to accurately represent the politeness strategies employed by the students. This is in contrast to experimental studies, where participants are aware that their emails will be studied and so can avoid FTAs by using more politeness strategies (Almoaily, 2018). During the data collection, it was evident that some of the students preferred to use their first language, i.e., Arabic, when composing their emails, probably because the students were aware that I am also a native speaker of Arabic. Therefore, the emails collected were either written in English or in Arabic and sometimes a combination of both.

In analyzing the data, the categorization developed by Almoaily (2018) for analyzing the greeting moves has been adopted, while the categorization developed by Codina-Espurz and Salazar-Campillo (2019) will be considered for analyzing the farewell moves. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the categories for the opening and closing moves:

TABLE 1
TYPES OF GREETING

Type	Formal greetings				Informal greetings				Null greeting
	Dear (Dr. X)	TRG + Dr. (FN)	RG	RG + TGR	Hello + Dr. FN	Hello	Hello + TRG	Hi + Dr.	

TABLE 2
TYPES OF CLOSING MOVES

Type	Pre-closing statement	Complimentary close	Signature		Null closing
			FN	FN+LN	

Table 1 shows that the greetings are classified into formal, informal, and null greetings. In the current study, formal greetings will be considered as a sign of a positive face strategy, whereas informal greetings are a sign of the student's lack of awareness of politeness strategies and formal greetings. Regarding closing moves, the emails will be examined to identify if they include pre-closing statements, a complimentary close, and a signature, either with the sender's first name (FN) or their first name and last name (FN+LN). A lack of these closing moves, i.e. null closing, will be considered as an FTA.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of the production of greetings and farewells will be discussed in order to answer the research questions of the study. First, the greetings (opening moves) will be discussed followed by a discussion of the students' use of farewells (closing moves).

A. Greetings

The data analysis showed that greetings were used by some of the students to initiate emails to their university instructor. However, a null greeting with no opening move was the most frequent in the sample, representing 54% of the greeting moves (see Figure 1). Formal greetings in general were ranked second, representing 37% of the total. Informal greetings were used less frequently by the students, representing 9% of the total. These findings are consistent with those of Almoaily (2018), who also found that emails with a null greeting accounted for the highest portion of tokens.

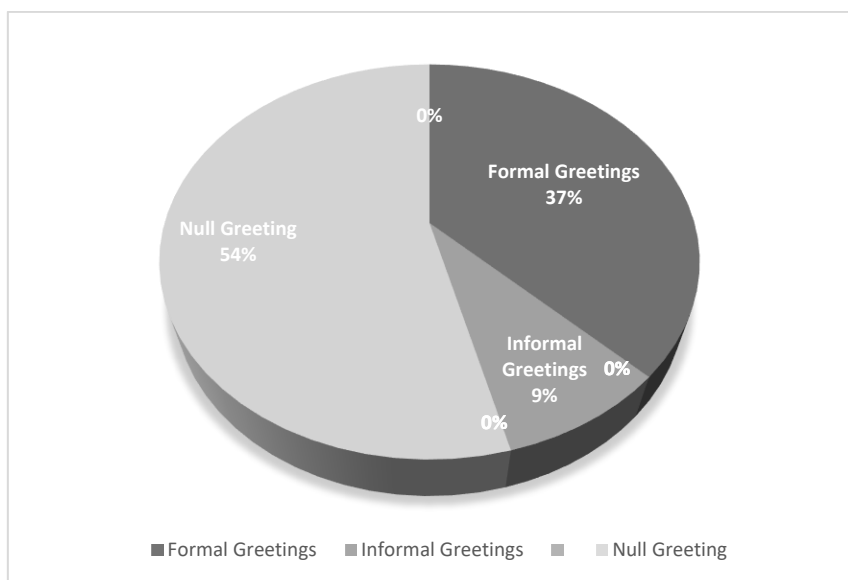


Figure 1. A Comparison of Greeting Moves

The analysis of formal greetings showed that the preferred greeting form was a time-related greeting expression followed by the title (TRG+title) (13 instances), as in *Good evening Dr.* or *Good afternoon doctor*. In some other instances, TRG was followed by the instructor's title and first name, which occurred eight times (e.g., *Good evening Dr. Majedah*). Also, time-related expressions occurred without the instructor's title and first name (5 instances), such as *Good morning*. It is worth mentioning that most of the time the students used TRG only in English. Only two TRG in Arabic were used, *ماجدة د. مساوك* and *مساء الخير دكتورة ماجدة*, which both mean *good evening*.

The formal greeting which begins with *Dear* was ranked second. According to Crystal (2006), the structure is supposed to be *Dear* followed by a title and surname, as in *Dear Professor X*. However, this form was not used by the students. Instead, various forms were employed, such as *Dear* followed by the instructor's title and her first name, as in *Dear Dr. Majedah* (13 instances). Salazar-Campillo (2018) noted that *Dr. + instructor's first name* (for example, *Dr. María*) is not an acceptable construction in English, and nor is an incorrect academic title (*Mrs. + instructor's last name*). However, this could be an influence from the students' first language, as in Arabic this form is acceptable.

Dear followed by the title and the instructor's first name and surname was also found, as in *Dear Dr. Majedah Alaiyed* (4 instances). *Dear* followed by the word *doctor* with the instructor's name occurred only once. Similar to Almoaily (2018), no translation of the word *Dear*, i.e., *عزيزتي*, was found, probably because of the intimate sense of this word in Arabic.

Religious greetings were ranked third in the use of formal greetings, representing 16.1% of the total. These findings contradict those of Almoaily (2018), who found that this type of greeting was used more than *Dear X* and TRG by his male participants, who were also students. To explain this, the factor of gender could be taken into consideration. Males in general prefer to use religious greetings in their daily life, i.e., *السلام عليكم* (Peace be upon you), more than females, who use other types of greetings such as TRG or words like *Marhaba* (مرحبا), which means *welcome*. The religious greeting was written in Arabic in all the emails even if the students switched to using English in the rest of their emails.

There were a few instances of more than one greeting being used at the same time, such as using a religious greeting followed by a TRG. This could be influenced by oral discourse, as it is common to use both in oral speech; this aligns with Crystal (2006), who regarded emails to be a hybrid genre of speech and writing.

Regarding informal greetings, words such as *Hello* and *Hi* were used by the students, albeit infrequently, representing 9% of the total. For example, *Hello* followed by the title and first name of the instructor occurred 10 times, as in *Hello*

Dr. Majedah. Hello on its own occurred only once. Similarly, *Hi* followed by the title and the first name of the instructor occurred only once. One occurrence of *Hello* followed by a TRG was found, as in *Hello, good evening doctor*. Again, this could be attributed to the influence of speech on written emails.

Table 3 shows the distribution of greetings found in the study.

TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION AND NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF THE OPENING MOVES

Type	Formal greetings				Informal greetings				Null greeting Ø
	Dear (Dr. X)	TRG + Dr. (FN)	RG	RG + TGR	Hello + Dr. FN	Hello	Hello + TRG	Hi + Dr.	
No. of occurrences	18	26	9	3	10	1	1	1	81
Percentage	32.1%	46.4%	16.1%	4.6%	76.9%	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%	100%
Total percentage	37%				9%				54%

To sum up the analysis of opening moves, null greetings were commonly used, with a low occurrence of formal greetings and few instances of informal greetings. These findings indicate that the students lacked awareness of how to write formal emails even though the participants were at advanced academic levels.

B. Farewells

The analysis of email farewells (closing moves, i.e., pre-closing, complimentary close, and signature) shows that they were less common than greetings (opening moves). While students may have started their emails with greetings, it was not necessarily the case that farewells were also found. Closing moves represented 34% of the total and null closing represented 66%, as can be seen in Figure 2. These findings contrast with the prior research of Bou-Franch (2011), who found that opening and closing moves were pervasive in the social events under study: opening moves were found in over 85% of emails, while closing moves were even more frequent and appeared in 97% of all emails. On the other hand, the findings from the current study agree with those of Waldvogel (2002), who found minimal use of farewells in her study of email use and practices in a large workplace.

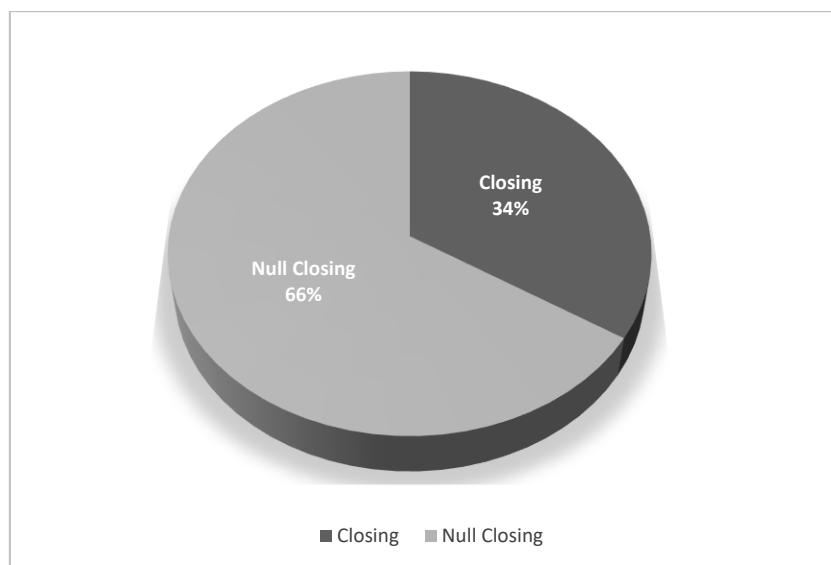


Figure 2. A Comparison Between Closing and Null-Closing Moves in Students' Emails

Closing moves were found in 51 emails, with variation in the forms used as sometimes the students ended their emails with a signature but with no pre-closing or complimentary close. In other cases, a pre-closing statement and complimentary close were used but with no signature. The distribution of closing and null-closing moves can be seen in Table 4.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF CLOSING AND NULL-CLOSING MOVES

Type	Pre-closing statement	Complimentary close	Signature		Null closing
			FN	FN+LN	
No. of occurrences	16	39	2	17	99
Percentage	10.6%	76.5%	3.9%	33.3%	66%

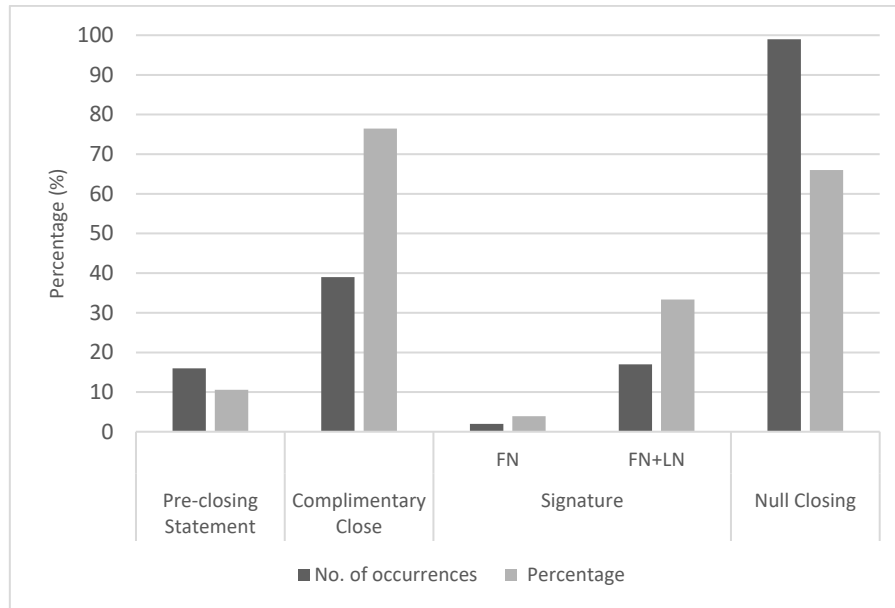


Figure 3. Distribution of Closing Moves

It is noteworthy that when farewells were used by the students, they were formal. The most common closing move was the complimentary one, produced in 39 emails and representing 76.5% of the closing moves found. The standard complimentary close *Thank you* and *Thanks* were the preferred formula, followed by *Regards*. The use of *Thanks* or *Thank you* is a polite form of behavior that reflects the students' awareness of the unequal relationship with their instructor; this finding is in line with Eslami (2013) and Salazar-Campillo (2018).

Ending the email with a signature was ranked second after the complimentary close, with the students writing their first and last name (16 instances). In five instances, the students added an extra closing statement before *Thanks*, such as *Have a nice day*. Pre-closing statements represented 10.6% of the closing moves, occurring 16 times. The most common pre-closing statements were those expressing apology, such as *Sorry to disturb you*, *I apologise for sending this e-mail*. Students used their first language to express their apology, as in *عذراً على الإزعاج* (I apologize for bothering you). The least common closing move was ending an email with the student's first name, which occurred only two times, representing 3.9% of the closing moves.

In summary, null greeting and null closing were commonly found in the emails analyzed in the current study. Moreover, the students used more greetings than farewells, with greetings found in 46% of the emails analyzed and farewells found in 34% of the sample. This aligns with Waldvogel's (2007) study of emails produced in an educational organization, where 59% contained greetings and 34% had closing moves. As found by Alemi and Maleknia (2023), the current study has found that there is a lack of awareness of politeness netiquette.

V. CONCLUSION

In an analysis of 150 emails, the present study aimed to investigate Saudi female EFL students' awareness of formal greetings and farewells as a politeness strategy. The analysis of the opening and closing moves revealed a low occurrence of these moves by the Saudi female EFL students. Null greeting and null closing were common, as the majority of the students did not use any form of greetings or farewells in their emails. Considering the factor of gender, it is noteworthy that, in comparison with the male participants in Almoaily's (2018) study where the male participants preferred RG, the female participants in the current study displayed a higher usage of TRG than RG. In the current study, informal greetings were used but at a lower rate than formal greetings.

It is worth mentioning that no opening move was used with the instructor's first name without mentioning her degree title (i.e., Dr.). This indicates that the students were aware of the social distance between them and their instructor.

The findings indicate that the students had an inadequate knowledge of the politeness features within the academic email genre, alongside a lack of awareness of politeness netiquette. Moreover, the students' first language culture seemed to have an influence on to their use of politeness strategies. The findings thus underline the importance of providing students with training on politeness netiquette, including appropriate email greetings and closings. This is especially relevant in contexts with a high level of formality, such as when students email their instructors or supervisors who have a higher social status.

The research is necessarily limited in terms of the sample as it focused on Saudi female EFL undergraduate students in the Department of English Language and Translation at Qassim University. It also investigated politeness strategies found in what Crystal (2006) classified as optional components of email writing i.e. the opening and closing moves of

emails. All the emails were sent to me as their course instructor and probably included the use of the Arabic language because I am a native speaker of Arabic.

Some issues could be considered for further research, taking into account gender differences in the use of politeness strategies (FTA), such as requesting or seeking information in emails, especially by EFL students. Moreover, interviewing EFL students to ascertain their opinions of the challenges of employing politeness strategies in the correct context, as well as whether they are aware of the importance of politeness and politeness strategies in different interactions, could be helpful in identifying the appropriate method to overcome this problem. This would be very useful for determining gaps in students' knowledge and suggesting pedagogical methods to increase the students' proficiency in politeness strategies. This would also help the students to avoid impoliteness and pragmatic infelicities, thereby facilitating smoother communication with their instructors. A comparison of emails sent by Saudi males and females in a different workplace is also suggested as a future line of research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher would like to thank the Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research at Qassim University for financial support (QU-APC-2024-9/1).

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A Variationist Analysis of Progressive Aspect Alternatives in Jordanian Arabic

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Abstract—This study investigates alternative variants of progressive aspect in Jordanian Arabic (JA). The study explores to what extent the progressive aspect variants: [qaʕid] 'to sit', [3'am], 'to do', and [3mmal] 'to be', are constrained by the social factors of gender, age, region, and education. Drawing on Labov's (1972) variationist sociolinguistics paradigm, a quantitative analysis of the said variants in the speech of 48 native speakers of JA was undertaken. To this effect, audio-recorded interviews of 30 hours of speech samples were analyzed by using GoldVarb X. Data analysis worked along three dimensions: the overall distribution of identified, targeted variants is presented, cross-tabulation of social factors is used to quantitatively analyze the relationship between multiple variables, and multivariate analysis is conducted to find correlations between several variables simultaneously. The study revealed that region, age, and education level significantly restrict the selection of [qaʕid] variant, while gender does not. The findings also suggest that some speakers view this variant as a marker of their identity. Moreover, the study revealed a kind of prestige associated with urban dialects, with [3'am] and [3mmal] variants being mainly used by urban speakers rather than rural ones. Finally, the findings highlight the significant impact of regional factors on language variation, with urban-rural differences obviously shaping linguistic patterns.

Index Terms—variationist sociolinguistics, Jordanian Arabic, progressive aspect alternatives, social factors

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2005), sociolinguistics is "the study of our everyday lives - how language works in our casual conversations and the media we are exposed to, and the presence of societal norms, policies, and laws which address language" (p. 1). In other words, sociolinguistics is about understanding how language operates in our everyday interactions, including casual conversations and media exposure, and how societal norms, policies, and laws affect language. Sociolinguistics, put simply, examines the relationship between language and society, aiming at understanding how language is structured and used in daily communication. It explores how social factors like age, education, region, and gender influence how people use language and make choices about the words. However, variationist analysis is a part of overall sociolinguistics. To this effect, this study undertakes a variationist analysis of the progressive aspect of alternatives in Jordan Arabic. It employs quantitative methods to examine how linguistic variation - the choices speakers make between different ways of saying the same thing - is produced and constrained by social factors, particularly gender, age, region, and level of education.

A. Language Variation

The examination of language variation is a fundamental aspect of sociolinguistic inquiries, essential for understanding how various socio-linguistic factors influence specific linguistic phenomena. Labov (1972) argues that the essence of studying language variation lies in the presence of "two or more ways of saying the same thing" (p. 271). Similarly, Al-Wer (2009) highlights that "variation is an inherent characteristic of every human language" (p. 1). This indicates that individuals do not consistently speak in the same manner across all situations. Furthermore, Wolfram (2006) suggests that "if structure is at the heart of language, then variation defines its soul" (p. 333). Variationists typically aim to quantitatively describe linguistic patterns, which are key for correctly explaining variations within a language and predicting language changes.

Variation in language is evident in everyday speech patterns, including differences in pronunciation, word choice or diction, and grammatical structures within the same speech community. This offers understanding into the diversity of language among various speaker groups and its interconnection with social factors. Arabic language, which is the study's focus, shows various types of variations, including phonological and syntactic alterations. For example, in Arabic varieties, the word for 'he said', /qa:l/, can be pronounced in seven different ways, namely [qa:l], [qa:l], [ʔa:l], [ka:l], [k-a:l], [gp:l], and [ʔv:l], each carrying distinct social meanings (Al-Wer, 2009). These different alternants of the word /qa:l/ 'he said' do not express different propositional meanings, but they are different with respect to their social meanings. Similarly, in urban Levantine dialects, variations in the feminine ending demonstrate how linguistic features

can vary based on regional and social factors (Al-Wer, 2000). This illustrates that linguistic variation extends beyond mere sounds and involves variations in grammar and word usage within specific language communities.

B. *Jordanian Arabic (JA)*

Jordanian Arabic (JA), a modern Arabic variety, is an integral part of the wider Arabic linguistic context, which includes both an emotional and conceptual relationship to Arabic. JA serves as a native dialect for individuals residing in Jordan. According to Al-Khatib (1988), the dialect is usually divided into three primary sub-dialects: Urban or Madani, spoken by urban dwellers from major cities in Syria, Palestine and Jordan, such as Amman, Irbid and Zarqa; Rural or FallaaHi, used by individuals from rural areas in Palestine and residing in rural areas and cities in Jordan; and the Bedouin dialect spoken by the people of the southern and eastern regions of Jordan. This categorization depends mainly on phonological differences, particularly in the pronunciation of certain consonants, such as q, k and l, as the lexical, syntactic and morphological features of spoken dialects often overlap (Cleveland, 1963). This classification is relevant to the present study as it examines progressive aspect alternatives in JA through the lens of variationist sociolinguistics, considering social variables of age, gender, region, and level of education.

C. *Progressive Aspect Alternatives in Jordanian Arabic (JA)*

The study at hand uses variationist sociolinguistics to investigate alternative variants indicating progressive aspect in JA. Particularly, the study explores how [qaʕid] ‘to sit’, [3’am], ‘to do’, and [3mmal] ‘to be’ variants, as progressive aspect markers in JA, are constrained by social factors. The following examples from JA illustrate how such variants can be used in JA as progressive aspect markers.

- 1) ʔaħmad qaʕid jehki maʕ ʔumm-uh
Ahmad BE- MSC. SINGULAR calling with his mom
[Ahmad is calling his mom.]
- 2) ʔaħmad ʕam jehki maʕ ʔumm-uh
Ahmed BE calling with his mom
[Ahmad is calling his mom.]
- 3) ʕammalha tijrab ʃa:j
BE- FEM. SINGULAR drinking tea
[She is drinking tea.]

In Examples (1, 2, and 3), [qaʕid], [3’am], and [3mmal] variants do not express the original lexical meanings of the verbs they derive from ‘to sit’, ‘to do’, and ‘to be’ respectively, but rather they have grammatical functions in JA. In fact, they mark progressive aspect. The examples illustrated above show that [qaʕid], [3’am], and [3mmal] are three different ways of expressing a similar interpretation, indicating that actions are in progress. According to the variationist approach, such a variation is a possible effect of sociolinguistic factors. To this effect, this study is concerned with exploring the effects of social factors, namely age, gender, region, and level of education, on variant choice.

D. *Social Variables*

For the purpose of this study, social variables assumed to constrain the use of [qaʕid], [3’am], and [3mmal] variants as markers for progressive aspect in JA are age, gender, region, and level of education. They are selected due to the widely held assumption in variationist sociolinguistics that they are closely associated with variations in language within variationist studies. The following sub-sections discuss these variables.

(a). *Age*

Age has been identified in many studies, including Al-Khatib (1988), Al-Wer (2009), and Al-Shawashreh (2016), as an important factor related to speech differences among different groups of speakers. For example, Al-Wer (2009) argues that within sociolinguistic research, age serves as an indicator of time depth, influencing phonological and syntactic variability in Arabic and facilitating in-depth analysis. The various speech patterns observed are often attributed to the distinct societal roles assumed by speakers of different age groups. Al-Khatib (1988) suggests that older individuals tend to follow traditional linguistic norms more strictly due to their prolonged exposure to these norms and their emotional attachment to them.

(b). *Gender*

Gender is assumed to be a key factor that influences speakers' choice of linguistic variants. In this context, Cameron (1998) argues that men and women can utilize their understanding of the gender-specific connotations associated with certain speech and behaviors to create various outcomes. Generally, studies that examine social dialects tend to explore linguistic differences between male and female speakers. Such differences are related to pronunciation, morphology, and syntactic structures (Holmes, 2008). In this regard, Trudgill (1972) emphasizes that women demonstrate a greater tendency towards using prestigious speech patterns compared to those used by men. Women often employ prestigious variants as a means of asserting their social status, especially in societies where access to workplace is limited for them. Equally, male speakers are more interested in asserting dominance through their economic achievements within their societies. Concerning the Arab world, Abu-Haidar (1989) asserts that young women show increased sensitivity and creativity in response to linguistic changes compared to both older women and young men. Women in village settings,

as explained by Sidnell (1999), typically spend more time at home than men, facing restrictions on their movement and social interactions within the society. Therefore, women tend to be more aware of their behavior and interactions, as their movement is often more restricted compared to men.

(c). *Region*

Regardless of whether they live in an urban or rural location, speakers' choice of linguistic variants is greatly influenced by their geographic region (Miller, 2007). This implies that social or geographic markers may influence language variety and change. Accordingly, linguistic characteristics will vary from one place to another. Due to greater dialect interaction brought about by social mobility and improvements in communication tools, the urban dialect is becoming more and more common among younger generations (Al-Tamimi, 2001; Al-Wer, 2007). According to Al-Shawashreh (2016), there is a widespread recognition in the Arab-speaking world and elsewhere of the impact of urban speech norms on patterns of variation and change. He points out that older, less educated people have less mobility, which limits their exposure to urban speech norms. However, young speakers from rural regions who move to cities for further education or work may change their speech patterns to fit in with urban standards out of concern of being socially stigmatized for coming from a rural background (Miller, 2008). Additionally, Abdel-Jawad (1987) draws attention to the belief that linguistic urban varieties are prestigious and modern in Jordanian communities, imparting a sense of superiority in speakers.

(d). *Education*

One of the most important instruments for promoting social connection in communities is education (Al-Wer, 2000). A person's level of education is frequently used as a measure for measuring their interpersonal ties and social connections. As mentioned by Al-Tamimi (2001), education is recognized for acting "as a channel that brings people in contact with the locally prestigious dialect rather than standardizing their speech" (p. 29). In the same vein, education, according to Owens (2001), is crucial for maintaining linguistic diversity in modern Arabic, as educated speakers exhibit a greater adherence to Standard Arabic patterns compared to their uneducated counterparts. Al-Wer (2000), on the other hand, refutes this idea, arguing that language usage and educational attainment are not correlated. Rather, she claims that a speaker's education operates as a "proxy variable" that reflects the type and degree of their social connections (p. 3). Furthermore, Al-Wer (2000) highlights that native varieties' status, which is based on speakers' social standing rather than Standard Arabic, often influences linguistic changes in the Arab world. Al-Wer (2000) argues that this may not always be the case, defying the notion that education levels rise with the usage of Standard Arabic.

E. *Aims and Questions of the Study*

This study aims at investigating progressive aspect alternatives, namely [qaʕid], [3'am], and [3mmal], in JA. To this effect, it examines the effects of different social factors in constraining variant choice. Drawing on Labov's (1972) variationist sociolinguistics paradigm, the current study aims to answer the following questions: a possible effect of sociolinguistic factors.

1) Which social factors of gender, age, region, and level of education, most influence the choice of progressive aspect variants in JA?

2) To what extent are the progressive aspect variants [qaʕid] 'to sit', [3'am], 'to do', and [3mmal] 'to be' in JA constrained by the social factors of gender, age, region, and level of education?

F. *Significance of the Study*

Variation is an inherent characteristic of language as there is more than one way of saying the same thing. However, this variation is not random but structured and rule governed. The ultimate motivation behind any variationist study is to investigate to what extent do social and linguistic factors affect speakers' linguistic choice. Thus, the significance of this study lies in its attempt to provide a detailed analysis of the attribution of an array of social factors in the alternation of progressive aspect in JA in a corpus of vernacular JA recorded in Jordan in 2023. Many studies have examined linguistic variation in JA with the majority of research focusing on phonological variation in Arabic, in general (e.g., Schulz, 1980; Shorrah, 1981; Daher, 1997; among others), and in specific JA, (e.g., Abdel-Jawad, 1981; Al-Khatib, 1988; Al-Wer, 1991; Al-Tamimi, 2001; Al-Ali & Arafa, 2007; El-Salman, 2003; among others). However, the dearth of research on alternative progressive aspect variants in JA and how social factors, including gender, age, region, and level of education, may influence their choice serves as the main impetus behind this study.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section aims at placing available research in the context of existing knowledge concerning variationist sociolinguistics, with focus on research related to Jordanian vernacular Arabic.

Al-Khatib (1988) conducted a pioneering variationist study in the Jordanian city of Irbid (Hōrān), focusing on six phonological variables: (q), (dʒ), (d), (θ), (k), and (a), across five social dimensions: regional origin, gender, age, education, and style. His research revealed systematic linguistic variation between two rural communities, the Horaniis and Fellahiin, with data collected from 38 informants through face-to-face interviews. Al-Khatib found that lexical

conditioning was prevalent and noted a trend toward greater standardization among males, younger speakers, and rural speakers of Palestinian origin compared to native Jordanians. Education emerged as a significant factor, with highly educated individuals showing a greater tendency toward standardization, particularly in formal settings. However, older speakers, with fewer educational opportunities, adhered more to colloquial variants. Al-Khatib's (1988) study highlighted the influence of social context and education on phonological variation and the ongoing linguistic transformation in the Irbid community.

El-Salman (2003) investigates linguistic variation among Fallahis who moved to Karak, Jordan, due to the Arab Israeli conflicts of 1948 and 1967, focusing on the reflexes of the voiceless uvular stop /q/, the voiceless velar stop /k/, and the morphological variable (Vki) for the 2nd person feminine singular pronoun. The study, involving 48 Jordanian informants displaced from Palestine, utilizes Labov's (1972) variationist approach and SPSS for data analysis. It reveals that young Fallahis prefer the local dialect over their native variants, notably avoiding the [k] variant in favor of [g] due to its social power. Older individuals maintain the non-local [ik] variant, showing resistance to change due to deeply fixed speech patterns, social pressure, and lack of motivation. Gender influences are significant, with young women opting for the [ʔ] variant over [k], aligning with Al-Wer's (1991) view that [ʔ] denotes modernity and softness. Education emerges as a crucial factor, as exposure to other dialects during schooling abroad influences the adoption of urban varieties.

In her study, Al-Wer (2007) explores the linguistic and social dynamics shaping the 'Ammani' dialect in Amman, Jordan, focusing on the interaction between Jordanian and Palestinian dialects. She asserts that the Amman dialect developed from scratch due to the city's lack of a stable, native population. Utilizing data from the Amman Project, she categorizes the city's residents into three generations: the first generation, exposed to various dialects leading to rudimentary leveling (Trudgill, 2004); the second generation, who were the first native speakers and displayed a mix of parental and diverse dialectal features; and the third generation, which achieved linguistic stability and order, earning the label "Ammani". Despite sample limitations, Al-Wer highlights the systematic nature of her data collection, facilitating inter-speaker comparisons and underscoring the transition from chaos to a structured dialectal form in Amman.

Al-Shawashreh's (2016) seminal study on syntactic variation in Jordanian Arabic (JA) investigates word-order variability and pro(noun)-drop variability through a sociolinguistic lens. Addressing the lack of systematic, community-based studies on Arabic word order, Al-Shawashreh provides empirical evidence for the shift from VSO to SVO in vernacular Arabic by analyzing everyday speech. Utilizing Labov's variationist approach, he analyzes data from sociolinguistic interviews with 30 native JA speakers in the Irbid metropolitan area, focusing on age, gender, education, and urban/rural backgrounds. The study reveals that SV(O) word order and null subject pronouns are predominant in JA, with age and education as primary social constraints. Younger, educated speakers prefer SV, while older speakers do not, indicating ongoing change. Linguistic factors, such as transitive verbs and definite subject pronouns, also influence word order choice. In pro-drop variability, education emerges as the main social constraint, with various linguistic factors affecting the selection of overt subject pronouns. This comprehensive analysis highlights the social and linguistic constraints on syntactic variation in JA, offering new insights into its dynamic nature.

Al-Shamayleh (2021) investigates linguistic variation within the Arabic dialects of southern and northern Jordan, focusing on phonological and morphological differences. Using sociolinguistic interviews with 20 participants and the variationist paradigm framework, she identifies significant distinctions, particularly in the use of the [k] and [ʃ] variants, with the southern dialect favoring [k] and the northern dialect favoring [ʃ]. This phonetic variation aligns with findings by Al-Masaeed (2012) regarding the influence of southern Syrian dialects on northern Jordan. These variations, absent in Classical and Modern Standard Arabic, highlight the interaction of standardization and urban influences on regional dialects. Al-Shamayleh's (2021) study enhances our understanding of Arabic dialectology and sociolinguistic dynamics within Jordan.

Alshaboul et al. (2022) investigate syntactic variation in Ammani Arabic (AA), focusing on the influence of social factors, namely age, gender, and education, on the use of intensifiers. Using Labov's variationist approach, they analyze 15 hours of AA recordings to examine the intensifiers /ʔikθi:r/ [many] and its variants, employing GoldVarb X for analysis. Despite thorough analysis, they find that social factors do not significantly impact the distribution of intensifiers in AA. The study also shows that subject expression in AA is primarily driven by linguistic constraints, with minimal representation of subjects as long as they remain relevant in discourse. Furthermore, the semantic classification and functional role of adjectives notably influence the usage of /ʔikθi:r/. Age and education significantly affect word order variant selection in Jordanian Arabic (JA), with transitive object verbs and definite subject pronouns favoring the SV(O) word order. However, factors, such as grammatical subject person, subject information status, and pragmatic discourse organization, play lesser roles. The researchers identify switch reference, person, and number of subjects as primary predictors of overt subject pronouns, while age, gender, and urban/rural dichotomy exhibit minimal impact, with education being a significant constraint.

In Al-Omyan's (2023) study, the person features of the subject are identified as the most significant determinant of the complementizer agreement (CA) pattern in Jordanian Arabic (JA). The study reveals a strong correlation between the subject's person features and the CA pattern, with first and second person subjects showing a higher likelihood of the complementizer agreeing with the embedded clause's subject. This can be attributed to the 'referentiality' of first and

second person forms, which contrasts with the non-referential nature of third person forms. Additionally, the concepts of 'shared context' or 'ostensive nouns' are important in understanding these linguistic constraints, as the cohesive shared context of first and second person forms differs from the disjointed context of third person forms. Thus, syntactic variation in CA within JA is primarily influenced by linguistic rather than social factors.

Finally, as far as the researchers could investigate, progressive aspect alternatives, namely [qaʕid], [3'am], and [3mmal], in JA has not been studied before or is under-investigated, and thus it remains a gap in literature. Accordingly, the dearth of literature in this regard had been the motivation for the current study.

III. METHODOLOGY

This section explains the adopted research design and analysis method, data collection and sampling, and framework of the study.

A. *Research Design and Analysis Method*

The present study follows the approach explained by Al-Shawashreh (2016), which involved not transcribing audio recordings in full. Instead, (1062) valid tokens including relevant occurrences of target variables, were taken out from the audio recordings, and transcribed into an Excel sheet for coding. Then, the tokens within the Excel file underwent coding for various social factors believed to influence variant choice. Once coding was complete and data accuracy was verified, coding strings for each token were combined. Next, both the coding strings and tokens were imported into a GoldVarb X token file, a flat-text format conducive to overall distribution, cross-tabulation, and multivariate analysis, as described by Al-Shawashreh (2016). For data analysis in variationist sociolinguistics, GoldVarb X (Sankoff et al., 2005) is usually employed by researchers. This software enables researchers to perform different analyses, including distributional, multivariate, and cross-tabulation analyses. These involve some steps. First, the frequency of variants for each variable in the dataset is calculated. Next, the distribution of variants across numerous factors influencing them is assessed, which includes comparing marginal distributions (Rand & Sankoff, 1990). A very essential step in distributional analysis is checking cross-tabulations. This step helps to understand how different factors interact (Labov, 2001). In this regard, Labov suggests alternating between cross-tabulations and multivariate analysis, particularly when dealing with social factors. Alteration is needed here because cross-tabulations reveal interaction existence, whereas multivariate analysis calculates the effect size. Incorporated into GoldVarb X, the logistic regression procedure helps identify statistically significant social factors simultaneously (Poplack & Tagliamonte, 2001).

B. *Data Collection and Sampling*

To answer the research questions, the study, following Labov's sociolinguistic interview methodology, examined the linguistic patterns of 48 Jordanian Arabic (JA) native speakers in Jordan in 2023. Through audio-recorded interviews, approximately 30 hours of speech samples were collected. Participants were stratified based on gender (male and female), age (young, middle-aged, and old), region (urban and rural), and education level (low educated and highly educated) to ensure diverse representation. This allowed for the exploration of potential linguistic variations across genders, age groups, geographical locations, and education levels within the JA-speaking community. Urban and rural distinctions aimed to understand the influence of geographical location on linguistic usage. Moreover, education level categorization enabled the examination of linguistic differences related to educational attainment.

C. *Framework of the Study*

The present study utilizes Labov's (1972) variationist sociolinguistics framework, which posits that language variability is innate but governed by internal and external constraints influenced by social and linguistic factors. Labov (1982) emphasizes the importance of understanding these constraints to gain insights into the linguistic system, highlighting the interaction between linguistic and social factors in language choice. Likewise, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001) argue that speakers make multiple choices among alternatives with similar functions, reflecting systematic linguistic variation based on preferences and social contexts. However, Labov (1982) asserts that individual speech cannot represent the entire community's linguistic repertoire, highlighting the significance of studying variation. This perspective is supported by the notion that linguistic variation is influenced by social factors like age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, providing insights into social stratification and identity construction. Eckert (2000) further notes that variationist analysis reveals how social meanings are encoded in linguistic forms, aiding in the understanding of the relationship between language and society.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section is intended to present and discuss findings. It also provides some illustrative examples of progressive aspect alternatives, namely [qaʕid] 'to sit', [3'am], 'to do', and [3mmal] 'to be', identified in the data. The analysis proceeds along three dimensions: first, it presents the overall distribution of identified, targeted variants; second, it uses cross-tabulation of social factors to quantitatively analyze the relationships between multiple variables; and third, it conducts multivariate analysis to identify patterns and correlations among several variables simultaneously.

A. Overall Distribution

The researchers identified 1,062 tokens from interviews with 48 speakers, classified by gender, age, region, and education level. Table 1 below shows the overall distribution of the variants found in the data.

TABLE 1
OVERALL DISTRIBUTION OF THE VARIANTS

VARIANT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE (%)
DELETED (NULL)	323	30.4
[3'AM]	122	11.5
[3MMAL]	43	4
[QASID]	574	54
TOTAL	1062	100

Table 2 shows that [qaʃid] variant is the most frequent variant in the data, accounting for 54% of the overall identified tokens. It also shows that the percentages of the other variants, i.e. [3'am], and [3mmal] are relatively low, accounting for 11.5% and 4%, respectively.

B. Cross-Tabulation of Social Factors

The subsequent sections present cross-tabulations for four social factors: age, gender, education, and region. This presentation is necessary as cross-tabulations for each social factor are included to investigate whether the intersection of these factors affects the constraints on variant choice.

(a). Cross-Tabulation of Age and Gender

The cross-tabulation analysis of gender and age, as shown in Table 2, indicates that the intersection of these factors does not notably affect variant choice. Both males and females across all age groups exhibit similar preferences for the [qaʃid] variant, representing 53% and 55% respectively. Similarly, for [3'am] variant, preferences remain consistent among young, middle-aged, and old individuals of both genders, with percentages ranging from 67% to 55%. However, there is a notable difference concerning [3mmal] variant, where males consistently show preferences across age groups, while females demonstrate a distinct pattern with minimal preference across all age categories. Despite these variations, [qaʃid] variant consistently emerges as the most prevalent across all age groups and genders. These findings suggest that while gender and age do not significantly influence variant choice overall, there are slight deviations observed, particularly with [3mmal] variant, indicating nuanced differences in preference among females across age groups.

TABLE 2
CROSS-TABULATION ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO AGE AND GENDER

Group #1 -- horizontally.
Group #2 -- vertically.

	A		B		C		Σ	
	+	%	+	%	+	%		%
M D:	49	26:	54	30:	54	28	157	28
L:	30	16:	18	10:	19	10	67	12
X:	20	10:	15	8:	6	3	41	7
Y:	92	48:	92	51:	117	60	301	53
Σ:	191	:	179	:	196		566	
F D:	68	36:	49	34:	49	30	166	33
L:	24	13:	28	19:	3	2	55	11
X:	0	0:	2	1:	0	0	2	0
Y:	95	51:	67	46:	111	68	273	55
Σ:	187	:	146	:	163		496	
Σ D:	117	31:	103	32:	103	29	323	30
L:	54	14:	46	14:	22	6	122	11
X:	20	5:	17	5:	6	2	43	4
Y:	187	49:	159	49:	228	64	574	54
Σ:	378	:	325	:	359		1062	

Gender (M: Male, F: Female); Age: A: (young 18-31 years), B: (middle 32-49 years), C: old (50+); Variants: Y: [qaʃid], L: [3'am], X: [3mmal], D: Null.

(b). Cross-Tabulation of Age and Education

The cross-tabulation analysis of age and education levels, as shown in Table 3, reveals that regardless of age, individuals with lower education levels tend to prefer [qaʃid] variant (59%) more than those with higher education levels (49%), while highly educated individuals exhibit a preference for [3'am] variant (17%) compared to less educated counterparts (6%). Notably, among highly educated speakers, there is a distinction in the use of [3'am] variant

across generations, with younger and middle-aged individuals showing higher usage (26% and 19% respectively) compared to older individuals (6%). However, the usage of [3'am] variant remains consistent across age groups among low educated speakers. Furthermore, both highly educated and low educated speakers demonstrate similar preferences for [3mmal] variant (4%) across all age groups. These findings suggest a correlation between education levels and variant preference, with higher education correlating with a preference for [3'am] variant, and a generational divide observed among highly educated individuals regarding its usage.

TABLE 3
CROSS-TABULATION ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO AGE AND EDUCATION

Group #1 -- horizontally.
Group #4 -- vertically.

		A		B		C		Σ	
			%		%		%		%
H	D:	57	30:	50	31:	49	28	156	30
	L:	49	26:	31	19:	11	6	91	17
	X:	8	4:	11	7:	4	2	23	4
	Y:	77	40:	69	43:	109	63	255	49
	Σ:	191	:	161	:	173		525	
L	D:	60	32:	53	32:	54	29	167	31
	L:	5	3:	15	9:	11	6	31	6
	X:	12	6:	6	4:	2	1	20	4
	Y:	110	59:	90	55:	119	64	319	59
	Σ:	187	:	164	:	186		537	
Σ		117	31:	103	32:	103	29	323	30
L:		54	14:	46	14:	22	6	122	11
X:		20	5:	17	5:	6	2	43	4
Y:		187	49:	159	49:	228	64	574	54
Σ:		378	:	325	:	359		1062	

Education (H: high education, L: low education); Age: A: (young 18-31 years), B: (middle 32-49 years), C: old (50+); Variants: Y: [qaʕid], L: [3'am], X: [3mmal], D: Null.

(c). Cross-Tabulation of Age and Region

The cross-tabulation analysis of age and region, depicted in Table 4, reveals notable trends in linguistic variant usage among speakers. Regardless of age, individuals from rural areas predominantly utilize the variant [qaʕid] (74%), contrasting sharply with urban speakers (38%). On the other hand, variants [3'am] and [3mmal] are entirely absent among rural speakers (0%), yet urban speakers employ them, constituting 21% and 7%, respectively. This pattern underscores a clear rural preference for [qaʕid] variant, while [3'am] and [3mmal] variants are exclusive to urban contexts, indicating a distinct linguistic divergence between urban and rural regions.

TABLE 4
CROSS-TABULATION ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO AGE AND REGION

Group #1 -- horizontally.
Group #3 -- vertically.

		A		B		C		Σ	
			%		%		%		%
U	D:	79	36:	57	32:	64	34	200	34
	L:	54	25:	46	26:	22	12	122	21
	X:	20	9:	17	10:	6	3	43	7
	Y:	67	30:	58	33:	95	51	220	38
	Σ:	220	:	178	:	187		585	
R	D:	38	24:	46	31:	39	23	123	26
	L:	0	0:	0	0:	0	0	0	0
	X:	0	0:	0	0:	0	0	0	0
	Y:	120	76:	101	69:	133	77	354	74
	Σ:	158	:	147	:	172		477	
Σ		117	31:	103	32:	103	29	323	30
L:		54	14:	46	14:	22	6	122	11
X:		20	5:	17	5:	6	2	43	4
Y:		187	49:	159	49:	228	64	574	54
Σ:		378	:	325	:	359		1062	

Region (U: urban, R: rural); Age: A: (young 18-31 years), B: (middle 32-49 years), C: old (50+); Variants: Y: [qaʕid], L: [3'am], X: [3mmal], D: Null.

C. Multivariate Analysis of Social Factors

Multivariate analysis allows for the simultaneous examination of multiple factors within a single run, with a limit of six factors per run. According to Poplack and Tagliamonte (2001), multivariate analysis provides three key pieces of

[Taha is talking to his friend.]

2. (Urban, Young, Low-Educated Male)

ʔaboj qaʕid jeħdʕar ʔilʔaxbar
My dad BE- MSC. SINGULAR watching the news

[My dad is watching the news.]

3. (Urban, Middle-aged, High-Educated Male)

tamir ʕam jeħdʕar ʔilmubarah
Tamer BE watching the match

[Tamer is watching the match.]

4. (Urban, Middle-aged, Low-Educated Male)

Nadja ʕamalha talʕab ʕalbaskalait
Nadia BE- FEM. SINGULAR plays bicycle

[Nadia is riding a bicycle.]

5. (Urban, Old, High-Educated Male)

ʕammar qaʕid jirdʒuf min ʔilbard
Ammar BE- MSC. SINGULAR shaking from cold

[Ammar is feeling very cold.]

6. (Urban, Old, Low-Educated Male)

sanaʔ qaʕdeh tʕrab maj
Sana BE-FEM. SINGULAR drinking water

[Sana is drinking water.]

7. (Urban, Young, High-Educated Female)

muna ʕam tʕrab ʕasʕjr farawla
Muna BE drinking juice strawberry

[Muna is drinking strawberry juice.]

8. (Urban, Young, Low-Educated Female)

ʕamalha tʕrab ʕa:j
BE- FEM. SINGULAR drinking tea

[She is drinking tea.]

9. (Urban, Middle-aged, High-Educated Female)

ʔana qaʕdeh ʔaʕmil muqa:baleh
I BE- FEM. SINGULAR doing interview

[I am running an interview.]

10. (Urban, Middle-aged, Low-Educated Female)

baba ʕam biʕu:f ʔilmuba:rah
Dad BE looking the match

[My dad is watching the match.]

11. (Urban, Old, High-Educated Female)

linda wa tuqa qaʕdat jithawafu
Linda and Tuqa BE- FEM. PLURAL fighting

[Linda and Tuqa are fighting.]

12. (Urban, Old, Low-Educated Female)

qaʕdeh ʔaʕtʕif ʔilʔardʕ
BE- FEM. SINGULAR cleaning the floor

[She is cleaning the floor.]

13. (Rural, Young, High-Educated Male)

qaʕid ʔaʕtayl ʕa muʕruʕi
BE- MSC. SINGULAR working on my project

[I am working on my project.]

14. (Rural, Young, Low-Educated Male)

muħammad qa:ʕid jiqraʔ ʕa ʔimtiħa:nuh
Mohammed BE- MSC. SINGULAR reading for his exam

[Mohammed is studying for his exam.]

15. (Rural, Middle-aged, High-Educated Male)

ʔinta qaʕid ʔitsawlif kθi:r
You BE- MSC. SINGULAR speaking a lot

[You are very talkative.]

16. (Rural, Middle-aged, Low-Educated Male)

ʔilxazzan qaʕid jnaqqetʕ maj

- The water tank BE- MSC. SINGULAR leaking water
[The water tank is dripping water.]
17. (Rural, Old, High-Educated Male)
Hajatnj qa:ʕid ʔaʕtʕj muhadʕarah
I am BE- MSC. SINGULAR giving lecture
[I am lecturing.]
18. Rural, Old, Low-Educated Male)
ha:dʒa:r qaʕdah tubrum maʕ ʕamitha ʕa talafu:n
Hajar BE- FEM. SINGULAR talking with her aunt on the phone
[Hajar is speaking with her aunt on the phone.]
19. Rural, Young, High-Educated Female)
ʔana qaʕdeh ʔaħdʕar ʔilmuhadara hasa
I BE- MSC. SINGULAR attending lecture now
[I am attending the lecture right now.]
20. Rural, Young, Low-Educated Female)
Hajatna qaʕdjn ʔindzahaiz ħalna
We are BE- MSC. PLURAL preparing ourselves
[We are preparing ourselves.]
21. Rural, Middle-aged, High-Educated Female)
Kunna qaʕdjn nishar sawa
We were BE- MSC. PLURAL stay up together
[We were spending time together.]
22. Rural, Middle-aged, Low-Educated Female)
ʔenti qaʕdeh ʔitdʕ ubbj ʔilyasi:l
You BE- FEM. SINGULAR picking up the laundry
[You are picking up the laundry.]
23. Rural, Old, High-Educated Female)
ʔana qaʕdeh ʔaktub baħθ qajjam
I BE- FEM. SINGULAR writing research important
[I am working on important research.]
24. Rural, Old, Low-Educated Female)
ʔilbisseh qaʕdeh ʔitmawwj
The cat BE- FEM. SINGULAR meowing
[The cat is meowing.]

D. Summary of Findings

In light of the results of the overall distribution, cross-tabulations, and multivariate analysis of the social (age, gender, region, and level of education) factors, it is obvious that some factors are found to be statistically significant factors in restricting the use of [qaʕid], [3ʕam], and [3mmal] variants in JA. The study shows that region, age, and education level significantly restrict the selection of [qaʕid] variant, while gender does not. This finding answers the first question of the study, which is related to the identification of which social factors of gender, age, region, and level of education, most influence the choice of progressive aspect variants in JA. Also, this finding suggests that some speakers view this variant as a marker of their identity and loyalty to their dialect, reflecting a deep connection to their cultural heritage and regional affiliation. Such expressions serve as powerful indicators of identity and group cohesion as they reinforce social and historical ties within communities. Moreover, the study highlights the prestige associated with urban dialects, with [3ʕam] and [3mmal] variants being used mainly by urban speakers and not by rural ones. This illustrates the concept of supra-localization, where urban variants gain wider acceptance at the expense of locally specific forms due to dialect contact, as discussed by Milroy et al. (1994). The findings emphasize the significant impact of regional factors on language variation, with urban-rural differences obviously shaping linguistic patterns. Additionally, the findings suggest that younger speakers are more receptive to new variants and innovations, facilitated by increased exposure to varied linguistic backgrounds through technology. This dynamic nature of language, where younger generations often introduce changes, contrasts with the tendency of older generations to maintain traditional norms, highlighting the key role of age in the evolution of language over time. Furthermore, higher education levels correlate with certain variant preferences, possibly tied to the prestige of urban dialects and the cultural affluence associated with education. This finding answers the second question of the study, related to the identification of the extent to which the progressive aspect variants [qaʕid], [3ʕam], and [3mmal] in JA are constrained by the social factors of gender, age, region, and level of education. In fact, such insights stress the dynamic nature of language variation and the interaction between social factors and linguistic choices in JA.

V. CONCLUSION

This study explores the variation in the use of the progressive aspect variants [qaʕid], [3ʕam], and [3mmal] in JA, and how social factors, such as gender, age, region, and level of education influence their usage. The results indicate that certain social factors, particularly region, age, and education level, significantly influence the selection of these variants in JA, while gender does not exhibit any statistical significance. The findings suggest that the use of specific variants serves as a marker of identity and loyalty to one's dialect, reflecting a deep connection to cultural heritage and regional connection. The study recommends expanding the sample size to include a more diverse range of speakers from various regions in Jordan to gain a comprehensive understanding of linguistic variation across the country. Also, longitudinal studies are advocated to track changes in the usage of specific linguistic variants over time, facilitating insights into the dynamics of language change and the factors driving it. In addition, the attitudes of speakers towards different variants and how these attitudes influence language use could be investigated. Understanding the social perceptions of linguistic variants can provide insights into the sociocultural dynamics of language use. Finally, comparative studies with other Arabic-speaking regions are recommended to identify similarities and differences in language variation patterns, contributing to broader Arabic dialectology.

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Imagined Identity and Investment in English Pronunciation Learning Among English Learners

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Abstract—This qualitative case study examined the impacts of learners' imagined identity on investment by analyzing English pronunciation learning journey among three English major students in China. The results indicated that the participants' investment choices at different learning stages were influenced by their diverse imagined identities, which were shaped by specific social and personal factors. However, the limitation in imagined identities as test-machine led to the neglect of English pronunciation learning, while the extension of imagined identities like a good English pronunciation learner and teacher encouraged further investment to be made in senior high school and university. Additionally, participants' imagined identities may function as a potent motivator for action, allowing them to execute investments accordingly across diverse learning contexts. Nonetheless, various personal and contextual factors hindered English pronunciation learning investment. Drawing from the findings, several practical pedagogical implications and recommendations for future studies are proposed to advance the domain of foreign language learning and teaching.

Index Terms—English pronunciation learning, English major students, imagined identity, investment

I. INTRODUCTION

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a significant national policy proposed during the Third Plenary Session of the 18th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee in 2013, aims to strengthen the global economic governance system and foster global common development. English, being the international language in countries along the BRI route, offers job opportunities and poses challenges for Chinese English major students (Xiao, 2021; Wang, 2020; Liang, 2015). One of these challenges is their insufficient English pronunciation skills, which impede smooth communication (Xuan, 2019).

Considering the poor pronunciation learning among Chinese English major students, a few studies (Wu & Zhu, 2020; Niu, 2022; Lu, 2016) have analyzed this matter based on motivation. As a result, the psychological construct perceives English learners as having a single, fixed, and non-historical personality and classifies them as good/bad, motivated/unmotivated, or introverted/extroverted. Norton (2015) contended that motivation alone cannot elucidate why a highly motivated learner might decline the chance to speak in a situation where they perceive themselves as disadvantaged. She argued that language learners possess intricate, multifaceted identities that evolve over time and in different environments, and are perpetuated through social interactions.

In Norton's (2000) perspective, identity includes "how an individual perceives their connection to the world, how this connection evolves over time and space, and how they envision future possibilities" (p. 5). Additionally, Norton (2000) stressed the intrinsic link between investment and identity, suggesting that investing in a target language is also an investment in one's identity. Consequently, not only do past and present constructed identities influence decision-making, but imagined identities also significantly impact learners' agency in making various learning choices, thereby shaping their learning paths (Norton & Kamal, 2003; Wu, 2017). Several researchers (Wu, 2017; Xu & Kim, 2022; Chik, 2007) have explored the connection between English learners' imagined identity and investment. Nevertheless, the aforementioned studies solely illustrated the relationships between the two constructs regarding general English learning in both the ESL and EFL contexts. The relevant studies on English sub-skills, such as English pronunciation learning in EFL are relatively rare.

Pronunciation stands out among the linguistic factors acquired by foreign or second language learners due to its profound link with identity, serving as a crucial aspect of self-representation (Tamimi Sa'd, 2018; Huang, 2022). Moreover, Foote and Trofimovich (2017) mentioned that learners' desired membership in professional, cultural, social, or linguistic communities influences their pronunciation. It indicates the necessity of understanding English learners'

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imagined identity and investment in English pronunciation learning from a sociocultural perspective. This current study could help teachers and learners understand the personal and contextual factors impacting learners' English pronunciation learning.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW: IMAGINED IDENTITY AND INVESTMENT IN ENGLISH LEARNING

With the waning of cognitivism in the mid-1990s, the sociocultural dimensions of second language acquisition have garnered increased attention. Amid this paradigm shift, the notion of investment (Norton, 2000) has emerged as a focal point. It challenges the idea of motivation as a binary, fixed, and singular construct, positing instead a more fluid, dynamic, and contextualized perspective that views language learners as individuals with diverse desires and identities shaped by historical and societal factors. According to Norton (2013), identity includes a learner's comprehension of their connection to the world, as well as the ongoing construction and reconstruction of that relationship in the future. This concept interconnects the past, present, and future, including various social connections. The formation of a learner's identity occurs within communities of practice, both past and present (Wenger, 1999), including learning groups and social activities within institutions. Regarding the future, it can be envisioned through imagination based on past experiences and personal interpretations of all other relationships.

Wenger (1999) pioneered the connection between imagination and identity, conceptualizing imagination as an extension of the individual that surpasses temporal and spatial boundaries. In this context, language learners can craft a fresh portrayal of themselves and their aspirations in professional and academic realms. This notion lays the groundwork for the concept of "imagined identity." Norton (2014) defined imagined identity as a virtual identity in the mind, wherein the perceived connection between events, even in the absence of direct interaction, influences their investments in second language (L2) learning. Some empirical studies (Pavlenko, 2003; Chik, 2007; Wu, 2017; Xu & Kim, 2022) in the EFL and ESL contexts have associated learners' imagined identity with investment in general English learning, revealing that if learners' imagined identity provides one's academic and professional objectives, they will take agency to achieve those goals.

Trofimovich and Turuševa (2015) proposed that learners' dedication to improving English pronunciation may strongly hinge on their beliefs regarding how their pronunciation will impact their future membership in an imagined community. Within the framework of ELF, numerous inquiries (Sung, 2014; McCrocklin & Link, 2016; Huang & Hashim, 2021; Kong & Kang, 2022) have examined the link between learners' perceptions of their desired identity and the learning of English pronunciation, particularly in relation to English accents. However, relevant empirical studies in this area of EFL are relatively scarce. In China, the general American (GA) and received pronunciation (RP) remain dominant in the learning process. To grasp the influence of learners' imagined identity on their English pronunciation learning, it is crucial to analyze the phenomenon of English pronunciation learning experiences qualitatively, for instance, through a case study approach.

To tackle the aforementioned concerns, this study utilized a multiple-case study approach to examine the English pronunciation learning experiences of three English major students in China. The primary focus was on their imagined identity shaped by English pronunciation learning and its influence on their investment in English pronunciation learning. The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. What imagined identities do the students develop throughout their English pronunciation learning?
2. How do their imagined identities impact their investment in English pronunciation learning?

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This article is part of the documentation from a qualitative PhD project. As per Yin (2009), a case study aims to investigate a contemporary condition within its real-life context, particularly when the boundary between the phenomenon and its context is blurred. Following this definition, Heigham and Croker (2009) suggested that a case study serves three objectives. Firstly, it seeks to enhance conditions or practices based on observations within specific cases. Secondly, the findings are extended to other cases with similar backgrounds. Thirdly, the study aims to attain a comprehensive understanding of the matter under investigation. Consequently, this current qualitative case study was developed to offer valuable insights into the role of imagined identities in English pronunciation learning investment in China.

A. Participants

In qualitative research, purposeful sampling is commonly employed, typically with small sample sizes (Palinkas et al., 2015). In addition, the researcher gains significant insights from participant selection (Merriam, 2019). Since imagination is a personal matter, imagined identity is influenced by specific social and personal factors (Wu, 2017; Kharchenko, 2014), such as learning and professional experiences, as well as language proficiency. To comprehensively understand English major students' investment in English pronunciation learning, three participants were chosen based on diverse English learning backgrounds and proficiency levels at a typical university. Invitations were presented to the students, while an introduction was made to the requisites and advantages of participation in this study. Subsequently,

three students consented to participate and signed consent forms. Additionally, pseudonyms were assigned to maintain participant confidentiality.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Age	Major	Pronunciation level	Grade	Family	Nationality
Chen	19	English Education	High level	freshman	Diver and saleswomen	Han
Xi	21	English Business	Middle level	Sophomore	Businessmen	Han
Ma	21	English Education	Low level	Sophomore	Peasants	Hui

B. Data Collection

Following the tradition of qualitative research, various data collection methods were employed in this study, such as interviews, participants' oral narratives, and written narratives. This approach facilitated a comprehensive comparison and triangulation of three distinct sources, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research findings and interpretations (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Data collection took place over a period of four months, from March to June 2022.

(a) *Written narrative* The three participants in this study were directed to document their English pronunciation learning journeys from primary school through junior and senior high school to university. They received a structured framework, based on Barkhuizen and Wett's (2008) guidelines, to capture essential data about their experiences, emotions, perspectives, and reflections on English pronunciation learning. Specifically, they were asked to detail their personal imagined identities related to English pronunciation learning, the development and evolution of these imagined identities, their impact on English pronunciation learning, and the challenges encountered across different stages of English pronunciation learning. All participants recorded their narratives in Chinese. Chen's narrative consisted of 3500 words, Xi's 2235 words, and Ma's 2100 words.

(b) *Oral narrative* All participants recounted their stories in Chinese, each lasting approximately 30-40 minutes. Their oral narratives were recorded, but only the extra comments not included in the written narrative were noted and then transcribed verbatim because the content of the oral narrative coincided with the written narrative.

(c) *Interview* The semi-structured interview format enables interviewers to investigate the opinions and ideas of the interviewees, as well as to probe deeper into their responses for further information and clarification, particularly when addressing complex or sensitive topics (Merriam & Grenier, 2019). An interview protocol, containing the questions for Chen, Xi, and Ma, was prepared in advance. Several questions required participants to provide clarification regarding the issues identified by the researchers upon observing their written narratives. These questions aimed to elicit additional insights and deepen the understanding of the participants' experiences. Overall, two semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 40 minutes each for factors shaping their imagined identity and investment in terms of English pronunciation were performed and audio-recorded during different English pronunciation learning phrases.

C. Data Analysis

Data analysis is a dynamic and evolving process that involves multiple readings of data collected from diverse sources (Patton, 2023). The written narrative transcripts, serving as the primary data source, underwent coding using Nvivo12 software. Subsequently, paradigmatic analytic procedures were employed to derive taxonomies and categories from common elements across the dataset (Polkinghorne, 1995). Key themes in both oral and written narratives were identified, and these findings were cross-referenced with interview data to confirm or refine emergent themes. Recurring themes and patterns observed during analysis were interpreted within the framework of two theoretical concepts: imagined identity and investment. Subsequently, the preliminary results were then summarized and presented to participants for feedback through a member-checking process (Thomas, 2017).

IV. THE RESULTS

A. Primary School

(a) *Chen* Chen, a native of Guiyang in southwestern China, had a substantial phonetic learning background compared to her peers. Despite English not being a primary subject in primary school, like Chinese and mathematics, she displayed strong enthusiasm for English learning. In her written narrative, Chen recounted how her mother regularly enrolled her in an English training institution called "*CC English*" every weekend. Inspired by the instructional philosophy of these English training institutions, which aimed to enhance learners' English communication skills, Chen aspired to excel as an English pronunciation learner.

Despite the positive aspects mentioned earlier, Chen encountered several challenges. For instance, she struggled with learning English pronunciation at "*CC English*" because she could not keep up with the teacher's pace of instruction. However, unlike her peers who gave up, Chen, a competitive individual, sought to earn her teacher's recognition and praise. With the help of her mother, she enrolled in another English institution called "*Susan English*." Here, Chen was able to acquire a solid foundation of basic phonetic knowledge, enabling her to develop her spoken English with the guidance of her dedicated teacher and her own diligence. During the interview, Chen elaborated on the investment behaviors she exhibited to achieve her goals.

Interviewer: How did you learn English pronunciation in *Susan English*?

Chen: During that period, I aimed to earn praise from my English teacher at the training center. Therefore, I made every effort to memorize the English IPA, spelling rules, and to mimic the teacher's pronunciation both inside and outside the classroom. Eventually, I became a model student in my formal school, and my classmates looked up to me as someone to emulate. You know, I was so delighted.

(Interview-Chen)

(b) *Xi* Initially, Xi's English pronunciation learning was confined to using Chinese pinyin to help her spell English words. Since English was not a major subject in the curriculum of her primary school, neither the school nor the teacher prioritized English learning. Based on Xi's written narrative, the English subject was taught by a math teacher whose English pronunciation was inadequate, causing her to lose interest in English. Consequently, she neglected English pronunciation learning and did not develop any imagined identity related to English pronunciation.

I began learning English in the third grade of primary school. However, phonetic symbols were not part of our curriculum. English was not a priority subject, so we did not pay much attention to it, including pronunciation. What's worse, the English was taught by a math teacher with poor English pronunciation. We had to resort to writing in Chinese to aid our memory of English pronunciation. Personally, I was playful and never considered improving my English pronunciation.

(Written narrative-Xi)

(b) *Ma* Ma, hailing from the Hui ethnicity, was born into a farming family. She attended primary school in Miyi, a mountainous county home to 26 ethnic groups. Due to the secluded location and limited educational resources, she had no contact with English during her elementary school years. According to Ma's narrative, she was completely unaware of English and had never heard of the concept, let alone formed any imaginary identities related to English pronunciation.

During my time in primary school, unlike my classmates who had experiences learning English in training schools or formal schools, I did not have the opportunity to learn English. To be honest, prior to junior school, I had never even heard of English, let alone English pronunciation. It simply was not something that crossed my mind.

(Written narrative-Ma)

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF IMAGINED IDENTITY AND INVESTMENT IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Participants	Imagined identity	Investment
Chen	A good pronunciation learner	"CC English" training institution; "Susan English" training institution
Xi	No	No
Ma	No	No

B. Junior and Senior High Schools

(a) *Chen* Throughout junior and senior school, Chen engaged in watching multiple English movies and TikTok short videos, as well as developed an interest in short dubbed videos. These experiences not only fueled her aspirations to become an English singer, blogger, and dubbing actress but also enlightened her to the pivotal role of pronunciation in shaping diverse characters. In the internet age, she believed that ordinary people are able to rely on their talents and efforts to join careers that were previously out of reach in the past and become members of glamorous communities. In her written narrative, Chen aspired to become a singer like *Taylor Swift*, who inspired her fans with an authentic American accent and hoped to be a lively and entertaining English blogger like *Ma Siri* and *Cardib*, who shared insights into the differences between Chinese and Western cultures in English. Overall, the appealing visions motivated Chen to consistently invest in English pronunciation through various means, including English fun dubbing, singing English songs, shadow reading outside of class, and practicing with classmates to overcome suprasegmental features and correct her Chinese accent. Despite facing challenges in reaching English pronunciation standards, Chen encouraged herself with the motto "Persistence is victory." She expressed the following sentiments during the interview.

In today's Internet age, achieving overnight popularity is no longer impossible if one has talent. Believing that with sufficiently standard English pronunciation, becoming an English-related internet celebrity was entirely feasible, I persevered in diligently working towards my dream through daily English dubbing and shadow reading exercises.

(Interview-Chen)

(b) *Xi* In junior high schools, English is no longer considered a minor subject; it holds an equally significant role alongside Chinese and mathematics in the curriculum syllabus. However, English pronunciation remains neglected, similar to Cinderella, as English teaching and learning primarily focus on written-examination knowledge, comprising vocabulary and grammar. However, her negative belief in English pronunciation turned to positive in senior high school. As the English representative, Xi was tasked with leading her classmates in morning read-aloud sessions. To fulfill the role of a model student capable of reading English texts accurately and fluently, she dedicated her spare time in the first and second years of senior high school to shadow reading after listening to audio to practice her English

pronunciation. While, in the third year, Xi shifted her focus entirely to preparing for the college entrance examination (*Gaokao*), which impacts the future of millions of students in China. Consequently, English pronunciation ceased to be her priority, given its exclusion from high-stakes examinations.

During senior high school, I was selected as the representative of the English course. Our English teacher preferred interactive activities to enhance our communicative skills. I always actively participated in these interactive activities. It was essential for me to serve as a role model. Hence, when speaking English, I felt compelled to ensure accurate pronunciation and enhance fluency. After class, I regularly practiced English reading in the mornings. But, in my final year of senior high school, I discontinued regular pronunciation practice and focused solely on preparing for the college entrance examination.

(Written narrative-Xi)

(c) *Ma* Although Ma began learning English in junior high school, she found that English pronunciation remained neglected throughout both her junior and senior high school years. From Ma's written narrative, as part of a minority group of students with weak English foundations, their English teachers expected them to achieve high English scores in both the senior high school entrance examination and the college entrance examination (*Gaokao*). These exams primarily focused on exam-oriented knowledge, including vocabulary, grammar, and reading comprehension. Since English pronunciation was not assessed in these high-stakes exams, it was never a focal point of the teachers' instruction. Consequently, activities related to English pronunciation learning, such as listening and speaking in the classroom, were rare. Ma described her experience as being similar to a "test machine" throughout junior and senior high school, with no emphasis on English pronunciation.

Interviewer: How did you evaluate your role in English pronunciation learning in junior high school and senior high school?

Ma: During these two periods, I saw myself merely as a test-taking machine devoid of emotions, never considering English pronunciation.

(Interview-Ma)

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF IMAGINED IDENTITIES AND INVESTMENT IN JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Participants	Imagined identity	Investment	Events resulting in less investment	
Chen	A good English pronunciation learner; An English singer; An English actress; An English blogger	English funny dubbing; Singing English songs; Doing shadow reading; Practicing with classmates		
Xi	A model English learner	Doing shadow reading	College entrance examination	
Ma	A test-machine		High entrance examination; College entrance examination	

C. At the University

(a) *Chen* As a versatile girl skilled in singing and dancing, she joined the school's literature and art club and actively participated in cross-cultural exchange activities to connect with like-minded friends. However, when she shared her aspirations with classmates and friends, they did not take them seriously, believing that teaching was the ideal career for girls. This reality made her aware of the obstacles in achieving her imagined identity as a multi-talented celebrity. In Chen's oral narrative, she acknowledged that if her dreams of becoming an English singer and blogger did not materialize, becoming an ordinary English teacher would be a respectable alternative, given its high public regard. With both her old and new aspirations in mind, she actively engaged in phonetic learning activities, sought assistance from teachers in class, sang English songs, practiced English dubbing exercises, and studied phonetics online outside of school. Here are Chen's statements from the interview:

Interviewer: Have you ever thought about giving up on ideas that classmates find impractical, such as becoming an English blogger?

Chen: No. Now everyone is living on the Internet. These ideas, as English singers, bloggers, or actresses, were easy to implement. Classmates may be more traditional. However, if these imagined identities cannot be realized, I can also become an ordinary university teacher who is widely recognized by the public. After all, becoming a well-known celebrity was not an easy task. Anyway, I would do my best not to let them burst.

(Interview-Chen)

(b) *Xi* At the university, Xi listened to the opinions of her parents, who perceived teaching as a more stable and suitable career for women. This profession also provided summer and winter holidays for women to care for their families. Therefore, Xi applied to a normal college to pursue an English major. In her freshman year, she encountered Ms. Dong who was responsible for teaching the English phonetic course and comprehensive English. Known for her strict teaching style, Ms. Dong prioritized articulation and pronunciation, which helped Xi aware the incorrect pronunciation habits formed from previous learning experiences. Concerned about potentially misleading future

students as an English teacher due to her own poor pronunciation, Xi actively engaged in phonetic instruction activities during her freshman year. This included participating in shadow reading, mimicking news broadcasts, and conducting morning reading sessions outside of class.

In the first semester of my freshman year, I aspired to be an English teacher. I was very motivated to learn. Ms. Dong, who was in charge of learning pronunciation at the time, made me realize that I had many incorrect pronunciation habits. Thinking about becoming a teacher in the future, I was afraid of misleading my students, so I was very serious about correcting pronunciation and practicing by imitation.

(Written narrative-Xi)

However, she has stopped learning English pronunciation since her sophomore year. According to the foreign language school policy, if students fail to pass the TEM-4, they will not be able to obtain a bachelor's degree or graduation certificate, which is essential for their job-seeking process in the future. Thus, to enhance the passing rate of the TEM-4 exam, teachers intentionally intensified exam-oriented practice in class, overlooking pronunciation issues. Concurrently, surrounding students were also intensively preparing for the exam, shifting their focus away from pronunciation learning. In this environment devoid of pronunciation learning, Xi's enthusiasm for improving pronunciation gradually waned.

In the sophomore year, everybody was busy with TEM-4, which was very significant for us in obtaining a bachelor's degree. The overall learning atmosphere was completely different from that in the freshman year, when both teachers and classmates paid great attention to pronunciation. I was not a maverick person. Hence, I did not keep learning pronunciation anymore.

(Written narrative-Xi)

Additionally, Xi lacks a comprehensive understanding of English phonetics. She expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that the English phonetic course was only offered for one semester during her freshman year. In particular, the focus of the course was on segmental features of phonetic knowledge, with little attention given to supra-segmental features. Consequently, Xi felt ill-prepared in this area. Even if she desired to self-study, she felt powerless due to the lack of resources and guidance.

Interviewer: How do you feel learning English pronunciation?

Xi: It is quite challenging. We only covered basic segmental features in the first semester, which was limited. Sometimes, I feel motivated to learn in my free time, but I struggle to figure out where to begin.

(Interview-Xi)

(c) *Ma* Following parental advice, she pursued an English major, aspiring to become an English teacher. Influenced by her English pronunciation instructor, she began to understand the importance of pronunciation. In her written narrative, Ma recounted attending an English phonetics class during her freshman year, where the instructor stressed the significance of pronunciation. Inspired by this guidance, Ma aimed to cultivate strong pronunciation skills and achieve her goal of becoming a qualified English teacher. Thus, during the phonetics course, Ma actively followed the instructor's guidance, practicing imitation of the 48 IPA symbols, focusing on articulation techniques in class, engaging in morning readings with English audio, and watching phonetic instructional videos on the *Bilibili* platform after class, all in pursuit of obtaining a high score in the pronunciation test.

During that period, I sensed a significant gap between myself and my classmates, motivating me to study diligently. Our English phonetics teacher was also very conscientious. Through her, I realized that poor pronunciation could adversely affect students if I were to become an English teacher in the future. Therefore, I dedicated myself to learning during that time, engaging in numerous imitation exercises such as morning readings and watching Bilibili, hoping to attain excellent results.

(Written narrative-Ma)

Despite Ma's diligent endeavors, she fared poorly in the English pronunciation exam, which left her disheartened since her efforts did not culminate in the outcomes she had hoped for. Subsequently, Ma stopped learning pronunciation and deliberately neglected it, as she perceived herself as a poor English learner, unlike her Han classmates who were apt and able to pursue advanced English pronunciation.

Interviewer: How do you feel about your poor phonetic score?

Ma: Disappointed. I am a minority student from remote areas. I did not aspire to be like my classmates who excelled in English. My only goal was to pass the TEM-4 exam the following year. Although achieving excellent pronunciation was satisfactory, I felt it was not the right fit for me. Consequently, I lost interest in furthering my English pronunciation skills.

(Interview-Ma)

Additionally, as the pronunciation-related courses wrapped up and Ma's sophomore year progressed toward the TEM-4 exam, her enthusiasm for learning pronunciation waned. She shifted her focus to redefining herself as a test-taker, directing her efforts towards acquiring knowledge that could improve her English literacy and skills essential for passing the TEM-4 exam. Acknowledging that mastering English pronunciation required significant effort but offered limited benefits for the TEM-4 exam, she opted to deprioritize it in her future learning endeavors.

Interviewer: How did you stop English pronunciation learning in the sophomore?

Ma: No learning atmosphere. The teacher and classmates no longer cared about English pronunciation. Even if

I wanted to learn, I may not feel as motivated by my own self as before. It was a little strange. On the other hand, English pronunciation did not have much effect on the written examination. Hence, I did not have any desire to learn it anymore.

(Interview-Ma)

TABLE 4
SUMMARY OF IMAGINED IDENTITIES AND INVESTMENT IN THE UNIVERSITY

Participants	Imagined identity	Investment	Events resulting in less investment
Chen	An English singer; An English actress; An English blogger; An English teacher	Participating in pronunciation learning activities; Asking for help from the teacher; Singing English songs; Doing English dubbing; Learning phonetic knowledge on the Internet	
Xi	A good pronunciation learner; An English teacher	Participating in phonetic instruction activities; Doing shadow reading; Doing news broadcasts; Doing morning reading	No phonetic course; TEM-4;
Ma	A good pronunciation learner; An English teacher	Participating in phonetic activities; Reading along with English audio; Watching phonetic knowledge videos	Poor result in English pronunciation test; No phonetic course; TEM-4

V. DISCUSSION

This multi-case study investigated the life experiences of three Chinese English major students to explore their imagined identities and investments in English pronunciation learning. The following sections will discuss in depth the themes pertaining to the results of the current study.

A. What Are the Students' Imagined Identities Throughout Their English Pronunciation Learning?

(a) *Imagined identity is socially constructed and reconstructed over time and place.* It was observed that Chen, an advanced English learner, cultivated positive imagined identities, envisioning the benefits of mastering English pronunciation and setting ambitious goals to fulfill throughout her learning journey. Her positive imagined identities, including 'a good English pronunciation learner', 'an English singer', 'an English actress', 'English blogger', and 'an English teacher', were integral to her English pronunciation learning process. In contrast, Xi developed two positive imagined identities, 'a model English learner' and 'an English teacher', during her senior high school and university years, respectively. Similarly, Ma's imagined identity pertaining to English pronunciation learning only emerged during her college years. However, Ma's imagined identities, such as that of an English learner with proficient pronunciation and a qualified teacher, deteriorated as she struggled to adapt to new learning contexts and relied heavily on her phonetics teacher's guidance. Throughout the process of learning English pronunciation, Ma experienced an identity conflict, viewing herself as a subpar English pronunciation learner and merely a test-taker, leading her to abandon her aspirations of becoming "a proficient English pronunciation learner" and "an English teacher". Overall, the three participants demonstrated varying levels of agency in constructing imagined identities. These findings align with the post-structuralist perspective that identity is socially constructed and continuously reconstructed over time and in different contexts (Block, 2007; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007).

(b) *Imagined identities were constructed and influenced by individual factors.* Chen's personal learning experiences were influenced by individual factors (Wu, 2017). Living in an urban environment, Chen benefited from ample informal English pronunciation learning opportunities through English training institutions and exposure to English media. This unique circumstance shielded her from the constraints of conventional formal schooling practices faced by her peers, enabling her to cultivate imagined identities as a proficient English user and a versatile celebrity with the assistance of the internet.

(c) *Imagined identities were constructed and influenced by the social institutional factor.* The social institutional factors (Wu, 2017) manifest through social, institutional practices and arrangements. Ma and Xi, influenced by the prevailing culture of English education focused on written examinations in their formal schools, viewed themselves as mere test-takers during their junior and senior high school years. Moreover, they did not develop any imagined identities related to English pronunciation. This finding corroborates earlier research indicating that social institutional practices and arrangements, such as educational systems, communities, organizations, and legal frameworks, play a crucial role in shaping the identity scope for language learners (Kharchenko, 2014; Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton & Toohey, 2011). Therefore, it is unsurprising that the two participants initially perceived themselves as passive test-takers, given the limited or nonexistent opportunities for English oral communication practice in their school environments.

(d) *Imagined identities are constructed and influenced by social cultural value.* The social cultural value, represented by the social professional gender stereotype, significantly shaped the imagined identities of participants as English teachers, as evidenced in the experiences of Xi and Chen during their university years. For example, Xi's parents' view

that “girls are more secure as teachers with enough time to take care of family” and Chen's recognition that “being a teacher is a widely recognized job” highlight the prevailing gender stereotypes associated with teaching professions. These stereotypes suggest that teaching roles offer stable schedules, ample vacation time, and guaranteed income, characteristics often deemed more suitable for women (Ao & Lin, 2020).

B. How do Their Imagined Identities Influence Their English Pronunciation Learning Investment?

(a) *Imagined identities promote English pronunciation learning investment.* The results of this study were consistent with Norton's (2015) statement that imagined identity refers to a virtual identity in the mind regarding the relationship between oneself and other people or events in which one has virtually no direct interaction and could influence one's investments in L2 learning. In the case of Chen, she had been aspiring to be a good English pronunciation learner since primary school. In addition, her imagined identities, which included an English singer, actress, blogger and teacher, became more diverse throughout her junior high school and university years. This situation prompted her to continuously invest in English pronunciation in various ways. Unlike Chen, Xi, from primary school to junior high school, and Ma, from primary school to senior high school, regarded themselves as test machines who ignored English pronunciation and invested specific effort in vocabulary and grammar. This trend stemmed from their perception that excelling in written exams would bring them advantages. However, as their imagined identities regarding pronunciation expanded, they started investing in English pronunciation learning. For instance, Xi's aspiration to become proficient in English pronunciation during high school and later to become an English teacher in university prompted her to enhance her pronunciation abilities. Similarly, Ma's desire to excel in English pronunciation and become an English teacher at university motivated her to make pertinent investments during her freshman year. However, in addition to the imagined identity, there is the impact of some contextual factors.

(b) *Learner identity inhibits learners' English pronunciation learning.* As a minority student from a remote area with limited English resources compared to her peers, Ma experienced feelings of inferiority and marginalization during the English pronunciation learning process (Cervatiuc, 2009). Despite her aspirations to excel in English pronunciation and become a qualified English teacher, her dissatisfaction with her pronunciation score led to a loss of motivation to continue investing in improvement and return to be an English test-machine. This finding is concurred with Teng's (2019) statement that in contrast to advanced learners, poor learners were unprepared to implement agentic behaviors to promote changes in their EFL learning.

(c) *The mismatch between practical and imagined communities inhibits English pronunciation learning.* Encouraged by the English phonetic course, Xi and Ma invested considerable time and effort into improving their English pronunciation during their first year at university. Their goal was to enhance their English communication skills and fulfill their envisioned identities. However, as the second year approached and with the completion of pronunciation-related courses, coupled with the upcoming TEM-4 exam that did not assess pronunciation, their focus on pronunciation learning decreased. Current and previous studies (Norton, 2010; Teng & Bui, 2020) have indicated that a match between practiced and imagined communities could generate coercive or cooperative forces and promote language learning investment, while misalignment was not conducive to investment in EFL learning.

(d) *A lack of systematic phonetic knowledge hinders learners from learning English pronunciation.* In the current study, Xi lacked suprasegmental knowledge, which made her feel lost and led to lower confidence. Hence, in practice, she avoided investing in her English pronunciation. This finding is consistent with Sung's (2019) finding that learners' limited cultural capital inhibits their participation in EFL learning activities. In summary, the analysis suggests that the development and investment in English pronunciation among EFL learners are influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including their imagined identity. The imagined identity is not solely responsible for shaping their investment in English pronunciation but interacts with various personal and contextual elements.

VI. CONCLUSION

This multiple case study of three Chinese EFL university students' English pronunciation learning experiences sheds light on their imagined identity and investment. It highlights the importance of contextual factors such as social institutional practices, social professional gender stereotypes, and individual factors in shaping participants' imagined identities. The intricate relationship between their imagined identity and English pronunciation learning is also examined. Drawing from these findings, the study carries several implications.

From a theoretical viewpoint, this research has broadened the scope of studies on imagined identity and investment relationships. Whereas previous research focused primarily on general English learning, this investigation delved into the intricate relationship between these constructs in the realm of English pronunciation learning, thereby advancing the “social turn” in the research of English pronunciation. Besides, this study has identified various personal and contextual factors that influence learners' imagined identities and their investments regarding English pronunciation learning.

Simultaneously, this study presents several points of empirical significance. It was discovered that participants' imagined identities motivated them to make contextual investments and reshape their trajectories in learning English pronunciation. Consequently, it is recommended that language teachers not only impart essential language knowledge but also recognize the influence of learners' imagined identities on pronunciation learning and organize activities that connect students' personal and professional aspirations with their learning of English pronunciation. Such interventions

enable students to see themselves as part of multiple communities, including the classroom, the target language community, and imagined communities; thus, facilitating their journey in learning English pronunciation with guidance (Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Furthermore, the findings suggest that institutional practices and arrangements have influenced the limited imagined identities of Xi and Ma as test-takers prior to their education in junior high and college, respectively. Language teachers are therefore advised to carefully evaluate their teaching methods to ensure they do not limit students' imaginative capacities regarding the language being learned and to pay particular attention to learners who struggle to engage in proactive behaviors and developments in EFL learning (Teng, 2019).

Last but not least, policymakers and curriculum developers are encouraged to concentrate on the needs, goals, and expectations of learners to provide adequate external support. In China, English pronunciation has been neglected in major examinations, leading to a lack of systematic phonetic knowledge in courses for English majors. Policymakers and curriculum developers are urged to reconsider the current examination and evaluation systems, the necessity of testing learners' oral expression skills, and the potential increase in instructional hours for English phonetics, particularly for supra-segmental features.

In conclusion, while the study of the three participants has linked imagined identities with investment, it is crucial to acknowledge the uniqueness of their experiences and their understanding of these experiences within specific contexts. Therefore, this research does not aim to generalize across all EFL learners. Future research should investigate additional learning contexts using diverse methodologies.

APPENDIX INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CHEN, XI AND MA

Examples of interview questions for Chen:

1. How did you feel about learning English in the training school during your primary school days?
2. Could you explain how the significant persons influence your English pronunciation learning during different learning phases?
3. What do you think was the reason that made you persist on English learning (even after having encountered so many negative experiences)?
4. What did English mean to you when you were in college?
5. As an English learner, what was your expectation of yourself in the future?
6. You mentioned in the written narrative that you want to be an online English blogger, how such idea comes from?
7. How do you think of your English pronunciation?

II. Examples of interview questions for Xi:

1. What did English mean to you when you were in the primary school?
2. What did English mean to you when you were in the junior and senior high school?
3. Why do you think you wanted to be an English teacher rather than a teacher of other subjects?
4. Did you invest in any additional effort in learning English pronunciation in the after-school program, i.e. cram school or tutoring, during your different learning phases?
5. Currently, what do you do to improve your English pronunciation ability in a daily life?
6. You said you want to pursue a graduate degree, how?

III. Examples of interview questions for Ma:

1. What did English pronunciation mean to you when you were in primary, junior and senior high school?
2. You said English pronunciation was like a big monster when you enter university. What was English to you when you were in the university?
3. Why do you want to go back to your hometown and be an English teacher?
4. How do you think of your English pronunciation that compared with your classmates?
5. Could you explain how the significant persons influence your English pronunciation learning during different learning phases?

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Social Attitudes Manifested in Embodying Cars in Arabic From a Cognitive Linguistics Perspective

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Abstract—This study investigates the phenomenon of “car embodiment”, where humans and machines are conceptualized as a hybrid creature in everyday language. Drawing on Langacker’s (2008) theory of cognitive linguistics, the author analyzed natural examples of car embodiment metaphors posted online by Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) users. Findings of the current study revealed that actions and states (46%) were more frequently embodied than body parts (16%) in these metaphors. This suggests that the conceptual blending of humans and machines is primarily driven by shared functional and experiential features rather than physical similarities. This study contributes to the understanding of conceptual embodiment in the context of human-machine interaction and highlights the potential of online data for exploring linguistic creativity.

Index Terms—car embodiment, Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Arabic metaphors, cognitive linguistics, Arabic language communication

I. INTRODUCTION

A trend in human language is the use of referring expressions concerning surrounding entities as sources of reference to things that lack established expressions. The target entities can be abstract concepts such as love and time, imaginary objects and creatures, or newly produced inventions for which referring expressions have not yet been introduced in the language, indicating that they are not as clearly delineated. Moreover, source domains are experienced more than the target domains, and human and animal bodies and related concepts are the most attractive source domains for referring expressions due to their high level of familiarity. One interesting example of such a reference relationship is when car parts are given human-referring expressions.

Because conceptual metaphors are realized by mapping source and target domains, a different choice of domain placement of human-associated objects and entities produces a distinct sort of embodiment. Consider the following embodiment types and related examples:

1. Human parts, states, and actions as the target domain¹ and the objects or entities not associated with the human being as the source domains.

Example: “*We’re still trying to grind out the solution to this equation*” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 27).

2. Human parts, states, and actions as the source domain and the objects or entities not associated with human beings as the target domains. This is the sense of embodiment focused on in this paper.

Example: “*Earth breathing easier as we hold our breath amid COVID-19*”

<https://dailygazette.com/article/2020/03/29/greenpoint-earth-breathing-easier-as-we-hold-our-breath>

(Accessed: 13/4/2020).

Names of human body parts can be helpful tools when referring to objects that are less delineated or familiar. Take, for instance, the “hand” of a clock, a table “leg”, and a “head” of grain, all of which were, at least at the time of their invention and/or coinage of their referring expression, less delineated than the human body-part names now used to refer to them. This conceptual mapping is not perfect. This is to say that not all the features of the source parts are projected onto the target parts (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Langacker, 2008). For example, the time indicators on a clock dial, the sticks supporting a table’s surface, and the topmost part of the wheat stalk were not expected to be perfect matches to the human hand, leg, and head, respectively, but that is what is expected from figurative mapping. Regardless of this imperfection, the human mind uses this conceptual mapping to label the target entities. Two things make the referring expressions of what were not originally perfect matches to the new objects feasible for use as their new referring expressions. One of these is the high familiarity of the source domain concept, human body parts in this case, which are inherently observable and utilized throughout daily life, both on oneself and on others encountered. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999). The second is the peculiarity, in Lakoff and Johnson’s (1999) words, of the human anatomy, whose uniqueness means it cannot be confused with other objects in the world (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

¹ The source/target domain distinction locates the object or entity being metaphorically referred to in the target position and the object or entity being literally referred to in the expression in the source position.

This study considered action and state verbs and body part nouns in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), in which human body-based metaphors were retrieved to answer the following questions:

- What are the patterns of using embodiment metaphors associated with cars in MSA?
- What are some potential reasons for using car-related embodiment metaphors in MSA?
- How are embodiment action and state words compared to human-part names when all are used as source domains for car embodiment?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

For the last three decades, reasoning and cognitive processes have been claimed to be shaped by the human body's peculiarities and experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Langacker, 2008). Connecting reason with the human body, embodiment is crucial in improving the efficiency of human communication (Varela et al., 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Gibbs, 2005; Langacker, 2008). This improvement in communication efficiency is activated by utilizing source and target domains and blending features from these domains to create a hybrid entity (Fauconnier & Turner, 1998; Oakley & Coulson, 1999). This original hybrid entity is made and introduced in the language and retains only a few features of the original source and target entities (Langacker, 2008; Kövecses, 2010). Such conceptual integration of concepts has been exemplified in literature by the land-yacht invention. This integration combines the concepts of being operated on land and being as luxurious as a yacht in one vehicle, representing an integrated concept (Turner & Fauconnier, 1995). Other examples of hybrid entities are found in the metaphors "His idea was half-baked" and "I'm tired of warmed-over theories", where features of IDEA² are blended with those of food, constituting the conceptual metaphor IDEAS ARE FOOD. In this conceptual metaphor, the idea-food entity had needed some time to be ready to use; however, the type of consumption was not orally digested but mentally processed.

The association between these original and new referents provides logical reasons for the mapping. In addition, the peculiarity of the human body, in Lakoff and Johnson's (1999) terms, makes such referring expressions feasible to use as feeding the source domains. The widespread use of metaphor is associated with the readiness to use the anatomy of human-body-related concepts. Kövecses (2010) went a step further to express that since our bodies play a role in mental representation, different bodies will represent different abstract concepts. This is found clearly in the current study, as different human and animal parts, actions, and states metaphorically represent different car parts, actions, and states.

Considering the prototype notion, words interact with contexts to refer to entities and objects that the dictionary entry lacks. This is to say that the background information the word underlies extends the range of references to which this word can refer (Fillmore, 2006). This implies having two levels of prototype structure: the lexical, which is found in dictionaries, and the semantic, which is associated with seemingly disparate senses driven by contexts (Brugman & Lakoff, 2006; Geeraerts, 2016). Adopting Fillmore's (2006) example, the social practice of the concept of breakfast indicates that it has three characters, namely "post-sleep", "early morning", and "breakfast menu". However, these characters of the concept are not criterial since one can have breakfast without sleeping before it, say, in the afternoon, for example, or have foods that are not typically on the breakfast menu, respectively. Not including this information about breakfast in dictionaries does not imply a lack of understanding of the core meaning of the word, but it indicates that the word offers a category that can be used in several contexts (Fillmore, 2006). The prototype notion was found to be at play repeatedly when dealing with car parts, actions, and states in the current study.

Defining embodiment can be tricky, as it is associated with different senses. For example, cognitive concepts can be affected either by the human anatomy or by sensation (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Maalej, 2004; Rohrer, 2007; and others). Other points of confusion regarding the concept of embodiment include the evolutionary change of organisms, robotics, neurophysiological sense, and neurocomputational models (cf. Rohrer, 2007), which are beyond the scope of this paper. Henceforth, embodiment indicates the use of a human body part or sensation as the source domain of the metaphor used in the community of practice. More particularly, this current study examines car parts, actions, and states that have some metaphorical association with human parts, actions, and states to shed light on some of the reasons for using such terms in their new contexts. The metaphors used in this study fall under the conceptual metaphor category of MACHINES ARE PEOPLE³ (Lakoff & Turner, 1989). Moreover, cars, as entities, have also been found to be social bodies (Young, 2001) and extensions of human bodies (Katz, 2000), and the driven car, together with the driver, constitutes a holistic assemblage (Dant, 2005).

Cognitive concepts can be shaped by the culture and society that bodies are situated in (Hutchins, 1995; Hutchins, 2005; Fauconnier & Turner, 2002; Rohrer, 2007). Živković (2014) found that the "Fića" (the nickname of the Yugoslavian-made Zastava 750 car model) represents many human attributes such as hero, family member, racer, etc. The author argues that the disjointed and mixed metaphors of this car are a reflection of Serbian life during the time of the car's production. This car model was produced locally in what was formerly called Yugoslavia and is now known as Serbia, and implies inner circle membership, excluding outer circle car models. This influence of culture cannot be seen

² Capitalization of all letters indicates a reference to a concept throughout this paper.

³ Some of the examples considered in this paper fall under the conceptual metaphor MACHINES ARE ANIMALS, which works similarly to the metaphor MACHINES ARE PEOPLE.

in Saudi Arabia. This can be a result of cars not currently being produced locally. Nonetheless, embodiment can also influence melting social barriers (Kövecses, 2004).

During times when cars were not accessible to everyone, they were considered symbols of power, inequality, and corruption. However, the mapping of corruption has changed over time; nowadays, it is more often mapped onto the abuse of cars (Notar, 2014). The author indicates that the use of a source domain can be manipulated to fit the current situation, which is why the metaphor USING A CAR IS BEING CORRUPTED is used for a different purpose, though it remains in use over time.

In previous studies, cars were embodied as both source and target domains. Those metaphors were utilized to indicate intimacy and heroism, for example, when cars are target domains (Živković, 2014). On the other hand, these metaphors were used as highlights of human traits, for example, being powerful and corrupt (Notar, 2014). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no previous studies considered the technical and feasible use of car embodiment metaphors.

III. METHODOLOGY

As a ready-to-use list of embodiment verbs was not found, a list was synthesized using the sources in Table 1.

TABLE 1
SOURCES USED TO SYNTHESIZE EMBODIMENT VERB LIST

Source	Purpose
The Muajam Alafaal Alarabia 'Arabic Dictionary of Verbs' Aldahdah (1995)	Primary source for the embodiment verbs in Arabic
The Asma'a A'ada'a Aljism Kamila 'Complete List of Human Body Parts' Salem (2023)	Primary source for the human-part names in Arabic
The Mize Car Maintenance Services webpage (accessed: 24/7/2023, https://mize.com.sa/خدماتنا)	Provides a car maintenance perspective on embodiment
The 7esl.com list of parts of the body (accessed: 24/7/2023, https://7esl.com/parts-of-the-body/)	Secondary source for human-part names

The dictionary of verbs includes hundreds of verb entries that were manually gone over and added to a list of 316 embodiment verbs. This list included verbs that describe actions and states carried out and experienced by humans; hence, they are embodiment verbs. Additionally, the Complete List of Human Body Parts by Salem (2023) was used as well. After that, the next step was creating phrases that included the word *السيارة/alsayaara* ("car") along with the verbs or part names in the lists. Using the Google search engine, the researcher searched for each of these phrases online, and all the results were considered until valid examples of using the phrases to indicate a car's action, state, or part were found. When the used phrase was found, it was included in the more specific lists of car embodiment verbs and nouns found in Table 1. It is worth mentioning that the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) created by Pragglejaz (2007) was adopted throughout the process of identifying metaphors to enhance the systematicity of metaphor identification. MIP works as follows:

1. Read the entire text to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text discourse.
3. (a) For each lexical unit in the text, establish its meaning in context—that is, how it applies to an entity, relation, or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
 - (b) For each lexical unit, determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. For the researcher's purposes, basic meanings tend to be:
 - More concrete; what they evoke is easier to imagine, see, hear, feel, smell, and taste.
 - Related to bodily action.
 - More precise (as opposed to vague).
 - Historically older.

Basic meanings of the lexical unit are not necessarily the most frequent meanings.

- (c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current–contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.

4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical. (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 3)

As for number three in the MIP, the Alma'any online dictionary was used.

Some⁴ of the tokens found online are given as examples and further analyzed in the analysis section. The reason for using pre-existing online data is to promote the authenticity of the data. In addition, online sources are original texts that are easy to collect and can be accessed by the author and readers; hence, they promote research reliability. The usage of

⁴ Not giving all the examples is due to the space limitations of a journal article.

tokens found online was analyzed with reference to the CMT. Following seminal analytical works, such as the analysis in Lakoff and Johnson (2003), the reason for the metaphorical mapping was attributed in part to the characteristics of the domains responsible for the mapping.

It should be noted that metaphorical mapping is based on multiple factors, such as sociocultural, structural, and ontological factors, as shown in several of the studies cited in the literature review section. These factors were considered and discussed according to the data in the present study. The focus of this paper is on the effect of human and animal bodies on the choice of car-related metaphors and the role played by some structural, ontological, and sociocultural factors in the choice of these metaphors as represented in action and state verbs and human-part names.

IV. RESULTS

The car has a figurative “face”, “eyes”, “brain”, and “lungs”. The engine, it has a “navel”. The car also has a “body”, “arms”, and a “bottom”. In addition, a car can “stand”, “walk”, “whistle”, and “choke”. The car can also be “asleep” and “tired”. These metaphors can be categorized into three classes: parts, actions, and states. Examples of part metaphors are the “head”, “face”, “eyes”, “navel”, “body”, “arms”, and “bottom”. Examples of actions are “choking”, “whistling”, and “walking”. Examples of states include “standing”, “tired”, and “asleep”. Table 2 includes the full list of car embodiment verbs and nouns found:

TABLE 2
THE WORDS FOUND INVOLVED IN CAR-EMBODIMENT

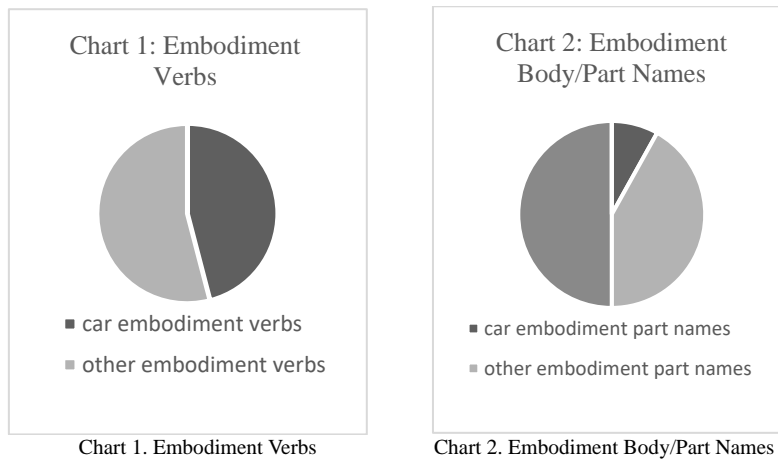
English	Verbs	English	Verbs	English	Verbs	English	Verbs
pride (is proud)	تفخر	seize	تتلفف	stand up	تقوم	accept	تقبل
contain	تستوعب	kidnap	تختطف	work	تعمل	muffle	تكتفم
succeed	نجحت	yawn	تثتأب	float	تعوام	grow	نشأت
win	فازت	tremble	ترجف	meet	تتقابل	be silent	تسكت
win	ربحت	wink	تغمز	pay	تدفع	possess	تملك
lost	فقدت	expose	تكشف	scratch	حكك	get tired	تعب
earn	تكتسب	start	بدأت	visit	تزرور	get sick	تمرض
be responsible	تتكفل	blink	ترمش	walk	تمشي	be dazed	ذهلت
got involved	تورطت	welcome	ترحب	return	رجعت	stretch	تمددت
intend	تتوي	beat	تتبيض	waver	تتعرج	accompany	تصحيك
learn	تتعلم	stutter	تتععث	crawl	زحف	die	تموت
take refuge	تلتجأ	dance	ترقص	go	راحت	drive	تقود
bid farewell	ودعت	play	تلعب	hold	تمسك	scare	ارعبت
study	تدرس	spew	تتفث	ascend	صعدت	inherent	ورثت
gets happy	تسعد	slip away	تقلت	step on	دعست	be alert	تنتبه
defeat	هزمت	march	تقدم	turn one's head	تلتفت	smiling	المبتسمة
oppress	بطش	exit	خرجت	grasp	تلقط	trip	تعرقل
fail	تعجز	face	واجهت	leave	تترك	monitor	تراقب
aspire	تطمح	pass	تمر	calm down	هدأت	Body Parts	
adopt	تتبنى	hit	تصدم	veil	نقاب	skeleton	الهيكل
simplify	تبسط	serve	تخدم	utter	تنطق	skin	الجلد
fail	تفشل	scream	تزعق	sniff	تشم	Tissue	النسيج
decline	رفضت	take	تأخذ	scream	صاحت	Brain	المخ
oppose	تعاقد	run	تجري	see	رأت	belly	بطن
punish	عاقبت	shiver	ارتعاش	feel	تشمع	brain	الدماغ
makes available	توفر	depart	ترحل	swallow	بلعت	back	ظهر
handle	تتولى	pluck	قطفت	chew	تمضغ	muscles	الجهاز العضلي
maneuver	تباغت	sneeze	تعطس	eat	أكلت	thigh	فخذ
exert	تكذب	return	عادت	drink	تشراب	lungs	الرئتان
vex	تغيظ	race	سبقت	exhale	زفرت	bones	العظام
survive	نجت	strike	تضرب	watch	تتنظر	face	وجه
seek	تسعى	hug	تعانق	bite	قضم	bottom	مؤخرة
wonder	تعجب	travel	تسافر	breath	تتنفس	lens	العدسة
understand	تفهم	slap	تلطم	spit	تلفظ	heart	القلب
sway	تترنح	stride	سارت	face	توجهت	joints	المفاصل
carry	تحمل	handshake	بصافحون	sit	جالست	eyelash	رموش
go	ذهبت	make way	نفسح	receive	تلقي	basin	حوض
wound	جرحتني	step	خطت	stay	بقيت	eye	العين
escape	فلتت	dive	غطست	reach	بلغت	arm	ذراع
come	أتت	come	جاءت	sit	تقعد	hind	خلفية
fight	تعاركت	hug	تضم	sleep	ترقد	navel	صرة
laugh	ضحكت	point	تشير	die	هلكت	knee	ركبة
go away	تبتعد	follow	تلتحق	sleep	نامت	mouth	الفم

The target domains represented by the words for car actions, states, and parts in Table 2 are better referred to by using more easily conceived terms that are already in use in the language, which may explain the use of human or animal body parts. In Arabic, the car is construed as a human standing on its four limbs or as an animal standing on its feet, constituting a metaphorical system for naming car parts and expressing some actions and states thereof through the conceptual metaphor THE CAR IS A HUMAN/AN ANIMAL. Tires are limbs or feet. A car also has arms, a face, eyes, a bottom, and a body. A car can also adopt, run, shiver, and survive, for example. The fact that cars replace older transportation means, for example, horses or camels, and even human beings, could be a motivator for this metaphor.

This relatively large-scale car embodiment is attributed to the ontological process of concretizing car parts and/or the structural process of building up a structure of parts, actions, and states. This figurative mapping is economical in creating a reference when conversing about inventions with no custom-coined terms, as is the case with car-related concepts. In the case of car embodiment, referring expressions are borrowed from a similar entity that is already familiar to the laypeople of that society. The following are the entailments and meanings of the conceptual metaphors A CAR IS A HUMAN or ANIMAL and CAR PARTS ARE HUMAN or ANIMAL PARTS, discussed above:

1. The car’s front is its “face” and the headlights are its “eyes”.
2. The tie rod ends are “arms”.
3. The undercarriage of the car is its “belly”.

Researchers found 147 car embodiment metaphors out of 316 general embodiment verbs, and 28 car embodiment metaphors out of 145 of all the body part names. Verbs are more commonly used than body parts to describe cars, with 46% and 16% usage, respectively. Consider Charts 1 and 2.



Car parts were found to reflect functional and formal types of embodiments. Consider examples (4 and 5).

4. فلتر الهواء أو رئة السيارة إن جاز التعبير الكثير منّا يغفل عن أهميته
 filter alhawa? aw ri?at as:ajarah?in zaza at:aʕbi:r alkaθi:r min:a
 filter DEF-air or lung DEF-car if permissible DEF-expression DEF-a-lot from
 jaʕfal ʕan aham:ijatih
 look-away of importance

“Many of us ignore the importance of the air filter, or car lung, so to speak.”

Notice how the forms of the air filter and lung are different while they both function to filter the air going to the car engine and human heart. Interestingly, the car engine was called the heart of the car in some of the examples found online.



Figure 1. Comparison of the Car Air Filter (Left) With the Human Lungs (to the Right)
<https://www.artofmanliness.com/skills/manly-know-how/how-to-change-your-cars-air-filter/> and
<https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/lungs-anatomy-human-internal-organ-gm1214263236-353209397>
 (Accessed: 14/7/2023)

5. هناك الكثير من الأسباب التي تؤدي إلى تعطل ركبة السيارة
 Hunak alkaθi:r min alʔasbab al:ati tuʔad:i ʔila
 There-are DEF-a-lot from DEF-reason-PL which lead to
 taʔaTul rukbat as:ajarah
 break-down-GER knee-POSS DEF-car
 “There are a lot of reasons leading to the breakdown of the ball joint of the car.”

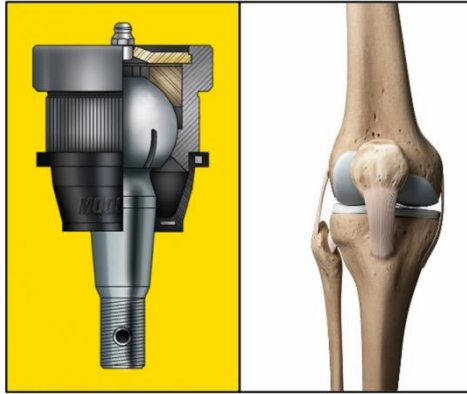


Figure 2. Comparison of the Balljoint (Left) With the Human Knee (Right)

<https://www.moogparts.com/parts-matter/all-about-ball-joints.html> and <https://sciencephotogallery.com/featured/switch.html?catalogid=f0082467>
 (Accessed: 14/7/2023)

Example 6 represents a function expressed by the verb *ترجف/tarjaf* (“tremble”).

6. وإذا خففت السرعة أحيانا ترجف السيارة
 waʔiða xaf:faft as:urʕa ʔaħjanan tarʒif as:ajarah
 and-when slow-down-GER DEF-speed sometimes tremble-3rdSG DEF-car
 “And sometimes the car trembles when slowing down.”

Example 7 represents a metonymy when in one domain there is the human being starting the invention of the first car and on the other there is the car as being volitionally starting its own invention. The verb used to represent the embodiment is *بدأ/bada* (“start”).

7. هل سألت نفسك يوما كيف بدأت السيارة؟
 hal saʔalt nafsak jawman kajfa badaʔat as:ajarah
 have you-asked yourself day-SG how start-PAST DEF-car
 “Have you ever wondered how cars (as an invention) started?”

Notice how verbs are used either to indicate functional features or a metonymy.

The term “engine head”, sometimes called the “cylinder head”, has been commonly applied since the common use of the internal combustion system around the end of the 1800s and into the beginning of the 1910s. This is based on the data in the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA). This means that the referring expression was coined to make the reference to this head familiar. Notice here that the word “head” is very productive and common in referring to objects that share some characteristics of the human, or animal, head. For example, the word “head” is used in the following phrases: the “head” of cabbage, the “head” of a company, and the “head” of a pin. In these examples, the shared features of the human head can be the bulky shape, the chief controller, and the topmost position, respectively. This head metaphor is also used in Arabic. Consider Example 8:

8. وديتها ورشة وقلت له افتح رأس المكيينة
 wad:etaha warʕa waqult lah iftaħ ras almaki:nah
 I-took-it-to-workshop and-said to-him open head DEF-engine

I took it to a workshop and told him to open the engine head. www.assayarat.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022)

The “head of the engine” metaphor in Arabic was potentially introduced to the language due to the shared conceptualization of the human head, standing for the chief controller of the car, which is the engine, and its bulkiness, as shown in Figure 3.

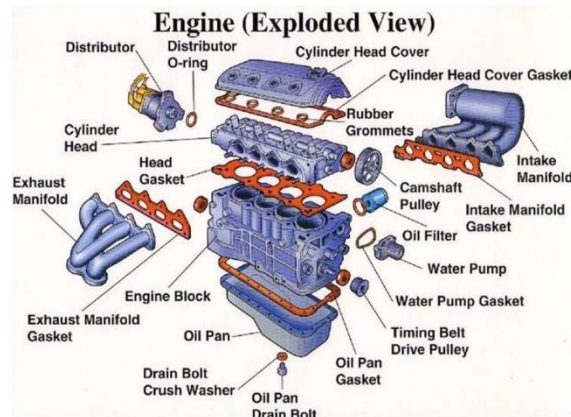


Figure 3. Engine Parts

<https://learnmech.com/ic-engine-major-parts-and-its-function/>
(Accessed: 14/1/2024)

The possibility that the term was introduced to the language as a result of car knowledge transfer cannot be disregarded. This is due to the fact that cars and their parts were initially imported into Saudi Arabia and not manufactured locally to a significant degree⁵.

Related to and attached to the head of the engine, Saudi Arabic speakers use the metaphor “engine head face”, as briefly mentioned earlier in this paper. Consider Example 9:

9. وجه راس المكينة خربان عندني من سنة

wəʒh ras ilmakinah ɣarban ʕindi min sanəh
face head DEF-engine not-working with-me from year

“The engine head’s face (head gasket) is broken” www.assayyarat.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

According to the online Oxford English Dictionary (OED), this metaphor is motivated by the sense of the word “face”, which is “the front part of the head”.

The “engine face” in Arabic is the part that is attached to the head of the engine and is equivalent to the “head gasket” in English. The connection between the head gasket and the human or animal face can be seen from the point of view that the engine head is looking downward. This point will be revisited later in this paper when considering the whole car as a “body”.

Using the Google search engine, the researcher found thousands of Arabic tokens of *وجه/wajah* (“face”) referring to the front of the car. Although there is an embodiment metaphor attached to such a referring expression, this metaphor does not share the same target domain that is used when using “car face” to refer to car parts in Arabic. Consider Example 10:

10. أثناء السفر بالسيارة تتعرض السيارة لرياح وأترية شديدة مما يسبب خدوش في وجه السيارة

?θna'a as:afər bis:aijarəh tataʕar:aD as:aijarəh lirijaħ
During DEF-travel by-car get-exposed DEF-car to-wind-PL
wa'atribəh ʃadidəh mim:a yusab:ib ɣudu:ʃ fi wəʒh DEF-is:aijarəh
and-dust strong which cause-V scratch-PL in face the car

“While driving the car, the car gets exposed to severe wind and dust, which may cause scratches on the face of the car (the front of the car)” www.assayyarat.com (Accessed: 5/4/2023).

The metaphor “car eyes” is also on the list of embodiment metaphors. Although this metaphor was used to indicate the headlights of a car, the more recent usage of this metaphor has its target domain corresponding to different types of sensors. Consider Examples 11 and 12:

11. يبسط فيه المصممون شكل ووظيفة مصابيح الإضاءة الأمامية، "عيون" السيارة

jubasiT fihi ilmuSam:imu:n ʃakla wawaZifət maSabi:h al'iDa'ətə al'amamijah
simplify-V-3rd in-it DEF-designer-PL form and-function headlight-PL DEF-light DEF-front
ʕuju:n as:aijarah
eye(of)-PLDEF-car

“Designers simplify the form and function of the headlights ‘the car eyes’” www.media.gm.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

12. هي عيون السيارة ذاتية القيادة LIDAR يمكننا التفكير في أن

Jumkinunaat:afki:r fi an:a 'LIDAR' hija ʕuju:n as:ajarata ɔatijata-alqijadah

⁵Until recently, Saudi Arabia has been an importer of cars and spare parts with very limited spare part manufacturing (Randheer et al., 2017). Due to the economic boom that started in the 1970s, Saudi Arabia began a plan of decentralized work by paving roads and establishing residences on the outskirts of cities. Parallel to this, car ownership started to increase, motivated by the government's plan to have cars as the main means of transportation (Aldalbahi & Walker 2017). All of this promoted human-car interaction, which presumably led to the need to borrow or coin new terms used to enrich automobile-related conversations.

We-can DEF-think in that LIDAR is eye(of)-PL DEF-car self-driving
 “We can think of LIDAR as the eyes of the self-driving car” <https://www.kia.com/nmc/ar/discover-kia/ask/are-self-driving-cars-the-future.html> (accessed 24/7/2023).

Using the referring expression *عيون/ayoon* (“eyes”) for the referent “headlights” indicates the form where the headlights are positioned on the sides resembling a face with a nose and mouth. Conversely, using *عيون/ayoon* (“eyes”) to refer to “LIDAR” indicates the function of the LIDAR device, where it is used to deliver information about the space in front and what exists in it. Regardless of the different types of information comparing eyes and LIDAR, it is noteworthy that this is a recent usage of the term in relation to cars due to its recent commercial production in 2017 model vehicles (Xiaoxi, 2022). Hence, it is logical to use Roman letters in the Arabic sentence to denote the target domain device.

Although “eyelashes” and “eyeliner” are not parts of the human body, while scrolling through online search results, the researcher found that both of these terms are used to refer to what resembles the forms of applying “eyeliner” and having “eyelashes” on the car’s eyes that correspond to the form of the headlights. Consider Examples 13 and 14:

13. شمعات مكحلة بعدسات نظيفة جدا
 jamʕat məkah:aləh biʕadasat naZi:fətən zid:an
 candle(lit.)-PL eyeliner-V-PAST with-lense-PL clean very
 “Eyelined headlights with very clean lenses” www.ksa.shofey.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

14. تعرّف على أفضل صفقات رموش السيارة
 Taʕar:af ʕala afDəl Safaʕat rumuʃ as:ajiara
 Recognize on best deals eyelash DEF-car
 “Know the best deals on car eyelashes” www.amazon.ae (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

Car “eyeliner” and “lashes” have only recently been introduced in the car accessory business, appearing on shopping and social websites but not in books (a Google search revealed no such tokens in books). One possible reason for this use of the referring expression “eyelashes” in Arabic is that the car metaphor considered above has become established in the car parts industry as a structural metaphor in which different features of the human eye and related concepts, such as eyeliner and eyelashes, are projected onto the car headlights. It is worth mentioning that the eye in Arabic culture is considered a symbol of beauty and charm, and the eyeliner indicates “added beauty”, especially if the eyes are naturally “eye-lined” with kohl. This suggests that the beauty of cars is highlighted using the metaphor HEADLIGHTS ARE EYES and eye-related concepts in Arabic.

The car’s “body” in Arabic is obviously borrowed from English, as is clear from the transliteration of the English term into Arabic, pronounced with the Arabic vowel /u/ as in /budi/⁶ as an Arabicized version of “body”. Consider Example 15:

15. هل تلميع بدّي السيارة وداخلها يأتّر؟
 hal talmi:ʕ budi as:aijarəh wadaɣilaha ji'aθ:ird
 Q-word polishing body DEF-car and-interior harmSG
 “Would polishing the car’s body and its interior cause any problems?” www.toyota4arab.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

This may not be a case of an active metaphor since the transliteration occurs. However, not opting for another term when the English term was first introduced to Arabic can indicate that the metaphor was created in English before it was borrowed. It is also noteworthy that the word “body” is a common transliterated word that can be used literally in Arabic. This could mean that the word “body” was not transferred from English to refer to “the body of the car” but adopted as an Arabic word that was borrowed earlier than the “body of the car” was introduced. The human body is an important participant in the embodiment metaphor, which implies that other human parts are expected to be projected into the target domain. The process of transliteration is not as productive as the coinage of embodiment terms. Other examples of transliteration include *مكيّنة [makinah]* (“machine”), *جربكس [zarabuks]* (“gearbox”), and *دفرنس [difrans]* (“differential”). Notice that these transliterations are of large parts that include smaller ones. More on transliteration follows in the next chapter.

In the case of the word *خلفية السيارة [ɣalfijətəs:aijarəh]* (“car’s back”), it refers to the rear part of the car (remember THE CAR IS A HORSE metaphorical system), while it may also refer to the actual bottom of the car. Consider Example 16:

16. كاميرا مثبتة على خلفية السيارة
 kamira muθab:atəh ʕala ɣalfijətə as:aijarəh
 Camera fix-ADJ on back DEF-car
 “A camera is attached to the back of the car” <https://mostaqbal.ae/> (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

Moreover, there is another word that is synonymous with *خلفية [ɣalfijət]* (“back”) in the context of car parts, which is *مؤخرة [muʔaxirat]* (“bottom”). Consider Example 17:

⁶The pronunciation of /budi/ is found in videos when talking about the body of the car. An example can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHUqbYLeeQc&t=9s>.

17. عندما تقترب مؤخرة السيارة من الرصيف، والتي تكون السيارة وقتها تقف بشكل زاوية حادة على الرصيف، يجب التأكد من اجتياز مقدمة السيارة

ʕindama taqtarib	muʔaxirat	as:aijarah	min	ar:aSi:f	wal:ati
when get-close	bottom	DEF-car	from	DEF-curb	and-which
takun as:aijarah	waqtaha	taqifu	bifakli	zawijatin	ħa:d:ah
be-FEM DEF-car	and-its-time	stand-FEM-SG	with-shape	angle	acute
ʕala ar:asi:f	jazibu at:aʔk:d	min	iztijaz	muqadimat	as:aijarah
on DEF-curb	should DEF-confirm	from	pass-GER	front	DEF-car

“When the bottom of the car gets close to the curb and when the car is standing at an acute angle, it should be confirmed that the front of the car has already passed” <https://blog.syarah.com/>.

Both خلفية [ħalfijat] (“back”) and مؤخرة [muʔaxirat] (“bottom”) refer to more or less the same thing when it comes to the human body. This is also the case in the target domain of the metaphorical mapping, i.e., the part of the car, constituting a match in the feature that locates this part in both the source and target domains.

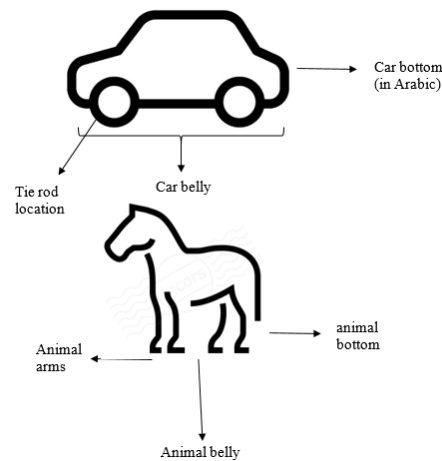


Figure 4. (Locations of Car and Horse Part)¹

Other parts that reflect car-embodiment metaphors include the arms and navel. Consider Examples 18 and 19:

18. طريقة بدائيه لوزن اذرع السيارة

Tariqatun	bida'ijah	liwazn	aḍriʕat	as:aijarəh
method-SG	primitive	for-calibrating	arms	DEF-car

“A primitive way to calibrate a car’s tie rods” www.mekshat.com.

19. عندي مشكلة في صرة المكيبة

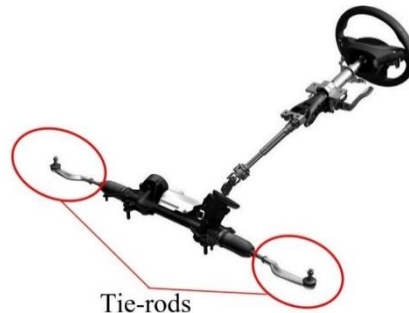
ʕindi muʕkiləh	fi	Sur:at	ilmaki:nəh
1 st -have problem	in	navel(of)	DEF-engine

“I have a problem with the engine oil drain plug” www.assayyarat.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

The tie rods are the arms of a car, and the oil drain plug is the navel in Arabic. When conceptualizing the car as an animal, the bottom of the animal is the back of the car, where the taillights are, and the location of the belly of the car is similar to that of a domesticated animal⁷, being below it. Consider Figure 4, above.

According to the online Merriam-Webster dictionary, an arm is “the forelimb of a vertebrate”. The location of the arms of an animal, or a crawling human, is where the location of the tie rod is on a car. This can be a result of the car becoming a modern means of transportation, replacing the old means of transportation, i.e., the horse. The form and function of the tie rods resemble those of human arms. Consider Figure 5.

⁷A domesticated animal such as a horse, cow, sheep, etc., which are four-legged and live alongside humanity; hence, experienced by humans.



Tie-rods
Figure 5. Car Tie Rods

<https://hondanews.com/en-US/honda-automobiles/releases/releasef208666ebede149755e901516f00ff28/photos/200>
(Accessed: 5/4/2022)

The location of the oil drain plug is similar to the location of the human navel when construing the oil pan as the belly. Consider Figure 6:

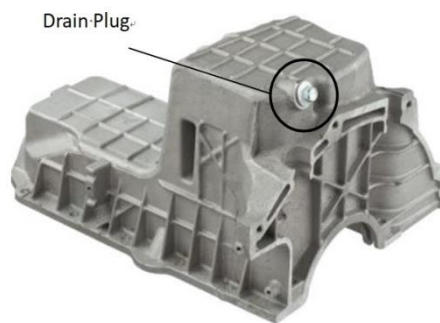


Figure 6. Drain Plug Location on an Upside-Down Engine Oil Pan

<https://www.stockwiseauto.com/atp-103155-engine-oil-pan?Year=2001&Make=Oldsmobile&Model=Bravada>
(Accessed: 5/4/2022)

This location is slightly different in different engines; however, an opening in the bulky body of the oil pan, the metal body in Figure 6, reflects the similarity between the human belly and the oil pan. A WHOLE FOR PART metonymy is used in this metaphor, where the navel is related to the whole engine in Arabic, 'صرة المكينة' [Sur:atalmakinah] ("the navel of the engine").

Moving to the other categories listed above, the metaphorical terms of actions and states, the metaphors "the car stands", "whistles", and "the car is tired", are all used in Arabic. Consider Examples 20 to 22:

20. تشغيل المكيف والسيارة ماشية

taʃxi:l almukaijf was:aijarəh maʃiʃəh
operating DEF-air conditioner and-DEF-car running

"Switching on the AC while the car is walking (running)" <https://toyota.montada.haraj.com.sa/> (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

21. السيارة تصفر اول ما اشغلها

as:aijarəh tiSaf:ir auwal ma aʃaʃ:ilha
DEF-car whislt-3rdSG once that 1stSG-start-TR-3rdSG

"The car whistles when I start it" www.assayyarat.com (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

22. احس السيارة تعبانه مافيه حيل تمشي

Aħus as:aijarəh taʃbanəh mafiha he:l timʃi
I-feel DEF-car tired NEG-in-it strength walk-V

"I feel that the car is tired (malfunctioning); it can't walk" <http://www.s-oman.net/avb/archive/index.php/t-288525.html> (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

In Example 20, human walking is projected onto car movement, where a car is in the process of moving when the air conditioner is turned on. Despite cars being supported by four rolling wheels for movement, this metaphor is entrenched in the lexicon and is commonly used by both automotive professionals and the general public. The metaphorical expression "the car walks" in Arabic has a corresponding equivalent in English, which is "the car runs". This parallel is evident in the conceptual metaphor CARS MOVE AS HUMANS/ANIMALS.

Example 21 illustrates how a sound that is less entrenched in the mind can be associated with a more familiar sound, such as the sound of whistling. Whistling is a behavior exhibited by humans and many birds. This act is projected onto objects where friction results in squeaking or screeching sounds. Friction is a natural outcome when a car is in motion, as the car's functionality relies on movement and friction.

In Example 22, the feelings and states of tiredness experienced by humans and animals are projected onto cars. The logic behind this projection is that when someone is tired, they cannot complete tasks properly, a logic that can be applied to cars when their performance is not as expected. Notice that although the concept of human tiredness is abstract, it is used as a source domain due to the fact that it is more entrenched in the language than the concept of not performing as expected in cars. This concept of being tired, indicating not working properly, can also be extended to other devices and machines, such as washing machines and computers, in Arabic.

The car is also conceptualized as a human when it chokes. Consider Example 23:

23. ((السيارة مشرقة؟)) او ((السيارة شرقت)) ما هو المقصود بمصطلح
 Mahuwa almaqSu:d bimUSTaləh as:aijarəh far:aqət aw as:aijarəh mfar:iqəh
 what meant by-term DEF-car choke-on-water or DEF-car choked-on-water
 “What does it mean when saying the car is choking on liquid?” <https://satfrequencies.com/answers/73491>
 (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

The “car-choking” metaphorical expression indicates that “A choking car does not start.” This “choking” is related to the triangle of fire the car combustion engine requires; not starting means not combusting completely. Consider Example 24:

The metaphor “an asleep tire is a flat tire” is used in Arabic.

24. بعد أسبوع لقيت الكفر نايم عبيته هوا
 baʔd usbu:ʔ lage:t alkaʔər naijm ʕabetaħ hawa
 after week-SG found-1stSG DEF-tire sleeping filled-3rdSG air
 “A week later, I found the tire flat, and I inflated it” <http://www.mekshat.com/vb/archive/index.php/t-627561.html> (Accessed: 5/4/2022)

Example 24 shows that embodiment affects car parts as entities independent from cars.

The state of being “asleep” also indicates the situation when cars have not been used for a long time. Look at Example 25:

25. هذه السيارات نامت لمدة نصف قرن في إحدى الملكيات الخاصة غرب فرنسا
 haðihi as:aijarat na:mat limudat niSf qarn fi ihda
 this DEF-car-PL sleep-PAST for-a-while-of half century-SG in one-of
 almiilkijat alxaS:ah ʔarb faransa
 DEF-possession-PL DEF-private west France
 “These cars have slept for half a country in a private property west of France”
<https://arabic.euronews.com/culture/2015/02/06/record-prices-expected-at-sale-of-baillon-car-collection-in-paris> (Accessed: 5/4/2022).

Considering another list of car-related terms (<https://mize.com.sa/خدماتنا/>, accessed 4/7/2023) from a car maintenance perspective, technicality played a significant role in blocking the embodiment in the society of Arabic users. See Table 3:

TABLE 3
 CAR PART NAMES IN ENGLISH WITH ARABIC transliterations OF INVENTOR’S TERMS

Inventor’s Term	Transliterated Term in Arabic with Phonetic Transcription	Alternative Coined Term in Arabic	Literal Meaning of Coined Term
gearbox	جربكس/zarabuks	مبدل السرعة/mubad:ilas:urʕah	speed shifter
machine	مكينة/maki:nah	محرك/muħar:ik	mover
sensor	سنسور/sinsər	حساس/ħas:as	sensor
body	بودي/budi	جسم/zism	body
differential	ديفرنس/difrans	-	-
clutch	كلتش/kalatf	-	-
radiator	ريدتر/ridetər	-	-
coil	كويل/kuel	-	-
cutout	كتاوت/katauit	-	-
timing (belt)	تليمن/teman	-	-
cylinder	سليندر/silindar	-	-
tank	تانكي/tanki	-	-
crank	كرنك/krank	-	-
hand brake	الهندريك/handbrek	-	-
self-starter	سلف/silf	-	-
chassis	شاص/as	-	-

Of the examples in Table 3, the first four parts of the schedule have two alternating referring expressions, each in Arabic. The last twelve referring expressions are only referred to with an English to Arabic transliteration each. The meanings of the first and second, جربكس [zarabuks] (“gearbox”) and مكينة [maki:nah] (“machine” or “engine”), respectively, have alternative coined terms indicating embodied functions. The meaning of the third one, سنسور [sinsər] (“sensor”), indicates an embodied state. The meaning of the fourth one, بودي [budi] (“body”), indicates an embodied

shape. Notice that the rest of the examples are technical; hence, they cannot be embodied for lack of matching functions, states, or shapes.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In previous studies on car embodiment, cars were used as source and target domains in metaphorical mapping. Those metaphors were utilized to indicate intimacy and heroism when cars were the target domains, as in, for example, the research of Živković (2014). On the other hand, these metaphors were used as highlights of human traits, such as being powerful and corrupt, for example (Notar, 2014).

When collecting the data for the current study, some words were not found involved in conceptual car embodiment mapping due to the technical nature thereof. Examples of this are جريكس [zarabuks] (“transmission/gearbox”) and عمود التوازن [ʕamudat:awazun] (“sway bar”). The word جريكس [zarabuks] (“transmission/gearbox”), similar to the case of Example 15, above, is a mere borrowing of the English-referring expression “gearbox”. The word عمود التوازن [ʕamudat:awazun] (“sway bar”), which literally means “balance rod” in Arabic, describes the function of the part. Another reason for not using them can be attributed to the structural and ontological infeasibility of using the embodiment, which also applies to the examples of “transmission/gearbox” and “sway bar”.

In the current study, car parts, actions, and states were found to be referred to by expressions that are literally used to represent human and animal parts, actions, and states. Consider the following list, which includes examples of the tokens studied:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. engine head | 5. car’s body | 9. whistle | 13. engine’s navel |
| 2. car eyes | 6. car’s bottom | 10.choke | 14. car arms |
| 3. car eyeliner | 7. stand | 11.tired | 15. asleep tire |
| 4. car’s face | 8. walk/ride/drive/run | 12.head’s face | |

Finding that many of the car-related conceptual metaphors are driven by embodiment supports the concept introduced by Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and Langacker (2008), which is that the peculiarity of bodies tends to feed the source domains of metaphors. Other car-related metaphors highlighted in the literature, such as those in Katz (2000), Young (2001), Dant (2005), Živković (2014), and Notar (2014), were not found in the car parts or related concept data. This suggests that the importance of embodiment in enhancing the effectiveness of human communication not only serves to emphasize human attitudes and values but also extends to enhancing other aspects of language, including the technical register.

The social motivation behind the car’s metaphorical embodiment can be observed in connection to the historical transition from animal-based transportation to cars. This shift in transportation reflects the use of animal forms to represent the function and design of older modes of transport. This phenomenon is expected to be prevalent in various societies worldwide due to the widespread transition from animal-powered to car-powered transportation. This trend is the primary focus of the study, as illustrated in Table 1. Another social factor contributing to the use of this metaphor is the adoption of English car part names in Arabic-speaking countries as cars and their components are imported. This adoption is evident in the transliteration of English terms into Arabic. Examples of transliterated terms include مكنية/makina (“machine”), جريكس [zarabuks] (“gearbox”), and دفرنس [difrans] (“differential”). Consider Table 2 for other examples and comparisons.

The motivation behind this embodiment was primarily driven by the recent invention of cars and the practicality of utilizing existing terms instead of creating new ones when structuring a framework for referring to car parts, actions, and states. When the target domains are abstract and people make them concrete to help promote convenient reference, the motivation is ontological. Human and animal body parts were employed to categorize car components in order to conceptually align formal and/or functional attributes. On the other hand, human and animal actions and states were utilized to structure the functional aspects of car actions and states.

The metaphors in the list above indicate that their metaphorical meanings exist on a semantic level. This is according to the prototype notion explained by Fillmore (2006), Brugman and Lakoff (2006), and Geeraerts (2016), among others. For example, the lexical-level meanings of the words head, eye, and face are “the upper or anterior division of the animal body”, “a specialized light-sensitive sensory structure of animals”, and “the front part of the head in humans” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed 4/7/2023), respectively. While the semantic level meanings of these metaphors are the “topmost part of an engine core”, “the headlight of a car”, and “the front part of the car”, respectively.

The percentage of car embodiment verbs among all embodiment verbs is relatively higher than the percentage of part names (46% compared to 16%, respectively). This is attributed to the limited forms of car parts when compared to the less limited functions and metonymies verbs can represent as source domains in embodiment metaphors.

The question of how similar car embodiment is across languages is interesting, but it is beyond the scope of this paper. Future research could explore this question by analyzing car embodiment metaphors in languages other than Arabic. This would help to expand the validity of the conclusion, but it is important to remember that the influence of embodiment on culture is not always straightforward. As Kövecses (2004) has argued, embodiment can sometimes melt social barriers, making it difficult to predict how car embodiment will be expressed in different languages.

Looking into car-related concepts in Arabic and English over time and exploring how they have influenced our perception of cars, would be a valuable direction for future expansion of the current paper.

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Representation of Patriarchal Ideology and Its Negative Effects on the Characters in Naomi Alderman's *The Power*

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Abstract—Patriarchy is a social system that systematically considers women as inferior to men. Therefore, this study aimed to examine patriarchal ideology and its detrimental effects on characters in Naomi Alderman's *The Power*. Using a qualitative descriptive and a feminist methodology, the results showed that patriarchal violence manifested in various forms, including physical and sexual assault as well as murder. This narrative suggested that women empowered by the control over electricity retaliated against men, showing the negative effects of patriarchy extended to both genders.

Index Terms—patriarchy, negative effects, feminism

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature is a diverse array of artistic expressions, including short tales, poems, novels, dramas, and songs originating from writers of various national and cultural backgrounds using multiple forms of English (Arafah, 2018; Afiah et al., 2022). It serves as a collection of literary works for both written and unwritten narratives, such as texts as well as spoken language (Fadillah et al., 2022; Baa et al., 2023), allowing a platform for individuals to express thoughts through words, actions, and writing (Iksora et al., 2022; Ananda & Arafah, 2023). This form of expression engages readers by incorporating compelling language in literary works (Sunardi et al., 2018; Asriyanti et al., 2022). Therefore, literature is generally defined as a written work of art created by a particular author (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019a; Yulianti et al., 2022). For example, literature may reflect a society's cultural values (Mokoginta et al., 2021; Hasyim et al., 2023) and bridge existential gaps as well as connect individuals (Moi, 2009; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b).

Literary works offer valuable lessons in the domain of environmental conservation and human survival. It further provides insights into life at particular junctures, offering diverse benefits to readers (Anggrawan et al., 2019; Arafah et al., 2021). Several genres of literature, such as poetry, prose, and theatre, are distinguished by the content, intricacy, and use of symbolic language. Additionally, novels present fictitious narratives in prose form, examining the characters' lives within specific contexts, including conflicts and problem-solving abilities (Hasjim et al., 2020; Takwa et al., 2022a;

Yudith et al., 2023).

The novel is selected as the literary work for this study and is defined as a largely fictitious prose story (Mazzoni, 2017; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). It has the potential to accomplish more than philosophy, poetry, science, and other forms of literature (Lawrence, 1936, p. 168; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). "*The Power*" by Naomi Alderman explores the limitations imposed on women and the consequences of defying these restrictions, emphasizing patriarchal practices and their impact (Sunyoto et al., 2022; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a).

Patriarchy denoting "rule of the fathers" is widely understood as a social, organizational structure where cultural and institutional beliefs reinforce the dominance of older or more powerful men over women and youth (Levy, 2007; Kaharuddin et al., 2022). This system grants men greater power, social control, material wealth, and higher social prestige than women (Hill, 2009; Kaharuddin, 2022). Patriarchal traditions further place women beneath men, erasing independence and autonomy (Udasmoro, 2017; Hasyim et al., 2020). Beyond the concept of "sexism", patriarchy is a societal creation of male-gendered authority with a specific structure (Ortner, 2022; Halil et al., 2024). According to Richards (2013, p. 184), the underlying patriarchal view was consistent with the sexist belief that women's minds and bodies were the property of male deities.

Historical investigations of violence against women through a patriarchal lens often idealize the oppressed and denounce the oppressor (Hunnicut, 2009; Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). Radical feminists further assert that patriarchy and women's subjugation originate from violence and control over other sexualities primarily influenced by ego and social connection in humans (Arafah & Hasyim, 2019; Purwaningsih et al., 2020). Feminism characterizes men's systemic power relations as patriarchy, where men govern women (Scraton, 2013; Takwa et al., 2022b). This perception perpetuates the community's view of men as dominant while environmental factors fail to equalize gender roles (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019b; Asri et al., 2023; Usman et al., 2024), making patriarchy challenging to stop.

Walby further asserts that recent Western history has seen two types of patriarchy and further separated into two categories, namely private and public. Private patriarchy is predicated on the relative isolation of women from social spheres other than the household, exploiting women's services individually and directly in the seemingly private domain of the home (Walby, 1989, p. 228). However, public patriarchy does not exclude women, with the appropriation of women occurring collectively rather than individually (Mutmainnah et al., 2022; Kuswanti et al., 2023).

Currently, patriarchy is often overlooked and normalized, particularly within domestic spheres. Despite the detrimental effects as evidenced in the novel "*The Power*," patriarchy profoundly harms both women and men. While individual violence may be perceived as sporadic, it can also originate from underlying psychological disorders or social structural traits exhibited by men (Walby, 1989; Takwa et al., 2024). Therefore, women require strength, which extends beyond physical prowess to comprise education. Empowering women to make decisions about marriage, family size, income distribution, mobility, jobs, education, and entertainment can improve their quality of life, giving them the ability to be defensive (Khan et al., 2019; Arafah et al., 2024).

The study aims to explore patriarchal ideology as perceived by women and elucidate the impact on the male and female characters depicted in Alderman's novel "*The Power*". Additionally, advancements in science significantly influence society by altering lifestyles and perspectives (Arafah et al., 2020; Suhadi et al., 2022; Kaharuddin et al., 2023).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Feminism is a movement that advocates equal rights for women, aiming to achieve equality with men in various spheres, such as political, economic, and legal domains (Offen, 1988; Arafah et al., 2020; Yudith et al., 2024). Listening to past and present women's voices fostered a more receptive and rational method of hearing men's opinions anew. Arafah (2011) emphasized the importance of granting women a platform to share life experiences, enabling a comparison between the adventures of both genders. Women's voices should reflect personal experiences and serve as conduits for authors' perceptions, engaging in public discourse and driving social change.

The study of feminism evolved in response to the feminist movement possessing strong will and ambitions but lacked ideology and empirical foundation to substantiate the claims (Tomm, 2006; Kaharuddin et al., 2021). Eisenstein (1979, p. 73) underscored the necessity of a feminist analytical framework in understanding that the quest for gender equality was a current process riddled with internal challenges. The subfield of social feminism was further used to study the Novel's content. The following theory elements included objectification, power and oppression, stereotypes, gender disparities, inequality, and oppression. Furthermore, a journey across the landscape of feminist methodology was offered to show the reader how women should learn about gendered living and adopt the information to claim a social existence (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002; Arafah et al., 2023a).

As a framework for approaching and evaluating life and politics, feminism was characterized by inquiry and the pursuit of answers rather than predetermined political conclusions regarding women's oppression (Siwi et al., 2022; Manugeran et al., 2023). Feminist perspectives elucidated that oppression did not originate from individual characteristics but from power dynamics and the systems used by authority to perpetuate control. Cultural norms and practices often led men and women to resist or be unable to conform, resulting in oppression (Peters et al., 2008; Arafah et al., 2023b). A well-known feminist criticism further emphasized the subjugation and marginalization of women's oral narratives by patriarchal written accounts (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022; Mardiana et al., 2023). Additionally, gender

issues were interconnected with private life, subjectivity, sexuality, and various social facets by feminism, deepening political conceptions, visions of social change, and modes of political engagement (Lennox, 1993; Arifin et al., 2022).

Feminism was a method deeply entrenched in daily life, permeating various aspects of societal interactions and personal experiences. This analytical method was considered revolutionary due to three significant factors (Eisenstein, 1979, p. 64).

- a. The emphasis on daily life and experience was not a moral choice but a necessity.
- b. Theory was integrated into daily practice, transforming social interactions in consciousness and reality due to its direct relevance to real-world requirements.
- c. As theory closely correlated with practical demands, it directly influenced social interactions in both awareness and reality.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study adhered to the qualitative method's methods and principles, which were used to comprehensively understand the issues under investigation (Abidin & Kaharuddin, 2021). Data were collected through meticulous reading and comprehension of the Novel, accompanied by recording of specific words and sentences. Following the guidelines outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994), data analysis comprises three main processes: data reduction, visualizing, and conclusion drawing/verification. During the data reduction phase, relevant data were selected from the novel text and subsequently simplified. The writer then provided the data by briefly discussing sections of the text or storylines containing patriarchal ideology and the consequences within the Novel. The presented text was elucidated in detail in the data visualizing stage, with novel excerpts correlating with the problem formulation, facilitating a methodical data analysis process. Finally, conclusions were drawn in the verification phase based on the problem formulation statement previously formulated by the writer (Arafah et al., 2023).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Naomi Alderman, the author of the novel *"The Power"*, recounted the story of violence experienced by women as a form of patriarchal action. In the narrative, women receive strength from God as a form of resistance and pursuit of justice. However, this power was used to take revenge on men, eventually leading to the control and dominance of social life by women.

A. Patriarchy Ideology Experienced by Female Characters

As the head of the family, husbands naturally exerted control or imposed restrictions on the wives. However, husbands resorted to physical abuse when wives committed offences, which was a highly unnatural action. Surrounding environments normalized domestic violence, leading to indifference towards occurrences of violence, as depicted in the Novel: "The men in the town beat the wives when attempts to bring more food were made" (Alderman, 2016, p. 103).

Men held power over their wives and acted without considering the consequences. Women were also perceived as vulnerable beings, as evidenced by the statement, "My mother's new husband has handcuffed the lady to the bed. Please send someone to rescue the lady" (Alderman, 2016, p. 127).

In marriages, husbands were responsible for the wife's well-being and had the duty to provide, love, and protect the wife. However, not every man fulfilled this responsibility adequately. Many mistreated the spouses and, in certain cases, resorted to violence, emphasizing patriarchal behaviour within the household (private patriarchy).

In the Novel *The Power*, female characters experience frequent physical assault in public. Women further endured physical abuse from men, even from strangers, as exemplified in the passage: "Two men were present, one taller with a face resembling a rat and the other shorter with a square jaw which was unfamiliar. The shorter one seized the mother by the throat while the taller guy pursued Roxy through the kitchens. The guy grasped the thigh as Roxy neared the back door, causing Roxy to stumble forward, then secured the hold around the waist" (Alderman, 2016, p. 7).

The men committed several acts of violence, including confinement, kicking, and striking, relying on their physical strength to mistreat Roxy and the mother without compassion, as evidenced by the passage, "The short man kicked Roxy's mum hard in the stomach. The mother doubled over in pain falling to her knees, then the man swishes the knife at Roxy" (Alderman, 2016, p. 9). Violence against women was also perpetrated by the police, as described in the following quotation.

...and that marked the end for the cops, pulling out the nightsticks and guns as the action commenced. Mez was screaming alongside the mother as blood stained the sidewalk, and both inflicted injuries upon the head. Mez recounted how the men restrained and caused harm with the tally seven to one." Allie listened intently, and upon Mez's conclusion, Allie inquired, "Is the lady alive?" Mez nodded. Do you know where the lady was taken to? Which hospital? Mez said the lady was not taken to the hospital. The men have taken the lady to the police station. (Alderman, 2016, p. 129)

The actions of these policemen showed the severity of patriarchy as women endured brutal physical violence despite their innocence. This assault was triggered by the officers' humiliation upon viewing a video of Roxy and Allie showcasing the strength online. The officers' disbelief in women's strength originated from the ingrained idea that men

were inherently more muscular than women, as depicted in the paragraph, "When facing the courageous fighters of Bessapara, it became evident who stood on the side of justice. Among the fighters were trafficked and shackled women, as well as individuals who might have perished alone in the darkness had it not been for the guiding light sent by a higher power" (Alderman, 2016, p. 211).

Violence against women was rampant in the Arab kingdom, where the royal family had been binding and trading women for decades. The extreme patriarchy in the Arab kingdom allowed for women's control and exploitation. Women's trafficking exemplified the low regard men held for women, allowing the gender to commit heinous acts with impunity, as described in the statement. "Upward of three hundred thousand women passed through the country every year, sold for the use of the moist bodies and fragile flesh. A great number of those have stayed having nowhere else to go" (Alderman, 2016, p. 108).

Patriarchy victimized women for over three centuries by being sold and exploited for their bodies. Women were often forced to submit to the actions of patriarchal perpetrators due to the lack of strength to resist. Poor women were more vulnerable to physical and sexual violence and often denied freedom as well as self-determination. Additionally, men's violence extended to the bombing of hospitals catering to women's health issues. "A terrorist group named Male Power claimed responsibility for the attack, which destroyed a medical clinic catering to women's health issues alongside a busy mall in Tucson, Arizona" (Alderman, 2016, p. 193).

A group of male terrorists targeted a hospital specializing in women's health issues as a protest against the government's allocation of funds. The terrorists advocated for equality as all funds were directed to the North Star Girls Training Camp, leaving no resources for men's defence programs.

The hospital attack was carried out by male terrorists aiming to provoke government action against what was perceived as a "human enemy" (Alderman, 2016). Women were perceived as the enemy of men, and monies for self-defence training were redirected to educate Northstar girls. Additionally, poor women were subjected to physical and sexual violence, as stated in the following sentence.

This was the place men came to when a woman was needed for use without law or license and discarded without censure. *The power* has been passed from palm to palm here for three years now, and the many death-bearing hands of women have a name here: Kali, the eternal. Kali destroys to bring fresh growth. Kali, intoxicated by the blood of the slain. Kali puts out the stars with her thumb and forefinger. Terror is her name, and death is her breathing in and out". (Alderman, 2016, p. 146)

Men exploited women without regard for legislation or consent, discarding the gender when no longer serving purposes. The treatment of women by men was deeply degrading, with the belief that the gender deserved the treatment and did not consider the possibility of retaliation.

Despite possessing talent, skills, and understanding, women were deemed unfit for leadership roles, particularly in politics. However, the women were expected to accompany the husbands rather than assume leadership roles merely. Women faced captivity and endured physical as well as sexual violence, hindering their ability to lead everyday lives, as described in the passage. "Tunde's report emphasized Tatiana Moskalev as a skilled political operator who effectively used Tatiana's influence" (Alderman, 2016, p. 107).

Men who exerted excessive control over women were deprived of the ability to make decisions. Women were regarded as the weakest creatures due to their incapability to be defensive or protective and thereby subject to governance and abuse by men, as evidenced in the following passage.

The men lurked in the darkness, honing their skills and ensuring the swift execution of the plan. The weapon was passed among the men, and marvelling at the power. It was a revelation for some who had been captive for an extended period and a curious rumour for others. The women believed it to be a miracle from God, similar to the deliverance of the Children of Israel from slavery. From the depths of despair, the women cried out and, in the darkness, found light. (Alderman, 2016, p. 102)

B. *The Bad Effects on Female Character*

The previous explanation discussed patriarchal ideas faced by women characters in Alderman's *The Power*. Furthermore, the author described the effects women felt against patriarchy as follows.

Physical Violence

In the novel "*The Power*", women experienced significant levels of physical assault both within the home and in public with men in control. Women were expected to adhere to strict rules, and any deviation or resistance was met with severe repercussions. This pervasive patriarchy inflicted considerable harm on women, reinforcing the idea of weakness as perceived by men (Arafah et al., 2023c).

Sexual Violence

Another manifestation of patriarchy depicted in the Novel is sexual violence, which occurs frequently. Sexual violence was defined as an attack on a woman's body or reproductive function. In "*The Power*", lower-middle-class women were sexually subjected to sexual abuse where men assert control over their bodies at will. The narrative suggested instances of sexual aggression, including groping and rape, emphasizing the extent of the dominance over women.

Trafficking of Women

Men engaged in the trafficking of women, particularly after committing sexual violence. This reprehensible trade primarily targeted underprivileged women, often living in destitution under bridges.

Murder

The most extreme consequence of patriarchy depicted in the Novel is murder. Men committed ruthless acts of violence against women, targeting individuals and groups. For instance, men carried out bombings targeting hospitals that catered to women's health issues.

C. The Bad Effects on Male Character

Patriarchy inflicted harm not only on women but also on the men who perpetrated the act. Effects observed on men committing these acts included.

Physical Violence from Women

Women resorted to physical violence as a means of retaliation against the oppression faced, as stated, "Roxy jumped over the prone man, groaning and pawing at the face" (Alderman, 2016, p. 9). For instance, Roxy fought a man to defend the mother due to the whisper of motivation to fight based on the statement in the passage, "Hit, poisoned, and use a needle full of poison to stick the man" (Alderman, 2016, p. 18).

A witch would further assault a man who had been flirting with the lady. This woman was bothered by the man's actions, using her strength to assault the man. Furthermore, women who were victims of sexual violence experienced additional physical violence as described, "And Roxy got the man at the throat, just under the jaw using a metal blade to slice the voice box. The man's mouth fell slackly open and made choking sounds. However, the man was still breathing and could not speak" (Alderman, 2016, p. 31).

Women who experienced sexual violence would fight back against the perpetrator. After discovering their power, the women would refuse to let the offenders take advantage. The following quote describes several examples of physical aggression, "The man was not supposed to say the mum's name. Roxy got the man across the throat, and the man screamed, saying, "Fuck. Fuck. Fuck" (Alderman, 2016, p. 57).

Roxy exacted revenge on the individual who murdered the mother. The revenge took the form of physical violence experienced by the murderer. The second retaliation was carried out by ladies who reside beneath the bridge, as evidenced in the following passage, "The women of Delhi had discovered a new tactic and found that electrifying a jet of water aimed at attackers could deliver lethal shocks. With hands in the spouts, the women unleashed death from the fingertips resembling the Goddess walking the earth" (Alderman, 2016, p. 146).

Victimized by patriarchy, women found an avenue to retaliate against men using electrical power. Women possessed the strength to wield against their enemies as the gender was no longer depicted as weak. In "*The Power*", Jocelyn cautioned Dakota against provoking physical assault. Jocelyn asserted women's collective show of strength in solidarity with those oppressed under bridges and deprived of water (Alderman, 2016, p. 147).

Women retaliated against men who posed a threat to their safety, as depicted in the statement, "Jocelyn pushed Dakota out of the way, leaned down, and gave the man a jolt in the head. This was to teach the man what would happen when the man messes with the women" (Alderman, 2016, p. 234). Additionally, women were not only defensive from threats but also aided the community, as described in the following passage:

As the ladies approached closer, the individual addressed the women, stating, "The man was not sure what the ladies witnessed, but a blow was delivered to the woman on the back of the neck. It was a fair exchange with a strike made, plain and simple." Magda, Marinela, Veronyka, and Irina seized the man's limbs, directing power onto the surface of the skin, leading to scars and markings, penetrating the flesh, loosening and twisting the joints. (Alderman, 2016, p. 345)

Women who rejected the idea of men mistreating the community often evolved as heroes or aides, leveraging their strength to confront men. This emphasized that when women possessed power, greater influence was used and exerted significant control over men.

Sexual Violence from Women

Men may be sexually abused due to patriarchy, as described in the following passage, "the woman sitting on the man's chest applied the palm to the genitals with a low hum of spark. Despite the man's muffled screams and attempts to escape, the pain was not too severe. Roxy inflicted similar acts on men ostensibly for amusement. The man's reaction was predictable with the arousal similar to a betrayal or foolishness" (Alderman, 2016, p. 316). In response to attacks on the camps, women retaliated by perpetrating sexual violence against the men.

The Lowered Status of Men

Another impact on men when women have power is their counterparts' lesser degree of control. The men would not be trusted in the public or private sectors. This influence was more severe than that felt by women, as men had historical dominance over women. Subsequently, the men were merely perceived as individuals who could only accomplish something with women's approval and assistance. Restrictions were imposed on men's activities, such as driving cars and owning businesses, while women even had the authority to use foreign journalists and photographers. Even assemblies were regulated, with men only permitted to assemble in groups larger than three when a woman was present (Alderman, 2016, p. 273).

Murder

The most heinous consequence of patriarchy was murder. When women felt oppressed and angered by men's actions,

they aimed for vengeance through killing, as described in the following passage.

"The woman put a hand to Primrose's temples and killed the individual (Alderman, 2016, p. 58). Subsequently, the woman tipped the man back into the pool and lit it up once, making the scenario appear as though the man had a heart attack, fell in, shot, and drowned. The lady then sat for a bit, feeling the power within, crystalline and complete, that something was killing Newland. (Alderman, 2016, p. 228)

Roxy exacts retribution on those responsible for the mother's murder by killing the two individuals who murdered the mum. Roxy pursued justice, and the men should also be killed when the mother was murdered. Women showed remarkable strength due to the knowledge of how to use the power to be protective or seek revenge. God gave women strength to be defensive, as observed in Jocelyn's experience:

Jocelyn's skin twitched because of excitement. It worked better than ever since Mother Eve cured her, showing why the miracle occurred. The aim was to save her from an evil man attempting to kill her. (Alderman, 2016, p. 342)

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Naomi Alderman described the cruelty of patriarchal actions experienced by women in the novel "*The Power*". The representation of patriarchy appeared in the form of physical and sexual violence, as well as the brutal murder of women, just as Kaharuddin et al. (2024) suggested. However, women are not always victims in this Novel, as they are the gender that receives strength from God. This strength enabled the women to take revenge against men, causing men to experience the consequences of patriarchal actions perpetrated.

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Voices From the EFL Literature Classroom: Students' Attitudes Towards the Use of Multimodal Literature to Improve Their CEFR Literary Reading Competence at C1 Level

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Abstract—The purpose of this research was to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to develop their literary reading competence at C1 level. The participants included 10 fourth-year English major students who were enrolled in the Contemporary World Literature course at a university in Thailand in semester three, 2023. The instruments used for the study included a questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions. Mean and standard deviation calculations including content analysis were used for data analysis. The findings revealed that the students had a positive attitude towards engaging in learning experiences with multimodal literature in the literature studies class. They also reflected the students' thoughts about studying with multimodal literature in the literature course to improve their multimodal literature applications in the EFL literature classroom.

Index Terms—multimodal literature, EFL literature classroom, CEFR, literary reading

I. INTRODUCTION

Education today involves more than just imparting knowledge; it also involves assisting students in acquiring an essential compass and skills necessary to deal with the world which is more complex and uncertain (OECD, 2021). Being literate in this global connectivity world not only refers to the ability to read and write effectively, but also expands the skills to include the capacities to understand, identify, interpret, create, and communicate in a digital or text-mediated platform. In this context, literacy includes media literacy, digital literacy, global citizenship, education for sustainable development, and job-specific skills (UNESCO, 2023). In the past, teachers could instruct their students to search for information in textbooks and accept it as accurate and true. They can now access millions of answers on Google without anyone dictating what is true or false. It is more crucial than ever to cultivate deep comprehension as well as the ability to negotiate ambiguity, triangulate opinions, and make sense of content given how much knowledge technology allows us to search for and access (OECD, 2021). In this respect, students in contemporary society need to hone their skills at understanding both traditional print-based texts or monomodal texts and other texts beyond the traditional or multimodal texts (Kress, 2010). These skills in need of development include to produce / design, consume, interpret, and analyse texts in new and more interactive ways (Anstey & Bull, 2006).

Multimodal texts convey their message through more than one semiotic mode or channel of communication. This is, meaning is communicated by incorporating spoken or written language, and still or moving images created either on paper or on electronic screen, with or without sound (Boshraadi & Biria, 2014). This definition implies that there are two categories to describe multimodal texts: printed texts including picture books, newspapers, magazines, and reference books as its initial type of text; and non-printed texts including videos, films, and digital media (Baharani & Ghafournia, 2015).

Multimodal literature comprises a variety of audio, visual, and other symbolic representations. In contrast to the linear reading of monomodal texts, multimodal materials entail the processing of more than one communication mode and recognition of the connections between these modes (Eisenmann & Summer, 2020). Thus, it is likely that different modes convey different meaning (Kress, 2010). The addition of images to verbal learning can result in significant improvements in higher-order learning. As such, multimodal learning may be more effective than conventional unimodal learning. Moreover, multimodal instructional resources facilitate reading comprehension through the interaction of text and visuals. By affording language learners the ability to listen to multimodal materials, especially non-printed texts, their pronunciation skills can be improved. Multimodal texts also increase the motivation of language learners to understand reading comprehension texts. When using multimodal texts, second language learners are more inclined to read texts in-depth than when using linear texts (Baharani & Ghafournia, 2015).

Previous studies of students' attitudes and perceptions of multimodal-text based learning in the classroom suggested they are viewed as positive learning experiences (Djamdjuri et al., 2021; Jocius, 2013). A review of the literature also revealed that most studies related to the attitudes and perceptions of students and teachers towards the integration of

multimodality into the classroom tended to be conducted in non-literature courses. Nevertheless, research on students' attitude towards the use of multimodal texts is scarce, particularly around the use of multimodal literature to promote EFL students' literary reading competence with reference to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for language at C1 level. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence at C1 level.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Multimodal Literature*

Multimodal literature generally refers to a book or a digital literary text like a picture book, informational text, or graphic novel. As opposed to the linear reading of monomodal texts, multimodal literature requires the processing of multiple channels of communication and an understanding of the connections between those modes. Multimodal literature includes several auditory, visual, and other symbolic representations. When reading multimodal materials, it is necessary to analyse many modes and recognise the relationships between them (Eizenmann & Summer, 2020). Thus, it is possible that various modalities convey meaning in varying ways (Kress, 2010).

Reading multimodal literature or multimodal texts encourages students to explore plot, point of view, and voice through visual imagery. Moreover, students can compare and analyse the same story presented across several formats and media. The multimodal method also enables teachers to successfully accommodate the different learning styles of students (Thompson & McInay, 2019). The benefits of using multimodal texts in the classrooms have been acknowledged by numerous English language instructors across many countries. Firstly, multimodal texts support learning by students representing diverse learning preferences. Although a student may have a preferred learning method, the multimodal text's multiple channels or modes of learning can cater to distinct student learning styles. For instance, kinaesthetic or tactile learners may learn best when they actively participate in classroom activities, auditory learners may benefit from listening to verbal instructions, and visual learners may learn best by observing the teachers' demonstrations (Jewitt, 2008; Kellner, 2008). In this respect, multimodal texts can be presented in a variety of ways to provide students with the opportunity to learn in a way that best suits them and which helps to improve their learning abilities. Secondly, employing multimodal texts in teaching and learning enhances student engagement and motivation. According to Lee's (2014) study, student motivation and confidence to learn increases after participating in multimodal learning experiences. Thirdly, students learn through various modes of communication and multimodal texts thus help to promote comprehension and learning retention. For instance, a visual presentation can solve the communication problem when written words are unable to convey the meaning (Chen & Fu, 2003). Additionally, studies show that student learn more in lessons that include words and images compared to lessons that use words only (Mayer, 2008).

B. *Literary Reading Competence Based on CEFR at C1 Level*

The CEFR for Languages is an international standard describing the language proficiency of English language users at different levels (Council of Europe, 2018). The framework was initially employed as a major language acquisition strategy for speakers of different languages as part of the administrative policies in education, workplace entry, immigration, and citizenship in Europe (Council of Europe, 2001; Tylor, 2004). More recently it has been widely used as a framework for developing foreign language instruction and learning in other non-European countries. According to Cambridge English (2016), there are six language competency levels on the CEFR scales: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. The "can do" statements are used to illustrate the range of tasks that students can complete at different proficiency levels. These statements outline the language ability that students at each level should demonstrate regarding a range of skills such as speaking, writing, interaction, and production (Council of Europe, 2018).

According to the CEFR, reading literature is important for developing communicative competency in the aesthetic uses of language for writing and speaking. The three illustrative descriptor scales on the topics related to literature are: 'reading as a leisure activity,' 'expressing a personal response to creative texts including literature,' and 'analysis and criticism of creative texts including literature' (Council of Europe, 2018). Literary reading competence at C1 level is defined as the ability to articulate a personal response to literature, including the capacity to analyse and criticise a literary work. In the first instance, learners should be able to clearly present their reactions to the work, develop their ideas, and provide examples and arguments to support them. They must also identify character traits, emotional states, motivations for actions, and the consequences of those actions. Furthermore, learners should be able to identify and interpret how the plot, characters, and themes develop within a story. Finally, they should be able to identify and interpret their personal interpretation of the work in detail and explain their reaction to specific features and explain their significance. The latter involves critically evaluating a wide array of texts including literary works of different descriptions and commenting on how the work engages the audience (Council of Europe, 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in this study to investigate the students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level.

A. Participant Recruitment

The participants of the study consisted of 10 fourth-year English major students (4 men and 6 women) who were enrolled in the Contemporary World Literature course during semester three in 2023 at a medium-size public university in Northern Thailand. The participants were purposively chosen based on the researcher's designated teaching course. The researcher met with the participants prior to commencing the study to thoroughly explain its goals and to solicit their voluntary involvement. Each participant received an invitation letter along with a Consent Form outlining their right to withdraw consent and discontinue participating in the research project at any time. By filling out and returning the Consent Form within a week, the participant confirmed her or his consent to participate.

B. Study Instruments

The questionnaire instrument to collect quantitative data was developed by the researcher and comprised 22 rating-scale questions and one open-ended question. The 5-point rating-scale questions were divided into four parts: attitudes toward studying literature; attitudes toward multimodal literature; attitudes toward using multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level; and attitudes toward the learning activities implemented in the classroom. The questionnaire required the participants to consider each item carefully and to indicate their responses to statements related to the use of multimodal literature, choosing from five levels: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. The open-ended question referred to other comments or suggestions related to the use of multimodal literature in the classroom. The questions were approved by three experts in the field of English literature and English language teaching. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) was used to establish content validity. Items with scores lower than 0.5 were revised, whereas items with scores higher than or equal to 0.5 were reserved. The overall IOC score of the questionnaire was 0.96. Content reliability was determined to ensure that the responses collected via the questionnaire instrument were reliable and consistent. The questionnaire was piloted with 25 fourth-year English major students studying at a university in the northern part of Thailand (the researcher's workplace), none of whom were in the study sample. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied to assess the reliability (internal consistency) of the items in the questionnaire, resulting in a reliability value of 0.88.

C. Data Collection

The participants were instructed with a variety of multimodal literature over the course of 10 weeks in the Contemporary World Literature course classroom. Each lesson was three hours' duration, for a total of 30 hours. In addition to administering the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain more in-depth insights into the students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level. The participants' attitudes towards three main aspects—the literary texts used, the multimodal literature used to develop literary reading ability, and the activities employed in class—were targeted in flexibly constructed questions to collect qualitative data. There were subsequent questions embedded in each main part. The same experts reviewed the interview questions and changes were subsequently made based on their feedback to make them more straightforward and clearer. Each interview lasted about 20 minutes, was conducted in Thai, and was audio recorded with each participant's consent.

D. Data Analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaire instrument were analysed to generate descriptive statistics of the mean (M) score and standard deviation (SD), based on the Likert-scale criteria. Means scores were interpreted in this study according to the follow criteria:

4.51-5.00	students reported strongly agree
3.51-4.50	students reported agree
2.51-3.50	students reported neither agree nor disagree
1.51-2.50	students reported disagree
0.00-1.50	students reported strongly disagree

Qualitative data from the individual semi-structured interview were descriptively analysed using content analysis.

IV. RESULTS

Students' Attitudes towards the Use of Multimodal Literature to Improve Literary Reading Competence at C1 Level

A. Questionnaire Results

The current study explored students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level. In terms of the demographic results, 4 males (40%) and 6 females (60%) were administered the questionnaire

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDYING LITERATURE (N=10)

Statements	M	S.D.	Level
1. I think that studying literature is useful for improving my English reading skills.	4.40	0.70	High
2. I think that studying literature helps me to develop critical thinking skills.	4.20	0.79	High
3. I think that studying literature is useful since I can gain moral lessons from each story to apply in my real life.	4.50	0.53	High
4. I think that studying literature is difficult and hard to provide an interpretation.	4.60	0.70	Highest

According to Table 1, item 4: *I think that studying literature is difficult and hard to provide an interpretation* achieved the highest mean ($M=4.60$, $SD=0.70$), while the second highest mean was for item 3: *I think that studying literature is useful since I can gain moral lessons from each story to apply in my real life* ($M=4.50$, $SD=0.53$). Item 2: *I think that studying literature helps me to develop critical thinking skills* achieved the lowest mean ($M=4.20$, $SD=0.79$).

TABLE 2
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD MULTIMODAL LITERATURE (N=10)

Statements	M	S.D.	Level
5. I like to study literature through graphic novel.	4.40	0.70	High
6. I like to study literature through picture book.	4.40	0.70	High
7. I like to study literature through animated video.	4.40	0.70	High
8. I like to study literature through film.	4.20	1.14	High
9. I think that studying literature using multimodal literature is more interesting than the traditional text-based methods because I can learn through various modes of learning such as seeing still images, moving images and listening to characters' voices and soundtrack rather than reading verbal texts only.	4.70	0.67	Highest
10. I prefer studying literature using multimodal literature compared to the traditional text-based method.	4.80	0.42	Highest

According to Table 2, item 10: *I prefer studying literature using multimodal literature compared to the traditional text-based method* achieved the highest mean ($M=4.80$, $SD=0.42$), while item 9: *I think that studying literature using multimodal literature is more interesting than the traditional text-based method because I can learn through various modes of learning such as seeing still images, moving images and listening to characters' voices and soundtrack rather than read verbal texts only as in traditional text-based method* is the second highest ($M=4.70$, $SD=0.67$). The lowest mean was achieved by item 8: *I like to study literature through film* ($M=4.20$, $SD=1.14$).

TABLE 3
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD USING MULTIMODAL LITERATURE TO IMPROVE LITERARY READING COMPETENCE AT C1 LEVEL (N=10)

Statements	M	S.D.	Level
11. I think that studying literature using a graphic novel helps to develop literary reading ability because narrating the story with pictures makes reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring.	4.60	0.52	Highest
12. I think that studying literature using a picture book helps to develop literary reading ability because the image illustration makes the story interesting.	4.30	0.48	High
13. I think that studying literature using an animated video helps to develop literary reading ability because the motion picture narrative makes the story easy for me to follow.	4.40	0.70	High
14. I think that studying literature using a film helps to develop literary reading ability because watching a film with sound audio and motion picture is fun and relaxing.	4.50	0.85	High
15. I think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to develop literary reading ability better than traditional printed-based text.	4.50	0.71	High

According to Table 3, item 11: *I think that studying literature using a graphic novel helps to develop literary reading ability because narrating the story with pictures makes reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring* achieved the highest mean ($M=4.60$, $SD=0.52$), while item 14: *I think that studying literature using a film helps to develop literary reading ability because watching a film with sound audio and motion picture is fun and relaxing* ($M=4.50$, $SD=0.85$), and item 15: *I think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to develop literary reading ability better than traditional printed-based text* achieved the second highest mean scores ($M=4.50$, $SD=0.71$). The lowest mean was achieved by item 12: *I think that studying literature with picture book helps develop literary reading ability because the image illustration makes the story interesting* ($M=4.30$, $SD=0.48$).

TABLE 4
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD ACTIVITIES USED IN CLASS (N=10)

Statements	M	S.D.	Level
16. I think that the <i>Discussion</i> activity helps me to identify character's motives for actions and the consequences of those actions.	4.40	0.70	High
17. I think that the <i>Picture Talk</i> activity helps me to identify and interpret the development of a plot, characters, and themes in a story.	4.40	0.52	High
18. I think that the <i>Me-Telling</i> activity helps me to describe personal interpretations towards the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain the significance.	4.40	0.70	High
19. I think that the <i>Move to Talk</i> activity helps me to give a clear presentation of my reactions to a work, develop my ideas, and support them with examples and arguments.	4.10	0.74	High
20. I think that <i>Reflective Writing</i> helps me to evaluate how effectively a work follows to the conventions of its genre.	4.30	0.82	High
21. I think that <i>Role Play</i> helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance.	3.90	1.20	High
22. I think that the <i>Drawing Picture</i> activity helps to stimulate my imagination and activate my background experiences necessary for text understanding.	4.00	0.67	High

Regarding Table 4, the highest mean score was achieved by items 16, 17, and 18: *I think that the Discussion activity helps me to identify character's motives for actions and the consequences of those actions* (M=4.40, SD=0.70), *I think that the Picture Talk activity helps me to identify and interpret the development of a plot, characters, and themes in a story* (M=4.40, SD=0.52), and *I think that the Me-Telling activity helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance* (M=4.40, SD=0.70). The second highest mean was achieved by item 20: *I think that Reflective Writing helps me to evaluate how effectively a work follows to the conventions of its genre* (M=4.30, SD=0.82). The lowest mean of this group was achieved by item 21: *I think that Role Play helps me to describe my personal interpretation of the work in detail and to express my reaction to particular features and explain their significance* (M=3.90, SD=1.20).

B. Interview Results

Regarding the qualitative data, six females and four males participated in the individual semi-structured interviews. Content analysis of the participants' interview responses was performed using the three main topics addressed in the interview: the literary texts used, the multimodal literature used to develop literary reading ability, and the activities employed in class. All interview data were transcribed into English. Examples of the students' attitudes toward the use of multimodal literature to improve literary reading competence at C1 level are illustrated in Tables 5-10, respectively.

(a). Attitudes Towards the Literary Texts Used

TABLE 5
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LITERARY TEXTS USED

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
1. What do you think about the contents used in the course?	For me, I like all the stories in the course because they contain various moral lessons which I can apply in my daily life. The story that I like most in this course is <i>The Alchemist</i> . It seems like actually our dream is not beyond our reach. We can achieve it as long as we do not give up (Student 10).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining moral lessons from stories ▪ Applying lessons in daily life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Alchemist</i>
	I like <i>The Alchemist</i> . It can be compared to human life when we determine to do something, sometimes we may encounter some difficulties and obstacles. I think the story reflects what we really face in real life (Student 8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Alchemist</i> ▪ Reflecting on everyday life
	All of the stories are interesting. However, I like <i>The Alchemist</i> the most because the plot is captivating and I also like an adventure story (Student 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The Alchemist</i>

Table 5 presents some of the students' attitudes towards the literary texts used in the course. The interview data gained from Students 10, 8, and 6 indicates that they liked the stories taught in the course, with *The Alchemist* selected as their favourite. They also asserted that they learned many moral lessons from *The Alchemist* that could be applied in their daily lives.

(b). Attitudes Towards the Multimodal Literature Used to Develop Literary Reading Ability

TABLE 6
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDYING LITERATURE USING MULTIMODAL LITERATURE

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
2. What do you think about studying literature using multimodal literature?	I think the use of multimodal literature creates a lively learning atmosphere in the classroom. In the previous courses, I am bored when I learn with the traditional texts because there are only written texts. I like to see pictures and to listen to YouTube (Student 10).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating a lively learning atmosphere ▪ Preferring to see pictures and to listen to YouTube
	I think that using pictures or video helps me to understand the story plot or sequences of the events in the story. Moreover, the character's actions are clearly presented in the video, so I gain more understanding about the character's actions compared to reading the traditional texts (Student 8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preferring the use of pictures or video ▪ Gaining a better understanding about the story's plot and the character's actions
	I like watching video; for example, <i>The Man Who Planted Trees</i> , because it is like a short summary of the story. Moreover, the illustrations in the video help me to understand the story plot (Student 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story's plot from illustrations in the video
	I think that using multimodal literature is something new for me. I have never experienced this kind of learning before. It seems like studying with multimodal literature in this course gives me new experiences. For example, I think that the use of film is very interesting, not boring (Student 2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing new learning experiences ▪ Using film is interesting, not boring
	I like graphic novels, animated video, and film. I get a better understanding of the story through audio and images. Reading written texts without pictures and sounds makes me bored. However, when multimodal literature is employed in the classroom, I feel that the learning atmosphere is livelier and fun (Student 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story through audio and picture ▪ Creating a lively learning atmosphere

As can be seen in Table 6, most students expressed the attitude that studying literature through multimodal literature helps them to gain a better understanding of the story's plot and the character's actions (Students 8, 1, and 6). Additionally, Student 2 expressed that learning with multimodal literature opens up new learning experiences for her because she had not previously used multimodal texts for learning. Moreover, Students 10 and 6 indicated that implementing multimodal literature in the literature classroom created a lively and fun learning atmosphere compared to studying with traditional texts and their focus on the written word without any pictures or sounds.

TABLE 7
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE MULTIMODAL LITERATURE USED TO DEVELOP LITERARY READING ABILITY

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
3. Do you think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to improve your literary reading ability? Why? How?	Yes, I do. When I read a text while looking at the illustrations at the same time, I can better understand the story. Sometimes, watching a video on YouTube makes me want to read the written texts more (Student 10).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story
	Yes, I do. I think that using multimodal literature such as film improves my vocabulary skills. Sometimes I learn new words from watching a video by guessing the contexts or moving images (Student 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improving vocabulary skills
	Yes, I do. Studying literature through multimodal literature helps to increase my understanding of the story because there are pictures and sounds to capture my attention (Student 2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capturing attention
	Yes, I do. I think it helps a lot. Reading merely written texts sometimes is so boring. However, if we can see pictures or listen to the audio from a film or graphic novel, it increases our comprehension about the story and the characters (Student 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story and characters

It is clearly evidenced in Table 7 that most students had the attitude that studying literature through multimodal literature helps to improve their literary reading ability. Firstly, they indicated that they gain a better understanding of the story plot and the characters (Students 10 and 6). Secondly, it was expressed that using multimodal literature such as film helps to improve vocabulary skills because the students can learn new words from watching a video by using moving images and context to predict the meaning of unknown vocabulary (Student 1). Thirdly, Student 2 adds that studying literature using multimodal literature helps to increase her understanding of the story because there are pictures and sounds to capture the attention.

TABLE 8
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE USE OF MULTIMODAL LITERATURE TO PROMOTE POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS STUDYING LITERATURE

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
4. Do you think studying literature using multimodal literature helps you to have a positive attitude towards studying literature? How?	Yes, I do. I feel that I have a positive attitude towards studying literature because I get a better understanding of the story through the use of multimodal literature (Student 3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gaining a better understanding of the story
	Yes, I do. I think that I have a positive attitude towards studying literature when I learn through multimodal literature. In the past, I did not enjoy studying literature and felt discouraged when I had to read written texts even though they are quite easy to read and understand. It is more enjoyable when studying with multimodal literature (Student 4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhancing enjoyment
	Yes, I do. Studying literature using traditional texts without any illustrations is not interesting and may discourage students when reading long texts. Studying with multimodal literature can capture the students' attention (Student 7).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Capturing attention

Toward question 4, "Do you think that studying literature using multimodal literature helps you to have a positive attitude towards studying literature? How?" the interview data reveals that all students expressed a positive attitude towards studying literature through the use of multimodal literature. Learning with multimodal literature was found to support students to have a better understanding of the story; therefore, they feel positively about their learning experiences in the literature course (Student 3). Moreover, when compared to the students' previous courses which relied heavily on written texts, studying with multimodal literature was regarded as more enjoyable (Student 4). Lastly, using multimodal literature can also capture the students' attention in class more effectively than simple written texts, which may result in a positive attitude towards literature study (Student 7).

TABLE 9
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TYPES OF MULTIMODAL LITERATURE

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
5. What type of multimodal literature do you like the most? Why?	I like picture books and animated video. I can see images and hear the sounds which is not boring (Student 10).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Picture book ▪ Animated video
	I like animation because I like to see moving images which makes me understand the story more. The use of still images is also good, but I prefer animated video (Student 8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Animated video
	I like the infographic because it is short and the information shown in it is the key idea or important topic presented in the story. When we read/view an infographic, we can understand the story's key idea in a very short time (Student 2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infographic
	I like graphic novels and films. Graphic novels are like a cartoon, so we follow the narration by enjoying the colourful images. Also, both sounds and images from a film attract and motivate us to enjoy the story more (Student 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Graphic novel ▪ Film

In terms of the types of multimodal literature most liked by the students, it emerged in the interview results that they varied in their choice of favourite. For example, Student 10 enjoyed reading picture books and watching animated videos because the images and sound make studying literature less boring. Student 8 echoed that watching animated video helps her to gain a better understanding of the story. Additionally, the infographic was mentioned as a favourite type by Student 2 as it provided a short message to convey the key idea or important information related to the story. Finally, a graphic novel was chosen by Student 6 as the favourite because it was similar to a cartoon and he could follow the narration by enjoying the colourful images. Regarding a film as a preferred multimodal text-type, Student 6 described how its sounds and images both attracted and motivated him to enjoy the story more.

(c). *Attitudes Towards the Activities Employed in Class*

TABLE 10
EXAMPLES OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ACTIVITIES EMPLOYED IN CLASS

Question	Students' Attitudes	Themes
6. Which activities do you like the most? Why?	I like the Discussion activity. Sharing ideas with friends in class helps me to explore new perspectives. Sometimes I can learn new ideas from friends which I have never heard before. Also, it helps me to understand the story more (Student 8).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion
	I like the Discussion activity. I can learn what others think about the issues reflected in each story that we study in class. It is like we are sharing ideas with one another (Student 1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion
	Personally, I like to do Role play. I find it is fun when the teacher asks me to create a scene and reflect what I think about the story or the character. It is not merely about acting skills. Instead, before you can do a role play, you need to understand the story and the character's emotion. We can also improve speaking skills from acting a scene which boosts our confidence (Student 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Role play

Regarding the students' attitudes towards the activities employed in the classroom, it can be seen from the interview data that most students identified the Discussion activity as their most-liked classroom activity. They asserted that they gain new perspectives from their classmates when sharing and exchanging ideas toward the issues reflected in each story, and that this helped them get a better understanding of the story (Students 8 and 1). Moreover, Role play was the most-liked activity for Student 6. He reported that he gains many benefits from doing a role play activity such as developing his speaking skills, acting skills, and reading comprehension skills. Boosting self-confidence is also another skill that he developed from participating in the role play activity.

V. DISCUSSION

Results from the analyses of both the quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data reflected the students' attitudes towards three important aspects: studying literature and the contents used in the course, the use of multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence, and the activities employed in the classroom.

Regarding the attitudes towards studying literature and the contents used in the course, most students reported that they found studying literature difficult and hard to provide an interpretation (see item 4, Table 1). In terms of the literary texts used in the course, the students asserted that all the stories were interesting and that they provided moral lessons which could be applied in real life (Students 8, 10 and 6). In line with Nita and Mustofa (2022), students' attitudes towards teaching and learning are influenced by the teacher's instructional methods and the literature used in class. Moreover, students' attitudes can be affected by a variety of factors such as selecting appropriate literary resources that align with the students' abilities, providing suggestions, and conveying the importance of studying literature including to facilitate students to engage deeply with the literary texts and to become active learners.

In terms of the students' attitudes towards using multimodal literature to develop literary reading competence, analyses of both the questionnaire and interview data indicated that they prefer to study literature using multimodal literature rather than traditional text-based methods (see item 10, Table 2). Moreover, the students also expressed during interview (Table 6) that studying literature through multimodal literature benefited them in three ways: to gain a better understanding of the story's plot and the character's actions (Students 8, 1, and 6), to access various new modes of learning (Student 2), and to engage them in a lively and fun learning atmosphere compared to studying with traditional texts and their focus on written words without pictures or sounds (Students 10 and 6). These findings are consistent with Kizil's (2017) depiction of the characteristics of students in the digital age. These include their propensity for versatility and their capacity to obtain information through a range of media with a preference for images, sounds, and video over traditional linear texts.

Moreover, the students pointed out that studying multimodal literature in the classroom helps them to improve their literary reading competence, particularly when engaging with a graphic novel. Some students claimed that studying literature with this type of multimodal text helped to develop their reading skills because narrating the story with pictures made reading a lengthy novel more interesting and less boring (see item 11, Table 3). This is echoed in the findings from the analysis of the interview responses (see Table 7) which revealed that most students agreed that studying literature through multimodal literature helped them to improve their literary reading ability. To illustrate, they indicated that it helped them to gain a better understanding of the story's plotline and character (Students 10 and 6), to improve their vocabulary (i.e., learning new words) while watching videos by using moving images and contexts to predict the meaning of unknown vocabulary (Student 1), and to improve their understanding of the story as there were pictures and sounds to capture their attention (Student 2). These findings corroborate Haren's (2010) assertion that multimodality fosters critical thinking as well as creative thinking. It can enhance students' academic performance and participation, in contrast to traditional teaching methods.

Furthermore, this study found that the students had a positive attitude towards literary study when studying literature using multimodal literature. Analysis of the interview data revealed that the students perceived they could better understand the story when learning with multimodal literature; and subsequently they felt more positively about their learning experiences in literature course (Student 3). Moreover, when making a comparison with their learning experiences in previous courses which relied heavily on written texts, the students conveyed that studying with multimodal literature was more enjoyable, potentially contributing to a more positive attitude towards literature study (Students 7 and 4). These findings align with those reported by Varaporn and Sitthitikul (2019) in their study that when Thai university students interact with multimodal texts in the classroom their motivation levels tend to increase.

Regarding the students' preferred multimodal text type implemented in the course, although graphic novel was chosen as their favourite type (based on mean score) in the questionnaire (see item 11, Table 3), during interview the students reported several favourite types including picture book, animated video, infographic, film, and graphic novel (Students 10, 8, 2, and 6). The finding suggests that students respond positively to the integration of different multimodal literature types to support learning as each type caters to a variety of learning modes and contributes to different ways of meaning making. Each of the five multimodal modes—linguistic, visual, aural, gestural, and spatial—has a unique quality that gives both message senders and recipients a distinct meaning or alternative way to communicate. Indeed, the interaction of many channels offers distinct and limitless opportunities for information transmission (The New London Group, 1996). To illustrate, the students can use visual and linguistic information to easily access the storytelling and to become more engaged with the characters in the picture book (Reyes-Torres et al.,

2020). The use of images and colours conveys a particular mood serving as a useful background indicator of the character's emotional state; constituting relationships between characters, objects, and events as well as establishing the character, setting, and plot development (Lewis, 2001; Martinez et al., 2020).

The study result confirmed the essential role of picture books in developing EFL students' language acquisition owing to the combination of written language and visual elements; therefore, they are effective learning and teaching materials to be used in the English language classroom (Nikolajeva, 2010; Serafini & Reid, 2022). With regard to the use of infographics, Noh et al. (2015) claim that it is a type of visual literacy media that can promote higher-level learning and best cater to the students' literacy interests. The finding reported in this study corresponds to claims in previous research of the positive effects of employing infographic in the classroom. For example, Bicen and Beheshti (2017) reported in their study the students' positive responses to learning with infographics. The students in their study expressed that studying with infographic materials encouraged them to become more creative thinkers and helped them to demonstrate various learning skills. They also claimed that they preferred to study with visual materials rather than the traditional materials such as books (Bicen & Beheshti, 2017).

The use of graphic novel not only motivates students to read but also improves their reading comprehension skills through the combination of texts and images. In the process of meaning-making, students need to develop skills for both textual and visual analysis (Cook & Kirchoff, 2017). The distinctive features of graphic novels encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills by questioning their preconceived beliefs and the information gained from different sources. Incorporating graphic novels into the curriculum and classrooms learning activities can introduce students to a medium that is consistently interesting and refreshing, while simultaneously addressing important skills and concepts (Hoover, 2012).

In terms of the learning activities implemented in the classroom, analysis of the quantitative data revealed that the students considered Discussion, Picture Talk, and Me-Telling as the top three activities to promote development of their literary reading competence. Each activity aimed to enhance the students' literary reading competence in different aspects. For example, the students felt enabled during the discussion activity to identify a character's motives for action and the consequences of those actions; supported during the Picture Talk activity to identify and interpret the development of plot, characters and themes in a story; and encouraged during the Me-Telling activity to describe their personal interpretation towards the work in detail and to express their reactions to particular features and explain their significance. Similarly, it emerged from the analysis of interview data that most students indicated the Discussion activity as their most-liked classroom activity. This was primarily because it provided an opportunity to gain new perspectives from their classmates toward the issues reflected in each story when sharing and exchanging ideas, which then helped them get a better understanding of the story (Students 8 and 1). Interestingly, although Role play was the least selected 'preferred' activity by the students in the questionnaire, one student seemed to appreciate the learning advantages of engaging in such an activity (Student 6). In addition to boosting self-confidence, this student found that he gained many benefits from engaging in Role play such as improving his speaking skills, acting skills, and reading comprehension skills.

VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The present study investigated students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in developing literary reading competence at C1 level. Data were collected using both questionnaire and individual interviews, with the findings revealing that the students' held positive attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in the classroom. The findings reported in this study can contribute to the improvement of multimodal literature applications in the EFL literature classroom. For the implication of the study, teachers and curriculum designers should consider about incorporating multimodal texts in literature classes and reading programs to support a variety of students' learning requirement and improve reading proficiency. Moreover, professional training is also vital for the teachers to learn how to incorporate multimodal literature into their lesson plans effectively.

VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The present study contributes new evidence related to students' attitudes towards the use of multimodal literature in developing literary reading competence at C1 level. Interpretation and application of its reported findings, however, should consider the following study limitations. First, the research results gained from the small sample indicated the specific opinions from a particular group of students and thus may not reflect the opinions for all students across all universities. Further studies should be conducted with a larger participant sample to elicit more comprehensive findings. Moreover, it is recommended to study the effect of specific elements of multimodal literature on students' reading comprehension and engagement. In addition, it would be very useful to study teachers' attitudes toward the integration of multimodal literature into their teaching practices.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research was funded by Unit of Excellence, University of Phayao.

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An Investigation Into the Relationship Between Saudi College EFL Learners' Motivational Orientations, Learning Autonomy, and Achievement

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Abstract—Using the Self Determination Theory (SDT) and the L2 Motivation Self System (L2MSS) as referential framework, this study aimed to explore Saudi college EFL learners' motivation and autonomy in terms of dominant motivational orientations, differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and between ideal and ought-to L2 selves, the level of learning autonomy, and gender differences in motivation and learning autonomy. It also aimed to identify whether motivation predicted learners' autonomy. A further aim was to identify whether motivation and autonomy predicted learners' achievement. Using a 24-item questionnaire, data was collected from 169 learners on their motivational orientations and autonomy. Statistical analysis revealed that the learners' ideal L2 self ranked first followed by intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and ought-to L2 self. Significant differences were found between learners' self-determined/internalized motivation and external motivation in favor of the self-determined/internalized motivation. Learners' autonomy was found to be high and no gender differences were found in learners' motivation or autonomy. Intrinsic motivation and ideal L2 self were found to be the best predictors of learners' autonomy. Of all motivational orientations and learning autonomy, learning autonomy, ideal L2 self and intrinsic motivation explained 47% of variance in learners' achievement. In brief, learners' self-determined/internalized motivation affected their autonomy most strongly, and both autonomy and self-determined/internalized motivation accounted for a sizeable proportion of their achievement.

Index Terms—motivational orientations, learning autonomy, achievement, Saudi college EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Since the paradigm shift that has moved emphasis from the teacher to the learner, learner characteristics and variables have received considerable research interest. Of the learner variables that have received and are still receiving research interest in second (SL) and foreign language (FL) learning are motivation and learner autonomy. The investigation of such variables in different FL contexts is justifiable given that these variables are subject to cultural variations. Contrary to theoretical assumptions, findings of research conducted in different SL and FL contexts revealed that no specific type of motivation is universal in the sense that it works for learners everywhere. Furthermore, learners can engage in language learning by a combination of motives that are theoretically different in nature (e.g., internalized and external motives). Intrinsic motivation can foster language learning in contexts, whereas extrinsic motivation works better for learners in other contexts. Still in other contexts learners can endorse both types of motivation (Brown, 2007). An example of a motivational orientation that works differently in different cultures is the ought-to L2 self that did not prove to be influential in western cultures, but proved influential in Asian cultures (Yashima et al., 2017). It is arguable then that types of motivation are not mutually exclusive and that no type of motivation is superior to another.

As there are variations in motivated language learning across different SL and FL contexts, research revealed mixed findings regarding the effect of motivation on language learning. In some studies, general or specific types of motivation correlated positively with language achievement (Karatas et al., 2015; Teng & Xu, 2015; Alrabai & Moskovsky, 2016; Vaseghi et al., 2020). In other studies, no positive reflection of motivation on achievement was reported (Altasan, 2016; Afshar & Jamshidi, 2022). This provides a rationale for examining the relationship between motivation and achievement in various SL and FL contexts given that this relationship can be lacking or that specific types of motivation, internalized or external, have shown different patterns of relationship with language achievement or proficiency. Learning autonomy, an aim actively sought in today's language education, is another learner variable that is currently receiving noticeable research interest. Like motivation, autonomy is cultural-bound with learners being autonomous in cultures and less autonomous in others.

No consistent research findings regarding the effect of motivation on learning autonomy or language learning have been reported. There are studies reporting a positive relationship between autonomy and motivation (Spratt et al., 2002; Benson, 2007; Liu, 2015; Csizér & Albert, 2024). Meanwhile, there are studies negating this relationship (Hashemian & Soureshjani, 2011; Foroutan et al., 2013). Similarly, some studies reported a positive correlation between autonomy and

language learning (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2013; Karatas et al., 2015; Tan & Zhang, 2015; Jianfeng et al., 2018), while others reported lack of this relationship (Zhang & Li, 2004; Zarei & Zarei, 2015; Ezzi, 2018). The inconsistent research findings regarding the interrelationships among motivation, autonomy and language achievement provides an impetus to explore these interrelationships in various FL contexts. Such investigations can provide a valuable profile of learners' motivated autonomous learning and its relation to language achievement.

The present study aimed to explore the profile of Saudi college EFL learners' motivation and autonomy. The motivational orientations investigated in the present study were taken from the SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017) and the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009). Two orientations were selected from the two motivation models, one from each model. These two orientations represented self-determined/internalized motivation (intrinsic motivation from the SDT and the ideal L2 self from the L2MSS). Two other orientations represented external motivation (extrinsic motivation from the SDT and the ought-to L2 self from the L2MSS). This would help in determining whether the Saudi learners are internally or externally motivated to learn English. The study also explored the relationship between learners' motivation and autonomy, specifically whether learners' motivation contributes to their learning autonomy. Furthermore, the study identified the effect of motivation and autonomy on learners' achievement. More specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the profile of Saudi college EFL learners' motivation and autonomy in terms of (a) dominant motivational orientations, (b) differences between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and between ideal and ought-to L2 selves, (c) the level of learning autonomy, and (d) gender differences in motivation and learning autonomy?
2. What are the contributions of motivational orientations to learners' autonomy?
3. What are the contributions of motivational orientations and autonomy to learners' achievement?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Motivation

Motivation is indispensable for successful language learning because it drives learners to initiate and pursue the demanding language learning task. Dörnyei (2005) argues that "Without sufficient motivation, even individuals with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, and neither are appropriate curricula and good teaching enough on their own to ensure student achievement" (p. 65). Motivation refers to the reasons for which individuals learn a language. An influential motivation theory in SL is the SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to this theory, different types of motivation are conceived of as lying on a continuum depending on the degree of self-determination or locus of causality, with amotivation and intrinsic motivation at opposite ends. At the lower end, there is amotivation followed by four types of extrinsic motivation, namely external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. At the higher end, there is intrinsic motivation. Since the emergence of this theory, researchers have investigated two main types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to "motivation to engage in an activity for its own sake", while extrinsic motivation refers to "motivation to engage in an activity as a means to an end" (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002, p. 245). Intrinsically motivated learners engage in language learning out of inherent enjoyment and the sense of achievement and satisfaction. Extrinsically motivated learners, on the other hand, engage in language learning for external contingencies and utilitarian benefits such as passing a required course. Although the SDT postulates that intrinsic motivation is more influential than extrinsic motivation, research has shown that in given contexts, extrinsic motivation can be more influential than intrinsic motivation. This suggests that motivation is culture-bound with learners being mainly intrinsically motivated in cultures and extrinsically motivated in others. Furthermore, learners can engage in learning by a combination of motives that are theoretically different in nature (e.g., internalized and external motives).

Another influential model of motivation is the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2009). This system is based on Gardner's revised model of motivation and Ryan and Deci's SDT. However, in this system "the motivationally important identifications are not with others but with future versions of the self" (Lamb, 2013, p. 1000). The system has three constituents: the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and learning experience. The self one would inherently like to become in the future, i.e., becoming a competent language user is the ideal-L2 self, whereas the self one would like to become to meet others' expectations or avoid negatives consequences is the ought-to L2 self. A learner with an ideal L2 self orientation will engage in language learning to realize the desired self. Unlikely, a learner with an ought-to L2 self will engage in language learning to avoid the dreaded self. The desire to move from the current self to the ideal L2 self shapes motivation to learn a language (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The ideal L2 self is thus similar to intrinsic motivation in the SDT in that it is self-determined/internalized, whereas the ought-to L2 self is similar to extrinsic motivation in that it is less self-determined and external. As the SDT attributes more significance to intrinsic motivation, the L2MMS attributes more significance to the ideal L2 self. However, research has reported the ought-to self as being influential in some SL and FL contexts. For instance, in a study conducted by Yashima et al. (2017) in an Asian context, both the ideal and ought-to L2 selves predicted language proficiency. The researchers attributed the motivational power of the ought-to L2 self to "what appears to be context-driven differences" (p. 701).

B. Autonomy

Learner autonomy is now an incontrovertible goal of language education, especially in FL contexts. Long (2014) argues that autonomy can compensate for the input-poor nature of FL contexts where language learning is mainly limited to the classroom. Although there is no consensus on what learner autonomy is, a definition that captures the essence of autonomy is Little's (1991) 'a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action' (p. 4). Benson (2001) maintains that autonomy entails that learners exercise control over learning management, cognitive processing and learning content. By reviewing literature on learner autonomy, one can identify a number of facts about autonomy that seem to be widely agreed upon. First, autonomy is not innate (Sinclair, 2000). Rather, it can be acquired through autonomy supported learning environments. Second, there are degrees of autonomy and complete autonomy is idealistic. It is not something that one can acquire once and for ever. Rather, learners, if engaged in autonomy-nurturing environments, get more autonomous with time (Nunan, 1997). This is reflected in Sinclair's (2000) assertion that "promoting learner autonomy is a matter of empowering learners so that they are in a better position to take on more responsibility for their learning than before" (p. 8). Third, autonomy does not "require the teacher to relinquish all initiative, intervention and control" (Little, 1991, p. 3). The teacher needs to play the important role of converting the learning environment into one that nurtures autonomy, which is not an easy task. Fourth, autonomy is not something that can be programmed into lessons (Little, 1991). Rather, it is a practice where learners are engaged in all aspects of their learning, e.g., setting learning objectives, selecting material, tasks and learning methods, and evaluating their progress (Benson, 2007).

Researchers offer a number of principles which, if applied, can make the FL classroom autonomy supportive. Little (2020) argues that the promotion of language learner autonomy entails "a teaching/learning dynamic in which learners plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate their own learning" (p. 1). That is, for learners to be autonomous, they need to actively engage in learning activities. They need to reflect on their learning and make changes to their learning approach based on the outcomes of reflection. Benson (2001) recommends training on effective language learning strategies, which constitute a tool learners need to be autonomous in their approach to learning. There is also a need for deviation from the traditional roles of teachers and learners. More specifically, the role of the teacher should change from an authoritative conveyor of knowledge into a facilitator and a guide of the learning process. Similarly, the role of learner should change from a passive recipient of knowledge into an active planner of own learning. In this respect Dam (2011) suggests that the development of learner autonomy entails "a move from a teacher-directed teaching environment to a learner-directed learning environment" (p. 41). Finally, Lewis and Reinders (2008) recommend changing the attitude of learners whom they describe as "teacher-centered" (p. 97). Such learners resist autonomous language learning practices and underestimate non-language activities that nurture autonomy like reflection on learning and evaluation of progress.

C. The Relationship Between Motivation, Autonomy and Achievement

Whether motivation precedes autonomy or vice versa has long been debated. The SDT postulates that autonomy is an antecedent to motivation. Contrary to this view, Spratt et al. (2002) found that motivated language learning among Chinese university students enhanced their engagement in autonomous learning practices inside and outside the classroom. Their findings suggest that lack of motivation debilitates the development of learner autonomy. This unresolved debate urged many scholars to maintain that the relationship between motivation and autonomy works in both directions. Dörnyei and Ushioda (2013) conclude that motivation, autonomy, and learning achievement are interrelated forming a cycle. Many researchers in various EFL contexts found a positive correlation between general or specific types of motivation and autonomy. Khonamri et al. (2020) studied the relationship between 100 Iranian EFL learners' motivation and autonomy. A significant positive correlation was found between autonomy and intrinsic motivation, while the correlation between autonomy and extrinsic motivation was significant but negative. In the Taiwanese context, Liu (2015) experimented with 150 non-English majors and reported that motivation explained 50% of variance in learners' autonomous learning. In some other studies, motivation and autonomy did not correlate positively (Hashemian & Soureshjani, 2011; Foroutan et al., 2013; Khonamri et al., 2020). For instance, Foroutan et al. (2013) did not find a significant positive relationship between 361 Malaysian EFL learners' motivation and autonomy.

As to the relationship between learner autonomy and language learning outcomes, a large number of studies found that autonomy leads to better language learning outcomes. For instance, Jianfeng et al. (2018) examined the relationship between motivation, autonomy, and language proficiency of 458 Chinese EFL learners. Motivation and autonomy had significant positive relationships with language proficiency. However, motivation was found to be a better predictor of learners' language proficiency than autonomy. In another study Tan and Zhang (2015) conducted with 212 Chinese EFL learners, learner autonomy strongly explained variance in learners' language proficiency. Other studies did not report positive relationship between autonomy and language learning. In a study conducted on Saudi EFL learners (Alrabai & Moskovsky, 2016), motivation emerged as the strongest predictor of academic achievement, whereas the effect of autonomy on academic achievement was marginal. In another study conducted on Iranian EFL learners by Zarei and Zarei (2015), neither autonomy nor motivation correlated positively with language proficiency.

As the case with learner autonomy, mixed research findings have been reported for the relationship between motivation and language learning, with the larger number of studies reporting a positive relationship. In a Turkish study, Karatas et al. (2015) explored the prediction of English majors' academic achievement by their motivational orientations and autonomous learning. Both intrinsic motivation and autonomous learning strongly predicted learners' academic achievement. A similar finding was reached among Chinese EFL learners (Teng & Xu, 2015) where intrinsic

motivation was found to strongly influence learners' academic achievement. In an Iranian study (Vaseghi et al., 2020), motivation correlated positively with the English proficiency of 60 EFL learners. However, in other studies, no positive relationship between motivation and language learning was reported. In a Saudi sample of EFL learners, achievement scores were not affected by either integrative or instrumental motivation (Altasan, 2016). The effect of motivation on a sample of Iranian EFL learners was found to be marginal compared to personality types (Ebrahimi & Heidarypur, 2016).

D. The Research Context

English is a FL in Saudi Arabia and, as argued by Altasan (2016), it is "rarely spoken in Saudi community and is one of the most failed classes in schools. Many students have no motive to learn English and wonder why they have to study it" (p. 1133). Saudi EFL learners' achievement has been reported to be poor (Al-Khairi, 2013; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015). Until recently, studies have reported Saudi learners as non-autonomous (Alrabai, 2017; Asiri & Shukri, 2020). Researchers attributed the low level of learner autonomy among Saudi learners to teacher-centered and spoon-feeding teaching. However, a recent study (Haque et al., 2023) reported Saudi learners as autonomous. The researchers nonetheless documented some obstacles against Saudi EFL learners' autonomy. These included over reliance on their teachers and on their test results, lack of opportunity to express their opinions about learning and not discussing how they work out their learning tasks. There may be a recent move to learner autonomy in the Saudi context and further research endeavors are required to verify this trend, if any. Regarding motivation, Saudi learners have been reported to be lacking motivation to learn English (Al-Khairi, 2013; Alrabai, 2014). Alrabai (2014) attributed lack of motivation among Saudi learners to inappropriate teacher behaviors, students' low self-esteem and self-confidence, high language anxiety, low autonomy, and inappropriate methods of teaching. Furthermore, Saudi learners have been generally found to be instrumentally or extrinsically motivated to learn English (Altasan, 2016; Kassem & Alqahtani, 2023). Accordingly, investigating Saudi EFL learners' motivation and autonomy and how they relate to each other and to academic achievement may shed more light on these significant learner variables.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

A total of 202 students in the Preparatory Year Program (PYP) at an emerging Saudi University were invited to electronically complete the research instruments at the end of the academic year 2023. However, because of missing data, the data of only 169 students was statistically treated. Upon completion of the PYP, the participants would initiate their main university study in medicine ($n = 74$, 43.8%), nursing ($n = 57$, 33.7%), and computer science ($n = 38$, 22.5%). Of the 169 participants, 93 (55%) were females and 76 (45%) were males. Students join the PYP program after they complete their high school (the science section) and satisfy the admission criteria for the PYP. They are native speakers of Arabic and have the same EFL experience regarding years of study and exposure to English.

B. The Instruments

(a). The Motivation and Autonomy Questionnaire

A 24-item questionnaire was used to collect data about learners' motivational orientations and learning autonomy. Driven from the SDT, two orientations represented internalized (i.e., intrinsic motivation) and external guides (i.e., extrinsic motivation). The other two orientations were taken from L2MSS. These were ideal and ought-to L2 selves. A fifth scale measured learning autonomy. Items were developed or adapted from relevant questionnaires in previous studies (Benson, 2007; Ryan, 2009; Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010; Kassem, 2022). Here is a brief description of the scales with sample items:

1. *Intrinsic motivation* (4 items): tapped into themes of learning English for inherent enjoyment (e.g., I study English because studying English is fun; making progress in learning English gives me a feeling of success and achievement).
2. *Extrinsic motivation* (4 items): included items focusing on learning English for external contingencies (e.g., I study English only because it is a required course; I study English because it will be helpful for my future career).
3. *Ideal L2 self* (4 items): had items about imagined successful future language user (e.g. whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English; I can imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively for communicating with locals).
4. *Ought-to L2 self* (4 items): included items related to meeting expectations and avoiding negative outcomes (e.g., I have to study English because if I do not, I think my parents will be disappointed with me; It will have a negative impact on my life if I don't learn English).
5. *Learning autonomy* (8 items): reflected such aspects of autonomy as responsibility for learning, reflection on learning, self-assessment of progress in learning, and use of learning resources (e.g., I use resources like the Internet for my English study; I seek opportunities to practice the English language).

Students responded to the items based on a 5-point scale ranging from 5 "strongly agree" to 1 "strongly disagree". The preliminary version of the questionnaire was administered to a pilot sample of 53 students and its internal consistency was checked by calculating correlations among items and their respective scales. All items correlated

strongly ($p = 0.01$) with their scales with correlations ranging between 0.57 and 0.90. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the scales and the total questionnaire ranged between 0.71 and 0.91. That is, the questionnaire and its scales were internally consistent and reliable.

(b). *Achievement*

The students' achievement scores were obtained by averaging their scores in the two courses they study in the PYP: Eng 109 and Eng 110. The total score for each course is 100 obtained from three exams: two midterm exams and a final exam. Thus, a student's minimum score is 0 and maximum score is 100. All the exams the students take in the two courses, midterm or final, include sections on listening comprehension, reading comprehension, writing, grammar and vocabulary. That is, with the exception of speaking, the exams include the main language skills and language elements.

IV. RESULTS

A. *The Profile of Students' Motivational Orientation*

(a). *The Students' Dominant Motivational Orientations*

Before conducting the statistical analysis, the normal distribution of scores was checked by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. All the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test values were greater than 0.05, indicating that all sets of scores were normally distributed and parametric statistics could be used. To consider a mean as high, medium or low, Oxford's (2001) scoring system was used: high (mean of 3.5 or higher), medium (mean of 2.5 - 3.4), and low (mean of 2.4 or lower). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the participants' motivational orientations. Of the four motivational orientations, ideal L2 self ranked first ($M = 4.12$, high agreement), followed by intrinsic motivation ($M = 4.02$, high agreement), extrinsic motivation ($M = 3.82$, high agreement), and ought-to L2 self ($M = 3.44$, moderate agreement). This indicates that students' more internalized orientations (ideal L2 self and intrinsic motivation) are stronger than their less internalized ones (extrinsic motivation and ought-to L2 self).

TABLE 1
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS

	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Intrinsic motivation	169	4.02	.760	-.558	-.242
Extrinsic motivation	169	3.82	.700	.001	-.486
Ideal L2 self	169	4.12	.776	-.770	.123
Ought-to L2 self	169	3.44	.836	-.077	-.367

(b). *Differences Between Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation, and Between Ideal and Ought-To L2 Selves*

The results of the paired-samples t-test (Table 2) revealed a statistically significant difference ($t = 3.5$, $p = .000$) between students' intrinsic ($M = 4.02$) and extrinsic ($M = 3.82$) motivation in favor of intrinsic motivation, signifying that their intrinsic motivation is substantially higher than their extrinsic motivation. Similarly, a statistically significant difference ($t = 9.8$, $p = .000$) was found between students' ideal L2 self ($M = 4.12$) and ought-to L2 self ($M = 3.44$) in favor of the ideal L2 self, indicating that their ideal L2 self is substantially higher than their ought-to L2 self. Overall, these results mean that students are basically motivated by self-determined/internalized contingencies.

TABLE 2
DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION, AND BETWEEN IDEAL AND OUGHT-TO L2 SELVES

Variable	M	SD	SEM	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Intrinsic motivation	4.02	.760	.058	3.5	.000
Extrinsic motivation	3.82	.700	.054		
Ideal L2 self	4.12	.776	.060	9.8	.000
Ought-to L2 self	3.44	.836	.064		

(c). *The Level of Students' Learning Autonomy*

As listed in Table 3, the students' learner autonomy is high ($M = 3.84$). That is, students can be said to be autonomous learners of English as a foreign language.

TABLE 3
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING AUTONOMY

	N	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Learning autonomy	169	3.84	.716	-.151	-.833

(d). *Gender Differences in Motivational Orientations and Learning Autonomy*

The t-test for independent samples revealed no gender significant differences in any of the five variables. There is a difference in intrinsic motivation in favor of females, but it was no significant ($t = .081$). Overall, male and female students were similar in their orientations and autonomous learning.

TABLE 4
THE T-TEST FOR GENDER DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS AND LEARNING AUTONOMY

Variable	Test	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Intrinsic motivation	Male	76	3.91	.818	-1.75	.081
	Female	93	4.11	.699		
Extrinsic motivation	Male	76	3.77	.759	-.840	.402
	Female	93	3.86	.650		
Ideal L2 self	Male	76	4.11	.827	-.138	.891
	Female	93	4.13	.737		
Ought-to L2 self	Male	76	3.50	.844	.898	.371
	Female	93	3.39	.831		
Learning autonomy	Male	76	3.81	.747	-.511	.610
	Female	93	3.86	.693		

B. Prediction of Learning Autonomy by Motivational Orientations

Intrinsic motivation correlated most strongly with the ideal L2 self ($r = .58$) and to a much lesser degree with the ought-to L2 self ($r = .26$). Similarly, extrinsic motivation correlated most strongly with the ought-to L2 self ($r = .52$) and to a lesser extent with the ideal L2 self ($r = .47$). This indicates that the self-determined/internalized orientations in the SDT and the L2MSS (i.e., intrinsic motivation and ideal L2 self) are closely related. Similarly, the external orientations (i.e., extrinsic motivation and the ought-to L2 self) are closely related. Overall, this indicates that the self-determined/internalized orientations in the SDT and L2MSS models are similar constructs, and so are the external orientations.

All orientations significantly and positively ($p \leq .01$) correlated with learning autonomy. The orientations that had the strongest correlation with learning autonomy were intrinsic motivation ($r = .53$) and the ideal L2 self ($r = .51$). Extrinsic motivation ($r = .47$) and ought-to L2 self ($r = .37$) also correlated positively with learning autonomy, but to a lesser extent than intrinsic motivation and ideal L2 self. This means that students' learning autonomy correlated more strongly with self-determined/internalized motivations. Achievement correlated most strongly with the ideal L2 self and learning autonomy ($r = .58$ for each) followed by intrinsic motivation ($r = .56$), and extrinsic motivation ($r = .43$). It correlated least strongly with the ought-to L2 self ($r = .22$).

TABLE 5
THE CORRELATIONS BETWEEN STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS, LEARNING AUTONOMY AND ACHIEVEMENT

	1	2	3	4	5	6
(1) Intrinsic motivation	-					
(2) Extrinsic motivation	.48**	-				
(3) Ideal L2 self	.58**	.47**	-			
(4) Ought-to L2 self	.26**	.52**	.37**	-		
(5) Autonomy	.53**	.47**	.51**	.37**	-	
(6) Achievement	.56**	.43**	.58**	.22**	.58**	-

To examine the contribution of motivational orientations to students' learning autonomy, a stepwise regression analysis was conducted with the four motivational orientations as predictor variables and learning autonomy as the outcome variable. Before running the regression analyses, the assumptions of normality and linearity were checked and no issues were found. The analysis produced three significant models (Table 6). In model 1, intrinsic motivation alone ($\beta = .53$, $t = 8.0$, $p = .000$) significantly and positively contributed to learning autonomy with 28%. In model 2, both intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .35$, $t = 4.5$, $p = .000$) and ideal L2 self ($\beta = .31$, $t = 4.1$, $p = .000$) significantly and positively contributed to learning autonomy with 35%. In model 3, intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .28$, $t = 3.5$, $p = .000$), ideal L2 self ($\beta = .25$, $t = 3.2$, $p = .000$), and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = .22$, $t = 3.0$, $p = .003$) significantly and positively contributed to learning autonomy with 38%. These results indicate that the strongest predictors of learning autonomy were intrinsic motivation and ideal L2 self, both being internalized motivations. Extrinsic motivation also predicted learning autonomy but to a lesser extent. The ought-to L2 self failed to predict learning autonomy. It is therefore safe to say that more internalized motivational orientations are much stronger predictors of Saudi college EFL students' learning autonomy than less internalized motivational orientations.

TABLE 6
STEPWISE MULTIPLE REGRESSION FOR PREDICTING LEARNING AUTONOMY BY MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS

Predictors	R	R ²	F	B	SE	β	t	p
<i>Model 1</i>								
Intrinsic motivation	.53	.28	64.7***	.50	.062	.53	8.0	.000
<i>Model 2</i>								
Intrinsic motivation	.58	.35	43.8***	.33	.072	.35	4.5	.000
Ideal L2 self				.29	.071	.31	4.1	.000
<i>Model 3</i>								
Intrinsic motivation	.62	.38	33.7***	.26	.074	.28	3.5	.001
Ideal L2 self				.23	.072	.25	3.2	.001
Extrinsic motivation				.22	.074	.22	3.0	.003

C. Prediction of Achievement by Motivational Orientations and Learning Autonomy

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed with orientations and autonomy as predictor variables and achievement as a dependent variable. The analysis produced 3 models. In model 1, learner autonomy alone ($\beta = .58$, $t = 9.3$, $p = .000$) explained 34% of variance in achievement. In model 2, learner autonomy ($\beta = .39$, $t = 5.7$, $p = .000$) and ideal L2 self ($\beta = .38$, $t = 5.6$, $p = .000$) explained 44% of variance in achievement. In model 3, learner autonomy ($\beta = .32$, $t = 4.5$, $p = .000$), ideal L2 self ($\beta = .29$, $t = 3.9$, $p = .000$), and intrinsic motivation ($\beta = .22$, $t = 3.0$, $p = .003$) positively predicted 47% of achievement. Again learner autonomy and ideal L2 self were the strongest predictors of achievement. Intrinsic motivation significantly and positively contributed to achievement but to a lesser extent. Extrinsic motivation and ought-to L2 self did not contribute to achievement.

TABLE 7
STEPWISE MULTIPLE REGRESSION FOR PREDICTING ACHIEVEMENT BY MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS AND AUTONOMY

Predictors	R	R ²	F	B	SE	β	t	p
<i>Model 1</i>								
Autonomy	.58	.34	85.9***	8.0	.87	.58	9.3	.000
<i>Model 2</i>								
Autonomy	.67	.44	66.6***	5.3	.93	.39	5.7	.000
Ideal L2 self				4.8	.86	.38	5.6	.000
<i>Model 3</i>								
Autonomy	.69	.47	49.7***	4.4	.96	.32	4.5	.000
Ideal L2 self				3.6	.92	.29	3.9	.000
Intrinsic motivation				2.9	.95	.22	3.0	.003

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results revealed that Saudi EFL learners' ideal L2 self and intrinsic motivation are significantly higher than their ought-to L2 self and extrinsic orientations. Extrinsic motivation and ought-to L2 self emerged as significant orientations, but to a much lesser degree. This suggests that self-determined/internalized orientations on the one hand and less self-determined and external orientations on the other hand are not mutually exclusive (Brown, 2007). This finding contradicts most studies conducted in the Saudi context that documented instrumental or extrinsic motivation as the dominant orientations among Saudi learners from different levels of study (Altasan, 2016; Kassem & Alqahtani, 2023). It nonetheless converges with two studies where Saudi learners were reported to have high levels of intrinsic motivation or ideal L2 self (Alkaabi, 2016; Alshahrani, 2016). A possible explanation for this finding is that the participants who are expected to initiate university degrees in programs that uses English as a medium of instruction, i.e., medicine and computer science have internalized reasons for learning English and an ambitious ideal L2 self. A student of medicine may identify with the image of professional physicians who speak English fluently as a prerequisite of success in the profession. The same observation applies to computer science students who realize that their future career entails communication with native speakers of English. Another possible explanation is that prospective students of medicine and computer science practice autonomous learning by virtue of their desired fields of study. Students of computer science for instance cannot entirely depend on teachers. They need to try things on their own and use e-learning resources. Noels (2001) argues that such autonomous learning practices enhance intrinsic motivation. Similarly, Deci et al. (1991) contend that motivation tends to be self-determined by the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

The participants were found to be autonomous learners. This finding is not in line with most studies in the Saudi context (Alrabai, 2017; Asiri & Shukri, 2020). The most recent of those studies was conducted in 2020. The current study's finding is nonetheless in agreement with a study conducted in 2023 (Haque et al., 2023). There may be a recent move towards learner autonomy in Saudi education. Furthermore, Saudi universities are now giving more room to distance learning. Recently, Saudi universities require programs to teach a given proportion of their courses online using various platforms, the Blackboard in the case of the university that the study's participants came from. Distance learning by its virtue supports autonomous learning because it facilitates self-access learning and gives learners opportunities to self-direct their learning (Benson, 2001). In a study investigating the effect of the shift to online education during the Covid-19 pandemic on Saudi college EFL learners' autonomy (Kassem, 2022), a sample of interviewed college EFL learners attributed to online education improvement in important aspects of autonomy, e.g., organization of study time, use of the Internet and social media as learning resources, and self-assessment. It is worth mentioning here that all Saudi schools and universities shifted to online education during the pandemic. One final explanation is that teaching in Saudi universities is now delivered by young Saudi faculty members who have obtained their degrees from distinguished western universities. These faculty members may be more cognizant of autonomous supporting teaching practices than older faculty members.

The results revealed no significant gender differences in motivational orientations or autonomy. This finding echoes some previous studies where no differences were found between males and females in motivation (Shokrpour & Shouraki, 2016; Niaz et al., 2018). It is nonetheless inconsistent with a larger number of studies reporting gender

differences in motivation (Mori & Gobel, 2006; You & Dörnyei, 2016; Vaseghi et al., 2020) and learner autonomy (Alrabai, 2017; Komlosi-Ferdinand, 2019) in favor of females.

Conceptually similar orientations in the SDT and L2MSS closely related to each other. Intrinsic motivation correlated most strongly with the ideal L2 self ($r = .58$) and to a much lesser degree with the ought-to L2 self ($r = .26$). Similarly, extrinsic motivation correlated most strongly with the ought-to L2 self ($r = .52$) and to a lesser degree with the ideal L2 self ($r = .47$). This indicates that intrinsic motivation and the ideal L2 self are similar constructs. So are extrinsic motivation and the ought-to L2 self. Similar findings were reached in previous studies. Yashima (2009) demonstrated that the ideal L2 self is more closely related to intrinsic motivation ($r = .44$). In Nishida's (2013) study the ought-to L2 self showed a positive correlation with external regulation ($r = .28$). In the study by Sugita McEown et al. (2014), exploratory factor analysis included the ideal L2 self in one factor with intrinsic motivation, whereas it included the ought-to L2 self with extrinsic motivation in another factor.

A finding that can have a positive reflection on teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia is the one regarding the relationship between motivational orientations and learner autonomy. Self-determined/internalized motivational orientations not only correlated positively with learners' autonomy but they predicted it substantially as well. Intrinsic motivation and the ideal L2 self explained 35% of variance in learners' autonomy. Extrinsic motivation predicted a very small portion of variance in learners' autonomy. Meanwhile, the ought-to L2 self failed to predict learners' autonomy, which indicates absence of social pressures on learners in the Saudi context. It is safe to suggest that Saudi EFL learners with stronger self-determined/internalized orientations tend to be more autonomous in their approach to learning English. In addition to supporting the assumptions of the SDT and the L2MSS, this finding echoes many previous studies where various motivational orientations correlated with and/or predicted learner autonomy (Spratt et al., 2002; Khonamri et al., 2020; Liu, 2017). Csizér and Albert (2024) investigated contextual variations in the role of individual difference variables in Hungary. Participants were 1152 students from 11 secondary schools across the country. The only variable that correlated with learner autonomy across all schools was motivation. Other previous studies reported findings that are not in line with the current study. In a study conducted on Malaysian EFL learners (Foroutan et al., 2013) motivation did not predict learners' autonomy. Similarly, in an Iranian study (Hashemian & Soureshjani, 2011), learner motivation and autonomy did not correlate significantly. That more self-determined/internalized orientations lead to higher autonomy seems logical. Learners with internalized motives may be more inclined to engage in autonomous learning of the FL than learners who learn the language for external factors.

Another important finding of the current study is that self-determined/internalized orientations and autonomous learning predicted a sizeable proportion on learners' achievement. Learner autonomy, the ideal Ls self and intrinsic motivation together explained 47% of variance in learners' achievement. Extrinsic motivation and ought-to L2 self did not contribute to achievement. A similar finding was reported for 400 Saudi college English majors (Alshahrani, 2016) where the ideal L2 self and learning experience were found to strongly contribute to the criterion measure, i.e., the intended effort to learn English. Similarly, the academic achievement of Turkish college English majors was best predicted by autonomous learning and intrinsic motivation (Karatas et al., 2015). Afshar and Jamshidi (2022) reported autonomy as the strongest predictor of Iranian EFL learners' L2 achievement. This study's finding is also partly in agreement with a Chinese study (Jianfeng et al., 2018) that found motivation practicing the strongest effect on EFL learners' language proficiency (.53), followed by learner autonomy (.43). Alrabai and Moskovsky (2016) reported a finding that is partly consistent with the current study. They found that motivation is the strongest predictor of Saudi college EFL learners' achievement. Autonomy also predicted learners' achievement but to a degree that the authors described as marginal. It seems that except for a small number of studies reporting lack of a relationship between motivation and/or autonomy and EFL learners' achievement (Zhang & Li, 2004; Zarei & Zarei, 2015; Altasan, 2016; Ezzi, 2018; Afshar & Jamshidi, 2022), both motivation and autonomy proved to contribute significantly to language learning outcomes with both alternating being the strongest predictor. That internally motivated and autonomous learners have better language learning outcomes seems logical. These learners learn with teachers in formal classrooms and on their own, which gives them a privilege over learners who entirely depend on teachers. A learner who wishes to be spoon-fed by teachers all the time cannot be as achieving as a learner who learns autonomously inside and outside the classroom.

VI. IMPLICATIONS

The results revealed that Saudi EFL learners with more self-determined/internalized orientations and higher levels of learner autonomy achieve significantly higher than their peers with less self-determined/internalized orientations and lower levels of learner autonomy. EFL teachers are therefore required to nurture learners' self-determined/internalized orientations and learner autonomy. This can be achieved if they succeed in making the FL learning environment motivation and autonomy supportive. Reeve (2016) conceives of teacher behaviors as lying on a continuum with highly controlling style, i.e., spoon feeding learners, on one end and a highly autonomy-supportive motivating style on the other. According to this view, teachers wishing to enhance their learners' motivation and autonomy should move with their learners toward the highly autonomy-supportive motivating environment. This move can be gradual and entails that teachers engage learners in decision making and management of their learning. Dam (2011) proposed a classroom-based framework for enhancing learners' motivated autonomous learning. One of the key elements in this framework is

allowing learners to make choices about their learning on multiple levels ranging from what activity to do to taking part in course design. Another key element is teacher support. Teachers should guide learners and provide them with whatever tools they may need to learn independently, e.g., training on language learning strategies. One more element is providing learners with tools for reflection, assessment, and reassessment. The creation of such motivation and autonomy supportive classrooms entails that Saudi in-service teachers at all levels from the elementary school to the university be trained on how to make their teaching approach motivation and autonomy supportive. Teacher preparation programs at Saudi universities should include a course where learners know about motivation, autonomy and how to enhance them in their students when they are practicing teachers. It is also recommended that university programs include in their assessment plans elements of independent learning, e.g., term papers and projects.

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Opening Interactions Between Inquirers and Employees in Jordanian Public Utility Services

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Abstract—This article investigates the strategic sequential options used to open a real workplace discourse in public utilities between Jordanian inquirers and employees. We examined how these opening moves are co-constructed and function, what linguistic choices are utilized to articulate these moves, and how they reflect socio-cultural relations between the interlocutors. The data reported here were drawn from seven employees and 100 Jordanian inquirers recruited from those approaching the organization and the employees responding to face-to-face inquiries. To achieve this, we adopted Al-Ali and Abu-Abah's (2021) sequential moves observed in Jordanians' telephone conversation openings. The moves identified in the data analyzed can be categorized into three groups: cross-culture-free phatic components (Greeting, Question-After-You (QAY)), socio-culture-bound components (Expressing hospitality, Invoking God-wishes, and Introducing oneself), and context-bound components (Expressing annoyance, and Topic introducer). Contextual and socio-cultural practices of Arabic speakers result in new moves that have led to a delayed switch to the core topic. Such a practice can be related to relationships in Arab culture established upon collectivism and indirectness that focus on rapport-building exchanges. Such findings will, hopefully, contribute to understanding how interlocutors use socio-cultural and religious affiliations to co-construct the components of this genre.

Index Terms—openings, public utility services, workplace discourse, face-to-face interaction

I. INTRODUCTION

Conversation transactions in various social settings and workplace discourses frequently involve a triplicate structure: opening, main topic, and closing. The opening phase serves to “oil the interpersonal wheels” (Holmes, 2000, p. 49) in social interaction. To achieve this, interlocutors use “prefabricated linguistic units”, and “conventionalized pre-patterned expressions” (Coulmas, 1981, pp. 1-2) to serve the functions of greeting, expressing gratitude, or leave-taking in a manner that makes it possible to “relate to others in an accepted way”. Such strategies encourage rapport building and facilitate participants' engagement in the forthcoming discourse encounter. The openings have been regarded as ‘small talks’ compared to the ‘full’ form of talk (e.g., meetings, interactions in workplace contexts); they typically occur on the ‘real full talk’ boundaries. For Holmes (2000), small talk can serve as ritualized greetings and parting exchanges of the core business talk. Thus, there is an amount of overlap between the small talk and the openings in that they relate more to the interpersonal social function in contrast to the transactional function of the real talk that “gets stuff done” (Coupland, 2003, p. 2), mitigate the threat of social contact, and help to structure and maintain social interaction and cohesiveness (Laver, 1975; Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Hopper (1992, p. 5) considers the opening exchanging sequence of turns between two parties in conversation small talk, whereas Sun (2004) and Al-Ali and Abu-Abah (2021) call them opening moves. The present study will not use small talk as a cover term since it includes different forms of talk, including phatic exchanges of greeting/leave-taking, some points near the core topic, and sometimes core-related talks (Holmes, 2000; Jin, 2018). The term, opening moves, is adopted in the current study since other researchers have used it to analyze different discourse practices. For example, this term is used by Scarpetta and Spagnolli (2009) in analyzing stand-up comedy performances, and it is used by Boden (1994) and Nielsen (2013) in analyzing business meetings.

Although opening conversations are considered almost phatic small talks and taken for granted, Tracy and Naughton (2000) consider them a necessary element of institutional success at various levels of the workplace as they put

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interlocutors at their ease, enabling them to ask questions or make interesting comments about ‘safe’ topics. Therefore, the frequent engagement in daily workplace talks in various contexts between parties in interaction needs some mutual acquaintance and mutual orientation between parties in workplace transactions where rapport building, according to Jin (2018, p. 41), is “equally important as instrumental task completion”. Pavlidou (1994, p. 121) also points out that these openings remain a sensitive area cross-culturally, even for those who have mastered the basics of a foreign language and culture because these opening preferences vary cross-culturally.

As far as we know, no study has investigated face-to-face conversation openings in Arabic using discourse analytic tools to examine the verbal sequential opening moves in their social and cultural workplace context. Thus, there is a pressing need for a study to address this area. Therefore, we present an analysis and interpretations of the opening moves of a real workplace discourse between Jordanian inquirers and employees at public utilities. This article examines the opening strategic sequential moves used, how they are co-constructed and function, and how they reflect socio-cultural relations between the interlocutors. Therefore, we address the following questions: What opening moves and linguistic choices are utilized to articulate inquiries between Jordanian inquirers and employees? What functions do these opening sequential components accomplish in this discourse context? What contextual and social factors determine the selection of these moves?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The opening phase of a communicative event has the purpose of establishing links of fellowship (Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021) between the interlocutors. Much work has been conducted on the telephone conversation opening phase (e.g., Sifianou, 2002; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2002; Lee, 2006; Grieve & Seebus, 2008), most of which have been triggered by Schegloff’s (1968, 1986) seminal telephone opening conversation model realized by a ‘summons-answer’, ‘identification-recognition’, ‘reciprocal greetings’, and ‘question about you’ sequence. These component categories of openings do not necessarily need to be present in all telephone conversations. In addition to Schegloff’s (1968, 1986) categories, Sun (2004) identified the following moves in analyzing the pragmatic functions of Chinese telephone openings: ‘affirmation of recognition’, ‘voice recognition comments’, and ‘disturbance check’. Drawing on Schegloff’s and Sun’s (2004) telephone opening moves, with some modifications, Al-Ali and Abu-Abah (2021) identified the following telephone opening functional moves that are most commonly used by Jordanians: Opening, Greeting, Address, Question-after-you (QAY), God-wishes, Disturbance check, Territorial breach apology, and Topic introducer.

In Arabic, studies have focused mainly on examining the lexical expressions signaling greetings and partings in face-to-face interactions. In a contrastive study between Iraqi and Jordanian Arabic greetings and partings, Gorgis and Al-Quran (2003) found that Iraqi people utilize *Allah wi Mohammad wi ali wiyyak* “God, (Prophet) Mohammad and (Imam) Ali be with you”. Jordanians, in contrast, tended to use a similar expression in Jordan but without ‘Ali’ (i.e., *Allah wi Mohammad wiyyak* “God and (prophet) Mohammad be with you”). In the Arabian Gulf, Alharbi and Al-Ajmi (2008) found that *assalaamu calaykum* “Peace be upon you” is used for greeting and parting, depending on the context.

Having been triggered by Schegloff’s (1968, 1986) framework of telephone call opening sequencing, other researchers have studied the sequential structure of openings of workplace discourses, such as face-to-face interaction (House, 1982), business meetings (e.g., Boden, 1994; Nielsen, 2013), and medical talk (e.g., Jin, 2018). In his study of face-to-face conversation, House (1982) found the following sequential moves: ‘territorial breach apology’, ‘remarks’, and ‘topic introducer’ in addition to those proposed by Schegloff (1968, 1986). Boden (1994) describes the following organizational issues that mark the openings of meetings: assessments of attendance, proposals to ‘get started’, or announcements and general information items (pp. 96-97). Likewise, Nielsen (2013) demonstrates that showing readiness to open meetings consists of ‘Opening via boundary marker’ (e.g., WEII), ‘Passing opportunity to talk’, ‘Opening via reference to procedure’, ‘Start declaration’, and ‘First topic selection’ (p. 49).

Most medical consultations reported by Jin (2018) open with invoking a phatic exchange by ‘Greeting and making co-presence’ to establish a relationship before getting into the medical business. Openings occasionally involve minimum exchanges on weather and work as a form of relational talk that serves functions, such as transition to core talk and building relationships.

This article addresses a relatively under-researched area compared with telephone conversations. Notably, although many studies have drawn on Schegloff’s model to examine conversation openings of ordinary talks in various cultures, some scholars (e.g., Godard, 1977; Sun, 2004; Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021) consider this model as culture-specific for Americans that cannot be generalized to all speech communities in the same way. It is worthwhile noting that most of the studies reviewed emphasized the importance of discourse context and social relationship in determining the function of a particular stretch of language within the opening phase. Sometimes, it is difficult to determine if an utterance is related to the opening phase or the core phase of the conversation, as some utterances are interwoven with the core talk rather than the opening phase.

Furthermore, the literature review indicates that no study has investigated the opening of face-to-face conversation in Arabic using discourse analytic tools to examine the verbal sequential opening moves in their social and cultural workplace context. Thus, there is a pressing need for a study to investigate what functional component moves the participants in an authentic workplace use to open conversation when inquiring about and responding to questions related to public utility services. This study also attempts to find out how this workplace discourse affects the type of

component moves selected to articulate the purpose of this genre and to what extent these selected functional components are similar or different from the opening components reported in previous studies.

III. METHODS

This study investigates the openings of inquirer-employees' authentic interactions at public utilities in Jordan. This workplace is Yarmouk Water Company, which the Jordan Water Authority owns. This company is responsible for collecting, purifying, operating, maintaining, and distributing drinking water in the Northern Governorates of Jordan, including five governorates, which cover half of the Jordanian population (i.e., five million people). The data reported here were drawn from seven employees and 100 Jordanian inquirers aged between 25-50 years. The inquirers were recruited from those approaching the organization to inquire about its services. The employees are responsible for responding to face-to-face inquiries from the people coming to the organization. Those employees were selected based on availability and willingness to participate in the study. Ethical approval was granted by the organization, and informed consent was obtained from the employees before they participated in the study. The researchers adhered to ethical guidelines, ensuring that the participants were not coerced or deceived in any way. The identities of all the inquirers and employees were treated with strict confidentiality. Therefore, we used pseudonyms or code names throughout the study to ensure anonymity and protect participants' privacy. The inquirers were not explicitly informed about the recordings, as they already know that any conversation between them and the employee in the organization is recorded for quality assurance purposes.

To facilitate data collection, tape recordings and written records were used to collect data. For data collection, one of the researchers, in person, recorded the face-to-face conversations between the employees and inquirers in the employees' offices using a voice recorder program on a mobile phone. Written records were also used to code data in real-time during the recording to capture any significant loss of information like non-verbal behavior as well as the overall flow and structure of the conversations, focusing on how participants co-construct the openings and closings of their conversation. The length of the recordings varied; some recordings lasted for 3 minutes, while others extended to 20 minutes, particularly in cases where the employees and inquirers shared familiar relationships or when the inquirer's issue was complex. The data was gathered over two months at the end of 2022.

To identify a descriptive account of the functional moves marking the opening and closing phases, we adopted Al-Ali and Abu-Abah's (2021) move structure utilized to describe the sequential move patterns observed in Jordanians' telephone conversation openings with some modifications and additions. However, we also identified other components related to the discourse context because the previous models do not apply well to real, face-to-face interactions in the workplace.

To identify the openings, we considered the sequences and verbal cues as they occur in the workplace socio-cultural context in terms of the inquirer's purpose of his/her visit, the social relationship between the interlocutors, and at which stage this exchange between the inquirer and the employee occurred. However, it is not always possible to draw a decisive boundary between the phases of conversation due to the "permeability of boundaries" between these phases (Holmes, 2000, p. 39). To facilitate the analysis of interlocutors' turn reference, we included the letters I and E in each exchange example to refer to the inquirer and the employee, respectively. The researchers listened to the opening of each conversation between each inquirer and employee and transcribed the related exchanges. Then, the researchers assigned a function to each utterance (i.e., move) of the opening components. After discussing and identifying the function of each move, the researchers coded the moves in each opening and assigned a function to each move. To ensure the reliability of the researchers' coding of the component moves identified, 60% of data openings (60 recordings) as a subsample were selected randomly from the data analyzed and given to two professors, who are specialists in discourse analysis, to recode them following our suggested coding scheme. When we calculated the average degree of agreement among the coders, we found an 82% agreement with those done by the researchers. For the openings on which there was disagreement, the researchers sat with the coders, recoded the disagreed-upon cases, and reached a consensus.

IV. RESULTS

We identified nine functional components describing the opening phase within the context of a Jordanian organization, Yarmouk Water. Table 1 presents the opening functional components identified within 100 conversations between the inquirers and the employees in Jordanian Public Utilities (JPUs).

TABLE 1
STRUCTURE OF FUNCTIONAL COMPONENTS OF CONVERSATION OPENINGS IN JORDANIAN PUBLIC UTILITIES

Functional move components		
	No.	%
Greeting	92	92
Using address terms	44	44
Introducing oneself	28	28
Question-After-You (QAY)	64	64
Expressing hospitability	38	38
Invoking God-wishes	67	67
Lack of contact	19	19
Expressing annoyance	17	17
Topic introducer	44	44

The analysis of the sequential functional components of the opening phase and the linguistic lexico-grammatical signals used to realize these components during inquirer-employee interaction in JPUs has revealed nine components (see Table 1). This does not mean all these components are found in each interaction and follow the same order.

In what follows, we present each component move and its frequency, the lexico-grammatical signals utilized to realize it as well as illustrative exchanges extracted from the data.

A. Greeting

Greetings refer to salutations at the beginning of a conversation between participants. This essential component sets the tone for the interaction and helps establish a friendly and polite atmosphere (Holmes, 1995). This component is the most frequently used (92%) in the opening phase. It is realized by greeting adjacency pairs. The interlocutors utilized various forms of greetings reflecting the intricate fabric of social norms and cultural traditions that shape face-to-face interaction within the context of the utilities. They relied heavily on the Islamic greeting as the main option to initiate this component move; it surfaced in 44% of the interactions because this formal greeting can be used at any time during the day, as shown in 1.

1. I: *Ṣassalaamu Ṣalaykum* 'Peace be upon you.'
E: *wa Ṣalaykum alssalaam* 'Peace be upon you too.'

This formal greeting is widely used in many Arabic-speaking countries to express good intentions towards the other party. The second most common way of greeting is *yaṣṣtiik il-Ṣaafye* 'May Allah give you strength', followed by *marḥaba* 'Hi', which is informal. Time-specific greetings like *sabaah ilxair* 'Good morning', *masaa? ilxair* 'Good evening' are also used.

Similarly, the employees responded to the inquirers' greetings with a wide range of responses. For example, in response to the greeting term *marḥaba* 'Hi', various expressions were used, such as *Ṣahlan wa-sahlan* 'Welcome', *ḥayaak allah* 'Greeted by God', and *yaa hala* 'Most welcome'.

Sometimes, recipients respond with duplicated greetings expressed by two similar forms like *Ṣahlan Ṣahlan* 'Welcome! Welcome!' or elaborated greetings realized by *ḥayaak miit marḥaba* 'Welcome, hundred hi' as in exchange 2. The latter greeting is a warm and traditional expression of welcome and hospitality in Jordanian culture. It is commonly used to greet guests or intimates to make them feel valued, comfortable, and appreciated.

2. I: *Marḥaba* 'Hi!'
E: *ḥayaak miit marḥaba* 'Welcome, hundred hi.'

B. Using Address Terms

Address terms are utilized to get attention using diverse forms of address at various phases of the interaction. This component occurred in 44% of the interactions. Our analysis indicated that the participants utilized connotative kinship address terms realized by *Ṣaxii* 'brother', or *Ṣami* 'uncle', and absolute social honorifics like *Ṣayiid* 'master' to address one another. The address terms *Ṣummi* 'my mother' and *waaldi* 'my parent' are also utilized to convey respect for elders, addressing them as if they were one's parents; these address forms emphasize the deep-rooted cultural norms of respecting and caring for older people.

However, the most addressing practice encountered in the data is paedonymic terms. They are used to address one another by the name of his/her first-born child for respect, using the Arabic term *Ṣabu* 'father of'+ proper name, like 'Abu Ahmed'. Consider the following exchange:

3. I: *marḥaba Ṣabu*+ eldest son's name 'Hi, **Ab**+ eldest son's name'
E: *Ṣhalan* 'Welcome.'
I: *yaa ṣiidi il-Ṣaziiz* 'O' my dear sir

In exchange 3, the inquirer addressed the employee using a paedonymic term to show politeness and respect. In the third turn, he used an honorific term *ṣiidi* 'sir' supplemented by a term of endearment, *il-Ṣaziiz* 'dear', to show more intimacy and respect for the addressee.

C. Introducing Oneself

This component occurred in 28% of the interactions; it establishes participants' identities and creates a foundation for further communication (Schegloff, 1979). The inquirers are always the ones who introduce themselves, not the employees. Introducing oneself in the data analyzed is not meant to establish one's identity but to promote oneself in order to get more attention, care, and gain more favorable treatment, especially when the inquirer introduces himself referring to someone, who has a high status and is known to both parties. This component was realized by various options like stating one's affiliation and position or aligning himself with an influential kinship who is known to the addressee, as in 4, or being recommended by the addressee's relative, or referring to neighborhood (e.g., *?ana dzaaritku ?um X* 'I am your neighbor, mother of X').

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| 4. | I: | <i>Marhaba</i> | 'Hello' |
| | E: | <i>?ahlan yaa hala</i> | 'Welcome. Welcome.' |
| | I: | <i>?ana garaabit X</i> | 'I am the relative of X' |
| | I: | <i>ya hayyaaka allah, tafað'al</i> | 'Oh, God bless you, welcome.' |

After the reciprocal greetings in 4, the inquirer introduces himself referring to a kinship relation between himself and someone well-known to the employee. This form of self-identification not only means introducing oneself but also connotes an alignment with someone influential, whose kinship or high social position can guarantee a certain advantage and attentive response from the employee. This practice is related to the cultural concept of *wasta* 'intercession', where individuals can utilize their social connections to gain favor and more consideration.

D. Question-After-You (QAY)

Data analysis revealed that this move occurred in 64% of the openings. This sequence is phatic in nature, involving ritualized inquiries about the addressee's health, family members, and current activities (Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021), and the recipient's response to these questions. Such inquiries and responses are ritualistic, and no genuine accounts are expected (House, 1982). This component was most frequently realized by linguistic expressions, such as *kiif ilhaal/fluunak* 'How are you?', or *fu ?axbaar iffuyul* 'How are you doing at work?', as in 5. Individuals tend to respond with thanks to God or reciprocate the same question.

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| 5. | E: | <i>kiif ilhaal</i> | 'How are you?' |
| | I: | <i>?a-lhamdu lillaah. fluunak</i> | 'Thanks be to Allah. How are you?' |
| | E: | <i>yaa hala yaa hala</i> | 'Welcome, Welcome.' |
| | I: | <i>fu ?axbaar iffuyul</i> | 'How are you doing at work?' |
| | E: | <i>?a-lhamdu lillaah</i> | 'Thanks be to Allah.' |

In exchange 5, the employee asks the inquirer about his well-being, whereas the inquirer responds to this by thanking God, not the questioner, followed by repeating 'How are you?', to which the employee responds with a duplicated 'welcome' in the second turn to index familiarity and intimacy with the recipient. Similarly, the inquirer reciprocates the QAY with the employee to show respect and friendliness. This kind of back-and-forth exchange reflects the customary nature of this sequence, where both participants politely inquire about each other's well-being without necessarily providing genuine information about themselves. Moreover, this exchange may be extended to asking about family members or relatives when the participants have mutual family relations or friendship. This is exemplified in exchange 6, where the inquirer extends his questions by asking about the addressee's father.

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|----|----|--|---|
| 6. | I: | <i>fu ?axbaar il-walid ba?du fii Dubai</i> | 'How is your father? Is he still in Dubai?' |
| | E: | <i>laa ridzi?</i> | 'No. He returned.' |

Notably, the question-after-you usually occurs after reciprocated greetings in the first two turns, which showcases a genuine concern for the well-being of the person being addressed. This component also reflects cultural norms of caring and respect for one another's extended family, especially when there is a mutual relationship.

E. Expressing Hospitality

Expressing hospitality is a speech act performed by a speaker who extends an invitation to an invitee. It can be realized by a friendly and generous reception and entertainment of visitors or strangers (Staats & Groot, 2019). This component occurred in %38 of the interactions. The inviters tend to use lexical expressions, such as *?halan wa-sahlan* 'You are welcome', *miit marhaba* 'A hundred welcomes', *?itfað'al idzlis* 'Come in, take a seat', and questions like *fiu tifrab* 'What would you like to drink?', *xaliina nnð'ayifak, gahwah, ?aw faai* 'Let us offer you some coffee, or tea?'. The 'hospitality' component creates a welcoming atmosphere and encourages further engagement, as in exchange 7.

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| 7. | I: | <i>ya?tiik illsaafyih.</i> | 'May Allah give you strength.' |
| | E: | <i>miit marhaba, tfað'al idzlis.</i> | 'A hundred welcomes, please come in. Take a seat.' |
| | I: | <i>fiu ?axbaarak</i> | 'How are you doing?' |
| | E: | <i>gabil ?axbaarii, xaliina nnð'ayifak, gahwah, ?aw faai</i> | 'Before how am I doing? Let us offer you some coffee, or tea?' |
| | I: | <i>fukran fukran habiibi bas wallaahi mista?dzil</i> | 'Thank you, thank you my dear, but I swear by God I'm in a hurry.' |

- E: *laa wallaahi maa bis'iir*
'No. I swear by God. This is unacceptable.'

The exchange above indicates a kind of relationship between the interactants. It can be noticed that the inquirer initiates the conversation with a friendly greeting, expressing his wish for the other person's well-being. The employee replies with a warm and inviting welcome realized by *miit marhaba* 'a hundred welcomes', followed by inviting the inquirer to sit down to convey a generous invitation. Hospitality is more evident in the fourth turn when the inquirer is asked to have coffee or tea. Although the inquirer declines the offer by thanking the employee twice and giving a reason for his apology (i.e., he is in a hurry) and confirms this by swearing, the employee does not accept the apology and swears by God that the inquirer should accept the invitation. Although swearing is not tolerated universally, except among intimates, it is sometimes socially and emotionally indispensable (Jay & Jay, 2015, p. 215). The invitee's insistence on the invitation can be explained with reference to Arab culture, according to which paying an invitation is not enough, but one should insist on the invitee to reflect a genuine hospitality. It is worth noting that offering and accepting invitations reflects the social values prevalent in Arab culture. It is meant to enhance the relationship and create a welcoming atmosphere for further engagement.

F. Invoking God-Wishes

This component move, which is marked by formulaic expressions having the function of expressing the wish of the bestowal of favorable mercy of God on the addressee, occurred in 67% of the openings. The internal structure of the Invoking God-wish formula consists of the subject 'God', a verb expressing the wish, and a pronoun object suffix referring to the recipient of the favorable action (Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021). Typical formulaic expressions signaling this component are: *ʔalla yaʕtiik illʕaafyih* 'May God give you strength', *ʔalla iyt'awwel ʕumrak* 'May God lengthen your life' and *ʔalla yihfað'ak* 'May God save you'. Invoking God-wishes were also extended to the addressee's family members, using expressions like *ʔalla yihfað' ʔawlaadak* 'May God save your children', or to his/her parents, *ʔalla yirham waalidayk* 'May God have mercy on your parents'. This component is always reciprocated when uttered by one party, as shown in exchange 8.

8. I: *Marħba* 'Hello!'
E: *Tfað'al* 'Welcome.'
I: *ʔalla yaʕtiik illʕaafyih* 'May Allah give you strength.'
E: *ʕalla yihfað'ak* 'May God save you.'

G. Lack of Contact

This component move, which occurred in %19 of the data, is a comment by intimate friends that indicates a lack of communication or connection for a long time (Pavlidou, 1994, p. 498). The interactants may refer to previous unsuccessful trials to contact, as in exchange 9.

9. E: *yaa hala, yaa hala, waynak zaman maa fuftak.*
'Welcome, welcome. **Where have you been? I have not seen you for a long time.**'
I: *raniit ʕaliik ma raddeitʕ ʕalai*
'I called you, but you didn't answer me.'
E: *yaa-zam infat'ar galbi ʕaʕaan afuufak miʕtaagilak*
'Man, **my heart aches because I want to see you. I miss you.**'

This exchange indicates that interlocutors have not contacted each other for a long time and refers to previous unsuccessful calls. It reflects a strong relationship between the interactants. This component was realized by linguistic expressions, such as *zamaan maa fuftak* 'I have not seen you for a long time', and emotional expressions like *miʕtaagilak* 'I miss you'. The 'Lack of Contact' component is evident in the first turn, where the employee says that he has not seen the inquirer for a long time, and the inquirer's reference to previous unsuccessful calls in the second turn. However, it has become more evident in the employee's last turn, where he expresses a strong emotional attachment and a sense of longing upon reuniting with each other. This component is not phatic but context-dependent (Sifianou, 2002; Sun, 2004) as it is encountered whenever the participants have a strong relationship (i.e., it cannot be extended to all situations).

H. Expressing Annoyance

Annoyance is a feeling of discomfort caused by something or somebody that disrupts satisfaction, often resulting in a desire to eliminate the source of bother (Schulte-Fortkamp, 2002). The data revealed that annoyance, which occurred in %17 of the data, was expressed with verbal or/and non-verbal cues, directly or indirectly, as exemplified in 10 and 11.

10. I: *Bidhum ʔimawtuuni, bidhum ʔimawtuuni raayiha dʒaayye ʕala iffarikah wallaahi ma ʔana ʕarfih suu ʔasawii uff*
'**They will kill me. They will kill me. I have been back and forth with the company. I swear I don't know what to do. Uff**'
E: *wala bitmuuti. ʔihdi*
'You won't die. Cool down.'
I: *hai rabiʕ marrah baadzi huun wil-muʕkilih maa nħllat*

‘This is the fourth time I have come here, and the problem has not been solved.’

In exchange 10, the inquirer opened the conversation with strong expressions of frustration and exaggerated annoyance realized by ‘They will kill me’ repeated twice, followed by swear words, and closed with the non-verbal interjection ‘uff’, accompanied by a puff of air to intensify the amount of exasperation. This interjection is usually uttered in Arab culture when one is fed up with a situation. In the second turn, the employee tries to reassure the woman and calm her down. However, her annoyance and complaints continued, claiming that her problem had not been solved although she had come back and forth several times.

Sometimes, annoyance is expressed indirectly in a monologue, where the inquirer speaks to himself, as in exchange 11.

Context: The following turn is uttered by a woman who is talking to herself but is audible to others; it takes place while the employee is being engaged with another inquirer, and the woman is waiting for him to finish the conversation and give her the floor to present her inquiry.

11. I: *laa ?ilaaha ?illal laah muhammadun rasuulul-laah wa laa hawla walaa quwata ?illa bil-laah*
 ‘There is no God but Allah, and there is no power or might except with (the help of) Allah (God)’
 E: *kiif haalik maalik za?laanih*
 ‘How are you? Why are you angry?’
 I: *?iyt’awil ?umrak*
 ‘God lengthen your life.’
 E: *?itfadð’ali juu bagdar ?asaa?dik*
 ‘You are welcome. How can I help you?’

Exchange 11 indicates that while the employee is engaged with another inquirer, a woman is waiting for him, talking to herself saying ‘There is no God but Allah, and there is no power or might except with (the help of) Allah (God)’. This expression is often uttered when one becomes frustrated, and all human solutions are exhausted. It is used to remind oneself that one must never rely on people’s resources so much but must return to Allah in remembrance because He is mighty and has all the power to solve problems. According to Jordanian culture, this utterance is interpreted as a way of seeking composure and help from God as well as a kind of self-control to avoid misbehavior when one is frustrated. In this context, it functions to express annoyance and draw the employee’s attention. That is meant to exert pressure on the employee, urging him to speed up the service or solve the problem in any way.

I. Topic Introducer

This component marks the end of the opening part of a conversation (House, 1982) and a transition from the socio-relational frame to the main topic frame. The inquirer can signal the disclosure of the main topic, or the recipient may initiate or shift to the core of the transaction by offering a service (e.g., Yes, please?). This component occurred in 44% of the Arabic data. The most frequent signals used by the inquirer to mark this move are *?issabab illi xallaani ?aadzi lahuun* ‘the reason why I have come here ...’, *biddi ?as?alik* ‘I want to ask you ...’ and *biddi ?ahkiilak ?an ?ifi* ‘I want to tell you about something ...’ as in 12.

12. I: *law samaht biddi ?as?alak ?an ha-affaylah* ‘Please, I want to ask you about something.’
 E: *aah tfadð’al* ‘Yes. Please.’

On the other hand, the employees may offer help using interrogatives like *bagdar ?asaa?dak* ‘Can I help you?’ or *?ay xidmih* ‘Any help?’ to indicate that they are ready to serve or to ask the addressee if s/he needs any service, as illustrated in 13.

13. E: *?ahlan wa-sahlan* ‘Welcome.’
 I: *ya?tiik il-?aafye* May Allah give you strength.’
 E: *bagdar ?asaa?dak* ‘Can I help you?’

In Extract 13, it is the employee who announces the shift from the phatic frame to the instrumental or main topic frame. This component is particularly relevant to the genre studied by Ventola (1987) of service encounters of the kind where someone seeks a service from another. Ventola (1987) argues that most transactional encounters follow a generic structure opened by ‘Offering a service’.

V. DISCUSSION

The data analysis has provided insights on the pragmatic component moves and their linguistic realizations. Jordanians opt for to open workplace discourse at public utilities. These functional moves can be categorized into three groups: cross-culture-free phatic components (Greeting, and Question-After-You (QAY)), socio-culture-bound components (Expressing hospitality, Invoking God-wishes, and Introducing oneself), and context-bound components (Expressing annoyance, and Topic introducer). Therefore, the interpretation of these findings should consider the socio-cultural and contextual issues that have given rise to these functional components and their linguistic realizations. These contextual and cultural issues constrain and specify how participants behave, make choices, and participate in interactions (Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021; Al-Ali, 2010; Samovar & Porter, 2003).

As regards the cross-culture-free phatic components, the occurrence of ‘Greeting’ and ‘Question-After-You (QAY)’ in the data analyzed is consistent with what has been documented in different discourse interactions, such as the telephone opening conversations in various languages (e.g., Schegloff, 1986; Sifianou, 2002; Taleghani-Nikazm, 2002; Lee, 2006; Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021) and across cultures (e.g., Godard, 1977; Sifianou, 1989; Grieve & Seebus, 2008). They also occur in the initial phase of face-to-face interaction (House, 1982), transactional service encounters genres (Ventola, 1987; Eggins, 1994), and medical consultations (Jin, 2018). The occurrence of these moves in the initial phase of conversation cross-culturally and in different domains has the functions of establishing a mutual availability of the participants (Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021) and allowing them to “cooperate in getting the interaction comfortably underway” (Laver, 1975, p. 220). These phatic functional moves have been schematized to the extent that they have become ritualistic cross-culturally even though the linguistic options and forms realizing these moves used by each language community are different. For example, although the phatic QAY component is used in different speech communities to ask about the well-being of the addressee him/herself, Jordanian participants tend to ask about the well-being and affairs of other family members like fathers, brothers, etc. These linguistic phatic choices can be attributed to Arab social relationships primarily founded upon extended family relations (i.e., a larger scope of the concept of self). Another example illustrating the differences in linguistic choices is that in responses to questions about one’s well-being, the recipient does not thank the questioner, as is the case in other cultures, but s/he thanks God who is thought of as the giver and protector of one’s well-being. Such linguistic and stylistic choices uncover the effect of religious affiliations, which is consistent with what has been observed in Al-Ali and Abu-Abah’s (2021) study of the opening of telephone conversations.

By contrast, the ‘Expressing hospitality’, ‘Invoking God-wishes’, and ‘Introducing oneself’ component moves are socio-culturally bound. Extending invitations to in-group members in workplace interactions can be due to Arab socio-cultural customs and religious motivations. Notably, hospitality is generally extended to acquaintances and honorable inquirers of high social status. Hospitality is an Arab social custom inherent in Islamic heritage (Janardhan, 2002). Arabs place a high value on generosity (*karam*) not only as a social habit (Shryock, 2004) but also as an integral part of the Islamic religious faith. That is because intense dedication to hospitality is considered a sacred duty, as the prophetic saying states: “He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should honor his guest”. Thus, genuine or ostensible invitations are not only paid in casual interactions but have also crept into formal settings (i.e., workplace interaction). In contrast, this social custom is rare in other societies (e.g., American or English) (Isaacs & Clark, 1990, p. 494). Likewise, the high frequency of ‘Invoking God-wishes’ (67%) also indicates the impact of religious affiliations. This tendency agrees with what has been documented by many researchers (e.g., Ferguson, 1983; Morrow, 2006; Al-Ali & Abu-Abah, 2021). Ferguson (1983) points out that God-wishes are of frequent occurrence in Syrian Arabic as formulaic politeness expressions, and Morrow (2006, p. 45) detects the omnipresence of Allah (God) among Arabic speakers to the extent that they “could scarcely conceive of a conversation where the name of God would not appear”. These findings are also consistent with the high frequency of God-wishes encountered in Al-Ali and Abu-Abah’s (2021) study of Jordanian telephone conversation openings.

Although some researchers have recognized that ‘Introducing oneself’ is used by participants cross-culturally to reflect their identities (Schegloff, 1979), none of the instances encountered in our data is meant to serve this function. Instead, it is far from being innocently used to reflect identity. Rather, it is intentionally employed to get more attention and gain favorable treatment, especially when the inquirer has a high status. Introducing oneself is not only realized by mentioning one’s name but also by reflecting one’s affiliation, position, kinship to an influential person, or relationship to a person mutually known to both parties. This practice reflects inquirers’ social connections that can be used as pressure tactics to gain favor or more attention from the addressee. This cultural concept is called *wasta* ‘intercession’ in Arab society, which is meant to get something done by virtue of who you are or who you know. It involves a protagonist intervening on behalf of the addresser to obtain a position or gain more favor from the addressee (Cunningham et al., 1994). An Arab inquirer is likely to have a good chance if he knows someone in an organization (Al-Ali, 2004) who can help him/her get things done quickly without wasting time waiting in queues.

‘Expressing annoyance’ and ‘Topic introducer’ components can be thought of as context-bound moves. The former, as a speech function, emerges when one encounters a problem or is fed up with an element of the context of the situation. Such behavior sometimes arises in organizations and utility services where the bureaucracy of governmental organizations is dominant. For example, you cannot get things done unless you stand in endless queues wasting your time dealing with inefficient employees, or you, sometimes, must go back and forth several times, as in exchange 10. However, expressing annoyance is by no means neutral. This component is sometimes used as an instrumental task completion to exert a sort of pressure on the employee, urging him to speed up the service, solve the problem in any way, or draw the employee’s attention or sympathy to get the problem resolved. Addressers employed both non-verbal and verbal-linguistic signals to articulate this component. The latter sometimes includes religious expressions related to Arab culture, especially when used as self-controllers to avoid misbehavior. The other component, ‘Topic introducer’, is co-textually bound because it occurs immediately before the main inquiry frame. It announces the participant’s immediate shift from the socio-relational frame to the instrumental frame (i.e., down to business) (Jin, 2018).

VI. CONCLUSION

Using a real face-to-face interaction at workplace public utility services between inquirers and employees, we have explored and illustrated how the opening phase of this interaction is executed, focusing mainly on identifying the main components constituting this phase and how they are realized linguistically. We also revealed the contextual and socio-cultural relations indexed by the co-construction of these components and how they are negotiated. The corpus showed that the interlocutors tend to use a set of functional moves, some of which are cross-culture-free phatic components that are similar to those utilized in other cultures and languages, others are socio-culture-bound components that surface in Jordanian Arab culture, and some others are context-bound components. These contextual and cultural issues constrain and specify how participants behave, co-construct, negotiate, and articulate these functional components as well as the linguistic selections realizing them.

The occurrence of ritualistic phatic moves (e.g., Greeting and QAY) in the initial phase of cross-cultural conversation is reasonable since they are meant to build rapport and establish a mutual availability of the interlocutors to get things done. In contrast, the occurrence of the socio-cultural components is influenced by socio-cultural customs, kinship ideology, and religious affiliations. Socio-cultural habits like extending invitations to acquaintances, kinship relations, and influential inquirers during official working hours are Arab social customs. These acquaintances and influencers can also exert social pressure on the employees to get more attention, favorable treatment, and immediate response to their inquiries. Thus, employees spend some time complementing invitees at the expense of work time. Concurrently, other inquirers are queuing and waiting to be served. This social behavior results in delaying official work, which in turn leads to the rise of additional context-bound components like 'Expressing annoyance'. Another socio-cultural practice is the genealogical kinship ideologies held by the interlocutors that lead to extended inquiries about the well-being of extended family members. This behavior is due to social relationships established upon the concept of collectivism. This conclusion supports Feghali's (1997, p. 352) view that Arab collectivism influences their social interaction patterns. Likewise, additional moves like 'Invoking God-wishes' and some religious linguistic terms occur due to religious affiliation. Therefore, it can be concluded that building and maintaining relationships between participants in public utility services is equally important as the completion of the inquiry task. However, this equality in dual purpose results in tension between building and maintaining social relationships, and serving inquirers efficiently because the former purpose becomes dominant in certain situations, and the other hardly matters.

It can also be concluded that these contextual and socio-cultural practices result in the occurrence of new component moves that give rise to a lengthy opening phase and a delayed switch to the core topic. Such a practice can be related to Arabs' indirectness by going through a set of rapport-building relation exchanges before shifting to the core phase (Zaharna, 1995; Al-Ali- & Abu-Abah, 2021).

Analyzing the dynamics of public utility services reveals similarities and differences between this genre and other workplace interactions. Therefore, the findings of this study can have practical implications for intercultural communication and discourse studies in that they, hopefully, contribute to the understanding of how interlocutors use socio-cultural and religious affiliations to co-construct the components of this type of discourse. Such an analysis is required to enrich interactants' perception and raise their awareness of these socio-relational moves that facilitate their interaction with utility service providers.

APPENDIX. TRANSLITERATION

The most noteworthy symbols used in transcribing Arabic words given in this article are: ʔ glottal stop, g voiced velar stop, ð^s emphatic voiced interdental fricative, dʒ voiced post-alveolar affricate, y palatal glide, ʃ voiceless alveopalatal fricative, t^s emphatic voiceless dento-alveolar stop, s^s emphatic voiceless alveolar fricative, h voiceless glottal fricative, ʕ voiceless pharyngeal fricative, x voiceless velar fricative, ɣ voiced uvular fricative, ʕ voiceless pharyngeal fricative, a short central low vowel, aa long central low vowel, u short back high vowel, uu long back high vowel, i short front high vowel, and ii long front high vowel.

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Translanguaging as a Method in Literary Works: A Case Study of the Chinese Literary Work *Food Is Heaven*

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Abstract—*Food Is Heaven*, written by Ge Liang (2022), has achieved phenomenal success since its publication. The innovative use of vernacular and classical Chinese, vivid narration of food, and multilingual interactions among characters have introduced readers to translanguaging aesthetics. Translanguaging, as a methodological and theoretical framework of language communication and human cognition (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2018, 2022a), is regarded as a literary device in *Food Is Heaven*. The lens of translanguaging emphasizes multisensory, multimodal, multisemiotic, and multilingual communication, fostering creative and critical approaches to meaning-making by transcending the boundaries of semiotic and linguistic divides. Literary works, serving as imaginative reflections of daily practices, bridge the gap between reality and imagination, embracing creative and aesthetic narrations in their meaning-making. However, few studies have explored literary works in light of translanguaging. This article aims to explore how translanguaging is employed as a literary device through a case study of the phenomenal Chinese book *Food Is Heaven*, written by Ge Liang (2022). Through the lens of translanguaging, we examine the creativity and criticality of the writer's innovative language philosophy, exploring how translanguaging is employed to break linguistic and semiotic boundaries, offering readers an embodied reading experience.

Index Terms—translanguaging, creativity and criticality, *Food Is Heaven*, literary device, language philosophy

I. INTRODUCTION

Food Is Heaven, the latest novel by Ge Liang, was published in 2022 by People's Literature Publishing House. Since its publication, the book has garnered overwhelming praise from literary reviewers, who have described it as “The Evolutionary History of Lingnan Cuisine (岭南饮食流变史)” and “The Spiritual Journey of Chinese People (中国人的精神旅途史).” These comments reveal, to some extent, the writer's continuous commitment to imaginative and innovative writings, aimed at exploring literary meanings for its readership.

Born in 1978, Ge Liang dedicated his twenties to literary writing, earning recognition as one of the most promising writers in contemporary Chinese literature. He has received numerous awards, including the Lu Xun Literary Prize, one of the most prestigious literary awards in China, which he was awarded for his work *Hair Cutting* (2020) in 2022. Additionally, his works have been translated into English, French, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and other languages. Ge is well known for his prolific output in novel writing and has three published novels: *Scarlet Finch* (2009), *Paper Hawk* (2016), and *Food Is Heaven* (2022). His works also include short stories such as *Hair Cutting* (2020), *Enigma* (2006), *Raccoon* (2013), and *Year of Drama* (2012) as well as collections of essays such as *Reflection of the World* (2016) and *Pears and Dates* (2023).

Ge's works value situated scenes, innovative writing techniques, elegant narration, and precision of language (*Scarlet Finch*, 2009; *Year of Drama*, 2012). As a master of language, he excels at evoking a subtle sense of beauty through refined language (*Scarlet Finch*, 2010; *Paper Hawk*, 2016). Throughout his writing career, Ge has developed his own language philosophy, emphasizing that language is not merely a tool for conveying the story, but an essential part of the narrative itself (*Paper Hawk*, 2016; *Hair Cutting*, 2020; *Tile Cat*, 2021). In other words, the manner in which he used language in his novels is not solely a matter of style but extends beyond its linguistic dimension in pursuit of underlying beliefs about humanity, rendering the stories more meaningful to their readership. This language philosophy shapes his literary creations and has an overall impact on his work.

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Food Is Heaven (2022) is a novel that focuses on the theme of food, offering a portrayal of China's modern history through the rise and fall of several families. This novel demonstrates the writer's conscious pursuit of his language philosophy in literary narration. For this purpose, Ge dedicated several years to conducting documentary research to uncover the "hidden history" of languages and weave historical materials into the experiences of the main characters in situated scenes. He highlighted translanguaging practices in daily life, such as the situated usage of dialects (e.g., Cantonese, Wu, and Northeastern Chinese), mixed usage of vernacular and classical Chinese, and creative employment of professional jargon and slang associated with food. The sophisticated and diversified translanguaging practices serve as evocative and abundant examples for the analysis of his language philosophy presented in this article.

II. TRANSLANGUAGING AS A LITERARY DEVICE

Translanguaging theory, rooted in foreign language acquisition and education, has promoted the active use of multiple languages and all other meaningful resources in applied linguistics and critical discourse studies (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2018, 2022a). Driven by Li and others, the translanguaging theory has gradually evolved into a practical and influential linguistic communication and cognition theory. Over the past two decades, it has been applied as a literary device to a wide range of lived realities in the humanities, social sciences, and beyond (Li & Shen, 2021), including bi-/multilingualism (Garcia & Li, 2014, 2022), visual art (Lee, 2015), translation and interpreting (Baynham & Lee, 2019; Han et al., 2023; Runcieman, 2021), language policy and planning (Zhu & Li, 2016; Pennycook, 2016; Han & Yang, 2022; Li, 2022b; Wen et al., 2022), daily life (Mazzaferro, 2018), and literature (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016).

In their task-based research, Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016) employed translanguaging as a literary device (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 57) and regarded it as a "legitimate form of communication" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 73) through which the effects of home-school cultural connections are achieved, contributing significant communicative meanings and pedagogical implications. As a literary device, translanguaging has achieved its meaning-making through translanguaging practices in literary creation by valuing all available resources beyond language. The translanguaging approach achieves meaning-making by subtly combining the characters' various communication modes (verbal, visual, gestural, and embodied) to convey abstract and intangible emotions and feelings. However, the boundary-breaking perspective of translanguaging also enriches the readers' sense of experience by shifting their attention from purely verbal content to the imagery of facial expressions, body gestures, or inner activities of characters, thereby enabling a richness of meaning and a variety of integrated experiences (Li, 2022a, p. 2). Therefore, in literary narration, multilingual practices foster a "sense of connectedness" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 66) among the writer, the text, and the readership, achieving a "legitimate form of communication" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 73). In return, this literary achievement is best captured and inspired by creativity and criticality, as Li Wei has unequivocally stated:

[C]reativity can be defined as the ability to choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of behavior, including the use of language. It is about pushing and breaking the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging. Criticality refers to the ability to use available evidence appropriately, systematically, and insightfully to inform considered views of cultural, social, political, and linguistic phenomena, to question and problematize received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations. (Li, 2011a, p. 1223)

The creative and critical perspective of translanguaging also provides a new conceptual framework that promotes literary innovation: innovation beyond language as abstract codes to meaning- and sense-making; combination of a wider range of multisemiotic resources to offer original and dimensional views of "cultural, social, political, and linguistic phenomena"; and employment of translanguaging as a literary device.

III. TRANSLANGUAGING IN FOOD IS HEAVEN

Employed as a literary device, translanguaging is highlighted in the novel *Food Is Heaven*. Through innovative language use, Ge further develops his language philosophy to present a vivid multilingual, multisemiotic, and multisensory world of food: he manages to present the characters' emotions and feelings through their situated translanguaging practices in different contexts; he succeeds in restoring the translanguaging usage of classical and vernacular Chinese to reflect historical complexity; and he uses food as a linguistic metaphor to explore the fusion of cultures. The following examples illustrate Ge's language philosophy and his innovative employment of translanguaging as a literary device.

A. *Situated Translanguaging Practices of Characters in Different Contexts*

In *Food Is Heaven*, one notable linguistic phenomenon is the prevalence of paraphrased dialogues, where vernacular Chinese is predominantly used. The vernacular Chinese, embedded in the Mandarin narration, reveals the characters' cultural backgrounds and highlights an immersive experience. Consider the following two examples.

TABLE 1
EXAMPLE 1

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 216)	慧生瞧着话头不对，忙将灶上的汤圆端过来，摆在桌上，大声说，来来， <u>食啲暖笠笠嘅嘢！</u> 屋里的空气便真的暖起来。招呼了师娘，慧生给三个小的，都盛得满满的，笑盈盈地说， <u>后生仔，食多啲，团团圆圆。</u>
English translation for reference	Noticing that the conversation was getting depressing, Huisheng quickly picked up the sweet dumplings from the stove and placed them on the table, saying loudly, “Come on, <u>sik di nyun lap lap ge je (let’s have some warm and delicious food)!</u> ” The air inside the room really warmed up. After Mrs. Zhou joined them, Huisheng filled up the bowls of the three children until they were full and said with a smile, “ <u>hau saang zai, sik do di, tyun tyun jyun jyun. (Young ones, eat more and be happy together.)</u> ”

In Example 1, the protagonist, Huisheng, is hosting Mrs. Zhou and her sons at home for the winter solstice. The entire narration is structured in Mandarin but incorporates several of Huisheng’s interventions in Cantonese. Born in Foshan, Huisheng grew up in Guangzhou and can speak authentic Cantonese. The person Huisheng is conversing with is Mrs. Zhou, the landlady, who is from Zhanjiang in western Guangdong and speaks the local language of Lianjiang. Although they both speak Cantonese, there is a difference in accent; hence, their conversations are typically conducted in Mandarin. In the dialogue, when the conversation unexpectedly shifts to the tragic death of Mrs. Zhou’s husband, Huisheng attempts to change the topic. He then offers the sweet dumplings to alleviate the somber atmosphere, and Mrs. Zhou’s language shifts to Cantonese. In this example, “食啲暖笠笠嘅嘢 (sik di nyun lap lap ge je; let’s have some warm and delicious food)” is a typical Cantonese expression conveying the sensation of warmth and comfort. Such warmth and comfort bring the characters back from memory to reality. Later, Huisheng continues in Cantonese “后生仔，食多啲，团团圆圆 (hau saang zai, sik do di, tyun tyun jyun jyun; Young ones, eat more and be happy together),” which contributes to dispelling the chilly dampness and creating a cozy haven in a cold world. Huisheng’s situated translanguaging succeeds in redirecting the conversation, reinstating the warmth, closeness, and protectiveness of homeland dialects, and effectively transmitting the involved characters’ emotions and feelings.

TABLE 2
EXAMPLE 2

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 424)	司马一拍他肩膀，你知道我是哪的人。白山黑水，老东北那疙瘩来的。我爱吃什么， <u>“棒打獐子瓢舀鱼，野鸡落到饭锅里”</u> ，啥好东西不是一锅烩。大碗喝酒，大块儿吃肉。来香港这么多年，吃啥都觉得淡了吧唧的，荤菜没个荤味儿。可到你这，不道咋的， <u>味儿老厚了</u> 。你这个红烧肉啊，带劲！咋说？叫个“人间至味”。你这个肉，不道咋整的， <u>好吃得敞亮</u> 。
English translation for reference	Sima slapped his (Wu Ju) shoulder and said, “You know where I’m from. I’m from the Northeast. Changbai Mountain and Heilongjiang River are located there. What do I love to eat? Stews, because in a single pot you may find all sorts of rare and wild delicacies.” Anything delicious can be cooked in one pot. I like to drink in big bowls and eat meat in big chunks. After living in Hong Kong for so many years, I <u>find everything tasteless</u> , with no meaty flavor in the dishes. But when I come to your place, <u>the taste is so rich</u> that I can’t believe it’s just Shanghai cuisine. Your braised pork is amazing! How should I describe it? It’s like “the ultimate flavor of this world.” I’ve tried Dongpo pork in Hangzhou, but compared to this, I’m not interested. I don’t know how you made this meat so delicious that <u>it brightens up my eyes</u> .

In Example 2, we focus on a scene featuring Sima, a native of northeast China and a frequent diner at the “Eighteen Hang” restaurant in Wan Chai, Hong Kong. In his daily interactions, he typically converses with the restaurant owner in Mandarin, occasionally interspersing his speech with broken Cantonese as he adapts to local life. However, under the influence of alcohol, he loses control of his language, and his heavy native accent emerges. He begins with a Northeastern saying that depicts the local people’s hospitality and the abundance of food: “棒打獐子瓢舀鱼，野鸡落到饭锅里 (Pinyin: bàng dǎ zhāng zǐ piáo yǎo yú, yě jī luò dào fàn guō lǐ; English: In a single pot of stew, you may find all sorts of rare and wild delicacies).” With this unconscious shift in dialect, Sima compares the flavors of the Cantonese cuisine in Hong Kong (吃啥都觉得淡了吧唧的; Pinyin: chī shá dōu jué dé dàn le ba jī de; English: I find everything tasteless) with those of “Eighteen Hang” – dishes prepared in the Shanghai style (味儿老厚了; Pinyin: wèi ér lǎo hòu le; English: the taste is so rich). These northeastern expressions, laden with heavy accents, not only reflect the straightforward and humorous nature of the northeasterners but also enable readers to partake in the vivid sensory experience. Translanguaging, as a literary device, contributes to evoking Sima’s memory, past experiences, and subconscious yearning for his roots, thus depicting the multidimensional personality of the character.

It is worth noting that the phrase “好吃得敞亮 (Pinyin: hǎo chī dé chǎng liàng; English: so delicious that it brightens up my eyes)” is a rhetorical use of synesthesia. By associating and combining experiences from various senses, a unique sensory experience is crafted, rendering the language more vivid, imaginative, and effective in conveying emotions and messages. In this example, by combining the senses of taste (rich) and sight (brightened), a sensory experience is created where taste and sight become intertwined. In this sense, synesthesia is regarded as a creative application of translanguaging that transcends the limitations of monolingual expression and creates a “sense of connectedness” (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 66) among the author, the text, and the readership, enriching the reading experience and facilitating a deeper understanding of the story’s setting and characters’ identities.

B. Mixed Usage of Classical and Vernacular Chinese

Another linguistic feature of *Food Is Heaven* is its mixed usage of classical and vernacular Chinese. As the story extends from the late Qing Dynasty to the reform and opening up of China, with a span of nearly a century, both the old and new language systems of China undergo dynamic changes and interactions. To depict the historical characteristics of this era, the author innovatively employs the method of translanguaging to restore historical reality in his narrative. From this perspective, we have selected the following two examples for analysis.

TABLE 3
EXAMPLE 3

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 090)	广州四大酒家每年制作之菊花五蛇羹，系用巨资，聘请向霞公太史之厨师传授制法，久已驰名遐迹。自分设楠园、大三源、闻园各酒家来港，每年于秋末冬初，三蛇已肥之际，必依法烹制应市，近已出世，曾尝试者，莫不交口称赞，并运到大帮南雄新鲜北菇，香味异常浓厚，每日又有竹丝鸡烩山瑞，均为应时补品，好者幸勿失之交臂，是幸。
English translation for reference	The four famous restaurants in Guangzhou produce Chrysanthemum and Five-Snake Soup every year, which is made with investments and by hiring chefs from the Taishi Family. It has been famous for a long time. Since Nan Yuan, Da San Yuan, and Wen Yuan restaurants came to Hong Kong, they have followed the traditional recipe to cook and sell the soup during late autumn and early winter when the snakes are fat. <u>It has gained great popularity and praise from those who have tried it. In addition, the fresh mushroom is transported from Nanxiong to Dabang, where they are used to make a soup with an exceptionally rich and delicious flavor.</u> There is also a <u>daily nutritional supplement</u> of bamboo and chicken soup with mountain delicacies. The diners who have tasted these delicacies <u>are fortunate.</u>

Example 3 presents an advertisement from the 1929 Hong Kong newspaper *Wah Sing Daily*. The linguistic features of the advertisement illustrate a transition from classical Chinese to vernacular Chinese, highlighting the linguistic milieu and cultural atmosphere of Hong Kong society during that period. In this example, the syntactical structure bears clear marks of classical Chinese influence, which stimulates a sense of the past. For instance, the two characters “是幸” (Pinyin: shì xìng; English: are fortunate)” together constitute a typical subject-predictive structure of classical Chinese. However, the lexical expressions lean more towards vernacular Chinese, featuring easily comprehensible phrases such as “交口称赞” (Pinyin: jiāo kǒu chēng zàn; English: It has gained tremendous popularity and praise from those who have tried it)” and “应时补品” (Pinyin: yìng shí bǔ pǐn; English: a daily nutritional supplement).” The text also employs more colloquial expressions, such as “并运到大帮南雄新鲜北菇，香味异常浓厚” (Pinyin: bìng yùn dào dà bāng nán xióng xīn xiān běi gū, xiāng wèi yì cháng nóng hòu; English: the fresh mushroom is transported from Nanxiong to Dabang, where they are used to make a soup with a vibrant and delicious flavor).” Notably, the integration of classical and vernacular Chinese in the text does not occur randomly, but rather as a deliberate strategy employed by the author to restore the unique linguistic phenomenon of the historical era. This literary device of translanguaging enables the readership to travel back and immerse themselves in the cultural and social milieu of the era.

TABLE 4
EXAMPLE 4

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 069)	下面几行，印纸页被蠹虫蛀了，只字片语，无法成文。跳过若干行去，才看到这么一句话：“ <u>然熔金煮玉，以富贵之名，得至清之意。弦断听音者，几希。</u> ” 这道叫作“熔金煮玉”的菜上来时，陈赫明正对着面前的“傍林鲜”，发着呆。在似是而非的珍宴之后，他几乎失去了最初的兴味与好奇。 <u>曲径通幽，清斋冷第后，窗亦垂幔，到最后也不过是满室珠翠旖旎情形。</u>
English translation for reference	The following lines were eaten away by bookworms, and only fragments of words remained, making it impossible to read. Skipping several lines, I finally came across this sentence: “ <u>Although the dish name sounds extravagant – ‘boiling gold and jade together’ – in reality, its true essence lies not in opulence, but in the pursuit of ultimate purity and clarity. Those who grasp its essence are as scarce as those who can perceive the sound from a broken string.</u> ” As the dish called “Melting Gold and Boiling Jade” was served, Chen Hemin was staring blankly at the “Banglin Fresh” dish in front of him. After the seemingly exotic feast, he had lost much of his initial interest and curiosity. Despite the <u>winding paths and secluded gardens</u> , even <u>the cold and quiet chambers</u> , and <u>the windows covered with curtains</u> , the final result was no more than a room filled with glittering jewels and pearls.

In Example 4, the author continues to use the method of translanguaging to enrich his narrative. In addition to portraying the impossible love between the nun Yue Fu and the young general Chen Heming, the example focuses on a dish prepared by Yue Fu for her lover. The dish refers to a porridge made of finesse rice, water, and bamboo shoots which is symbolically named “熔金煮玉” (Pinyin: róng jīn zhǔ yù; English: melting gold and boiling jade).” Its deeper meaning is derived from the poetic verses in which it is embedded: “然熔金煮玉，以富贵之名，得至清之意。弦断听音者，几希” (Pinyin: rán róng jīn zhǔ yù, yǐ fù guì zhī míng, dé zhì qīng zhī yì, xián duàn tīng yīn zhě, jǐ xī; English: Although the dish name sounds extravagant – ‘boiling gold and jade together’ – in reality, its true essence lies not in opulence, but in the pursuit of ultimate purity and clarity. Those who grasp its essence are as scarce as those who can perceive the sound from a broken string).” As such, the poetic expression “熔金煮玉” is imbued with a sense of solemnity, loyalty, and commitment against all odds. After the poetic verses in classical Chinese, the author reverts to

vernacular Chinese when describing the young general's mental activities. Nevertheless, classical aesthetics can be observed frequently throughout the narrative through the use of several four-character expressions, such as “曲径通幽 (Pinyin: qū jìng tōng yōu; English: winding paths and secluded gardens),” “清斋冷第 (Pinyin: qīng zhāi lěng dì; English: the cold and quiet chambers),” and “窗亦垂幔 (Pinyin: chuāng yì chuí màn; English: the windows covered with curtains).” The embedded usage reflects the author's creative language philosophy, incorporating diverse linguistic elements as part of his unitary “language repertoire” (Li & García, 2022, p. 2) in translanguaging practice.

C. Translanguaging Practice Within the Theme of Food

In *Food Is Heaven*, the author also dedicates significant attention to describing the preparation and consumption of delectable food, emphasizing cuisine as a cultural element and fostering sensory satisfaction through language. By using culinary jargon from various regions, the author integrates linguistic and cultural elements into the narrative surrounding food, offering a new perspective on its expression and perception as a symbolic and metaphoric device/construct of social identity. With this in mind, we proceed to the analysis of two specific examples.

TABLE 5
EXAMPLE 5

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 483)	看露露，利利索索地给豆芽焯水，切洋葱、生姜、黄姜、南姜、大蒜成末，入锅上油，炒香。一边厢将叻沙叶、香茅煮水。油锅里头，放入峇拉煎炒化，再入咖喱粉、叻沙粉翻炒，下香茅水，直熬到锅里泛起红棕。一面搅拌，一面慢慢倒入椰浆、生奶。
English translation for reference	Watching Lulu, she blanched the bean sprouts, chopped the onions, ginger, turmeric, galangal, and garlic into small pieces, and stir-fried them with oil until fragrant. Meanwhile, she boiled the laksa leaves and citronella in water. In the oil pan, she added the belacan and stir-fried it until it dissolved, then added curry powder and laksa powder and stir-fried them. Next, she poured in the citronella water and simmered it until the mixture turned reddish-brown. While stirring, she slowly poured in the coconut milk and fresh milk.

In Example 5, Lulu, a Singaporean girl, presents her culinary talents at the Shanghainese restaurant in Hong Kong. Lulu's localized Southeast Asian cuisine leads to a magnificent fusion of flavors. Her preparation of “峇拉煎” (Pinyin: bā lā jiān; English: belacan) involves a variety of culinary techniques, such as “焯水 (Pinyin: chāo shuǐ; English: blanching),” “煮水 (Pinyin: zhǔ shuǐ; English: boiling),” “翻炒 (Pinyin: fān chǎo; English: stir-frying),” and “熬 (Pinyin: áo; English: simmering).” It is seasoned with ingredients such as “叻沙叶 (Pinyin: lè shā yè; English: laksa leaves),” “香茅 (Pinyin: xiāng máo; English: citronella),” and “椰浆 (Pinyin: yē jiāng; English: coconut milk),” incorporating the distinctive culinary essence of South Asian cuisine.

The sequence of actions depicted creates a cooking scene, evoking the reader's sensory perception of food and eliciting their emotional resonance with food culture. The tongue, serving as a metaphorical vehicle for sensory exploration, embodies the dynamic and interactive cultural fusion in food, echoing the theme of *Food Is Heaven*. Through the device of translanguaging, the author enriches his narrative by incorporating sensory resources such as taste, smell, and visual imagery, thus creating a literary abundance.

TABLE 6
EXAMPLE 6

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 510)	最后一道呢，是生蚝。粤厨做的是“花胶金蚝焖花菇”，这是功夫菜，算一个十分堂皇的收束。料丰味浓，是一场盛宴的高潮。可五举，却反其道而行之。他将活生蚝，用本帮醉虾醉蟹的办法。用那陈年的花雕醉了，只是撒上少许蒜蓉，便端上了桌。这倒难住了评委。一浓一淡，一丰一简。可一试之下，他们却都将票投给了五举。
English translation for reference	The final dish was raw oysters. The Cantonese chef made “Braised Golden Oysters with Dried Scallop and Mushroom,” a grand and sophisticated dish that was the highlight of the feast. However, Wu Ju took a different approach. He used the method of drunken shrimp and crab from his hometown to prepare the live oysters. He soaked them in aged Shaoxing wine and served them with a touch of garlic. This stumped the judges. The two dishes were vastly different in flavor and complexity. But after trying them, all the judges unanimously voted for Wu Ju.

Taken from the plot of a chef's competition held in Hong Kong, Example 6 showcases a culinary event where restaurants compete to present the finest Chinese cuisine. Wu Ju, an expert in Chinese fusion cuisine, surprises the audience with a dish called “Drunken Oysters,” which incorporates Cantonese cuisine into Shanghai dishes. In this example, instead of being conventionally steamed with chopped garlic in the Cantonese manner, oysters, a type of seafood, are innovatively marinated in yellow wine – “Huadiao” – to become “drunken” and then garnished with garlic powder. Although marinating shrimp and crabs in yellow wine is a customary practice in Shanghai cuisine, Wu Ju combines two culinary languages to creatively transform the dish into a new cultural expression. The narrative transcends the taste itself and evokes a sense of appreciation and enjoyment. Through the lens of translanguaging, the author highlights the transformative power of transcending culinary boundaries, showcasing its dynamic vitality and beyond.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper examines the use of translanguaging as a literary device in the novel *Food Is Heaven* by Ge Liang. We analyze six examples of translanguaging practices to demonstrate how the author solidifies his innovative language philosophy through the lens of translanguaging. Focusing on the theme of food, the author manages linguistic and semiotic interactions within the text, facilitating the reconciliation of classical and vernacular Chinese and the representation of diverse gastronomic cultures: The characters' emotions and feelings are revealed through their situated translanguaging practices in different contexts; the historical linguistic complexity is restored through translanguaging usage of classical and vernacular Chinese; and the integration of cultures is metaphorically achieved through food fusion. In addition, by transcending the limitations of a monolingual narrative, the author cultivates a multilingual, multisemiotic, and multisensory world, enriching the aesthetic experiences of the readership and offering new possibilities for transformative meaning-making. In doing so, the author highlights the dynamic and fluid nature of communication, emphasizing the importance of creative and critical modes of literary expression. Ultimately, this translanguaging perspective offers a powerful tool for writers to explore and celebrate the rich diversity of the human experience, fostering a more vibrant and inclusive literary landscape.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported by a Macao Polytechnic University Research Project (RP/FLT-01/2023).

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Phonological Awareness and Reading Ability: Exploring the Connection Between Phonological Skills and Reading Proficiency

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Abstract—This research paper explores the connection between phonological skills and reading proficiency among Arabic-speaking male students at Haql College. Using a qualitative thematic analysis approach. This study investigates the level of phonological awareness and how the phonological awareness relates to reading proficiency among Saudi University students. The participants were 20 first-year students from the Languages and Translation department at Haql College. Semi-structured group interviews were conducted to examine participants' perceptions of phonological skills and their impact on reading ability. The findings reveal a strong connection between phonological skills and reading proficiency through different factors or themes that develop reading proficiency among the students, such as awareness of phonological sounds, reading habits and practices, and perceptions of phonological skills in reading. Based on the findings, recommendations were provided for educators and policymakers to integrate phonological awareness activities into language instruction. It is important to introduce professional development programs to provide educators with the essential skills to integrate phonological awareness education into the curriculum. It is advisable to conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the lasting impact of phonological awareness interventions on reading achievement in Arabic-speaking university students. In summary, educational institutions may empower students to become proficient readers and lifelong learners by prioritizing phonological instruction.

Index Terms—phonological skills, reading ability, phonemic awareness, reading comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Study Background

Within the field of literacy development, academics and teachers have paid close attention to the complex link between phonological awareness and reading ability. The ability to identify and control language sounds at the phonemic and syllabic levels, or phonological awareness (Anthony & Francis, 2005), is essential to the learning and development of reading. This level of awareness includes phoneme segmentation, blending, manipulation skills that are needed in decoding written language and advancing comprehension and fluency (Ehri et al., 2001).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undergone significant changes in its educational landscape, notably with a commitment to increase educational excellence and prepare its citizens for the demands of a knowledge-based economy. This can be reflected in an increase in the number of enrollments, program offerings, and services in Saudi universities, which are meaningful to the seriousness of efforts in designing opportunities for enhancing higher education in Saudi Arabia (Alharbi & Alzahrani, 2020).

In this regard, literacy acquisition has emerged as one of the greatest concerns, specifically concerning reading skills among university students. Much has been done in raising access to education; however, much emphasis needs to be put on literacy acquisition and reading skills. This should be addressed immediately, as the students' failure to develop reading skills may pose a great risk to their success during academic years and indeed after college life (Al-Qahtani & Al-Harhi, 2020). Reading skills have been emphasized to be crucial in achievement, in communication, in thinking, and in becoming socially and politically aware and active among others (Kazmi, 2021).

One of the most important components of reading skills is phonological awareness. The ability to recognize and manipulate speech sounds, including vowels, spelling, and rime initiation (National Reading Council, 2020). Phonology plays an important role in the development of reading skills by facilitating word recognition, and comprehension (Torgesen et al., 2020). Research across language domains has consistently demonstrated the importance of phonological awareness in predicting reading achievement across languages and scripts (Elbro et al., 2021).

In the Saudi context, where Arabic is the main language of instructional communication, the relationship between phonetics and reading skills is even more important if Arabic is known for its phonetic system. Thus, it is complex, characterized by a rich variety of sounds, complex syntax, and orthography. Also, depth of understanding becomes important, especially where there are subtle connections between letters, sounds, and idioms (Taha, 2021).

Despite the importance of phonological awareness in Arabic literacy development, there are few empirical studies examining its role in the context of Saudi university students. Existing research has mainly focused on primary and secondary school populations, providing some gaps in our understanding of how phonological awareness contributes to

reading competence among university students (Al-Seghayer, 2020). Moreover, most of the research in this area is conducted in Western contexts, which means that it may fail to capture the full extent of what it means to acquire literacy in Arabic, including its embedded linguistic and cultural subtexts (Alhassan & Al-Dosari, 2020). Therefore, there is a need for empirical research that sets out to establish the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability among university students in Saudi Arabia.

B. Problem Statement

Literacy development remains one of the major problems in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. According to studies by academic researchers, despite huge resources poured into academic facilities and the provision of educational opportunities, there remains a gap in information on factors that improve the reading proficiency of university students. There is a dearth of knowledge as regards the acquisition of literacy skills among such students based on the role of phonological awareness. While the acquisition and distinct uses in linguistic contexts have been highly researched, there is a knowledge gap on the peculiarities of phonological awareness in its use by Arabic speakers at a tertiary level (Alhassan & Al-Dosari, 2020).

The researcher has noticed that most of the students majoring in English at Haql College have low phonological awareness, which could lead to the lowest reading outcomes. The problem at hand is multifaceted. First and foremost, there is a lack of empirical research that specifically investigates the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability among Saudi university students. While such research studies have indeed been very useful in increasing our understanding of the contribution of phonological skills to reading development in Western orthographies, these findings may not readily generalize to Arabic-speaking populations because of differences between the orthographies (Abu-Rabia & Taha, 2020). It is not clear to what extent findings from Western research can be generalized to a Saudi context. Therefore, there is an imperative requirement to conduct localized studies.

Moreover, research on phonological awareness in Saudi Arabia and its relationship with reading performance has relatively concentrated more on schoolchildren within the primary and secondary school age groups (Al-Seghayer, 2020). Various studies claim that strong phonological skills are foundational for effective decoding, which is important for reading fluency (Kibby, 2020). Without using these skills, students may struggle with recognizing word patterns and sounds, leading to difficulties in reading development. Furthermore, the relationship between phonological awareness and reading proficiency is extremely significant in languages with complex orthographies, such as Arabic. Students with higher phonological awareness tend to have better reading outcomes, as they can more easily map sounds to their corresponding letters and words, thereby enhancing their overall reading proficiency (Alshaboul et al., 2022).

Research has led to advances in the knowledge of early literacy development but has not offered any implications for the university sample, which would be different given the academic requirements and language competencies. Therefore, there is an urgent call to close the gap in the existing literature through much-focused research that explores the link between phonological awareness and reading ability in Saudi university contexts. On the other hand, the effects of the gap in research being noticed transcend theoretical boundaries. Phonological awareness is widely recognized as a key predictor of reading success, with deficits in this skill linked to reading difficulties and learning disabilities (Taha, 2021). Given the central role of reading proficiency in academic achievement and career readiness, the failure to address potential deficiencies in phonological awareness among Saudi university students may have far-reaching consequences for their educational outcomes and prospects (Al-Qahtani & Al-Harhi, 2020).

Overall, this research is going to address the problem by investigating the phonological awareness among Saudi university students and addressing the need to clarify the relationship between phonological skills and reading ability among Haql college students at the University of Tabuk.

C. Research Objectives and Questions

The main aim of this study is to look at the relationship between Saudi university students' phonological awareness and reading ability. To achieve this overarching goal, the following specific objectives and research questions have been formulated:

(a). Objectives

1. To assess the level of phonological awareness among Saudi university students.
2. To examine the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability among Saudi university students.

(b). Research Questions

1. What is the extent of phonological awareness among Saudi university students?
2. How does phonological awareness relate to reading proficiency among Saudi university students?

First-year students in the languages and translation department at Haql College will be interviewed to address the research questions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This part tries to investigate the connection between phonological awareness and reading ability, provide a summary of pertinent theoretical frameworks and ideas, and concentrate especially on Saudi university students. To add to the

body of current knowledge and highlight possible directions for future research, this review looks at earlier studies and points out research gaps.

Phonological awareness is a term used to describe one of the many linguistic awareness levels that form phonological awareness through the recognition and manipulation of phonemes, syllables, and other phonological units. Melby-Lervåg et al. (2021) and Peterson and Pennington (2020) have proved the importance of phonological awareness in the development of reading and phonological skills as the best predictors of success in reading. Individuals with strong phonological awareness skills tend to exhibit better word recognition, decoding ability, and reading comprehension, while deficits in phonological awareness have been associated with reading difficulties such as dyslexia (Melby-Lervåg et al., 2021).

Several studies have investigated the relationship between phonological awareness and reading skills in different languages and for different types of users. For example, recent research on phonological awareness in English-speaking countries has shown that phonological awareness contributes to reading acquisition (Peterson & Pennington, 2020; Snowling & Hulme, 2020). Other bilingual studies also found that phonological awareness plays an important role in first and second languages in terms of reading acquisition (Bialystok et al., 2017; Duñabeitia et al., 2009).

Understanding this relationship is particularly relevant in the Saudi context, where Arabic is the primary language of instruction and literacy skills are essential for academic achievement. As such, this literature review seeks to bridge the above-mentioned research gap by examining the relationship between phonological awareness and reading proficiency among university students in Saudi Arabia. This review synthesizes the current literature to fill the gaps in the current understanding and tries to offer insights into the uniqueness characterizing the reading development of this special population.

Besides these studies, there are also recent ones in the context of the Arab world. For instance, the study carried out by Al Dahhan et al. (2021) examined the role of phonological awareness in the reading acquisition of children speaking Arabic. Similarly, Al-Azri and Shabani (2020) investigated the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability among Omani students. Other studies of note are by Alqahtani (2021) and Al-Mughales (2020), in which the focus was on phonological awareness interventions and the possible effectiveness of developing reading skills for Arabic-speaking children. A more recent study was conducted by Alrashidi, Ads, and Abou Ghaida (2020) on the development of phonological awareness among young bilingual Arabic-English learners.

However, despite the wealth of research on phonological awareness and reading proficiency, there is a notable gap in the literature concerning Saudi university students. Limited studies have specifically examined the relationship between phonological skills and reading ability within this population. Therefore, this literature review will seek to address this gap by establishing the relationship that exists between phonological awareness and reading proficiency among Saudi university students. The review of the recent literature and the gleaning of gaps in the existing body of knowledge shall give the reader insights into the unique factors that influence the development of reading with this population.

A. *Phonological Awareness*

Phonological awareness is a foundational skill in literacy development; it refers to the ability to detect and manipulate the sounds of a language, including phonemes, syllables, and onset-rime units (Adams, 1990). It covers various levels of awareness, from phonemic awareness (awareness of the single phonemes) to syllable awareness, onset-rime awareness, and phonological manipulation. Research reveals that phonological awareness has been seen as the necessary precursor to success in reading, in that it will help children to develop an understanding of the alphabetic principle, that is, the use of the written letter to represent sounds of speech and decode words in print.

In the context of investigating the relationship between phonological skills and reading proficiency among Saudi university students, phonological awareness serves as a central theoretical framework for understanding the cognitive processes underlying reading acquisition. Arabic, as a highly phonologically transparent language, relies heavily on phonological decoding, making phonological awareness particularly salient in Arabic literacy development (Elbro & Arnbak, 1996). In addition, the phonological process displays group differences, which can be deduced from the nature of studies undertaken to measure the phonological awareness skills among Saudi university students.

A substantial corpus of studies across languages and orthographies has also shown a relation between phonological awareness and reading achievement (Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Melby-Lervåg et al., 2021). Strong phonological awareness skills lead to better word recognition, decoding ability, and reading comprehension. For example, a deficit in phonological awareness has been linked to reading difficulties such as dyslexia (Vellutino et al., 2021). Understanding the role of phonological awareness in reading proficiency among Saudi university students would be important in identifying potential risk factors for reading difficulties and, hence, in designing interventions intended to support their literacy development. Furthermore, phonological awareness represents several skills that may be especially relevant to reading proficiency at the university level. While phonemic awareness is fundamental for decoding written words, syllable awareness and phonological manipulation skills contribute to more advanced reading processes, such as recognizing morphologically complex words and understanding sentence structure (Elbro & Arnbak, 1996). The different dimensions of phonological awareness in Saudi university students would help researchers understand how these competencies interact with other cognitive processes that form part of reading comprehension, such as vocabulary and syntactic processing.

Phonological awareness theory focuses specifically on the ability to detect and manipulate the sounds of language, including phonemes, syllables, and onset-rime units. Therefore, this theory directly relates to assessing the phonological awareness skills of individuals, and its relevance in the study of Saudi university students is drawn. The theory on phonological awareness, moreover, focuses on phonological skills as one of the stages in reading development by examining the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability (Alshaboul et al., 2022; Kibby, 2020). This aligns with the current research objectives of assessing phonological awareness levels and exploring their connection with reading ability among Saudi university students.

B. The Simple View of Reading

The Simple View of Reading is one of the important supporting theoretical frameworks that posits reading comprehension to be a product of two essentials: decoding (word recognition) and linguistic comprehension (understanding the meaning of text) (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). This concept holds that the interaction between these two elements—which is mathematically expressed as a formula—is what leads to effective reading comprehension.

C. Reading Comprehension=Decoding × Linguistic Comprehension

Decoding refers to the ability to accurately recognize and pronounce printed words, relying on phonological skills to translate graphemes (letters) into phonemes (speech sounds). Linguistic comprehension is an understanding of what words, sentences, and paragraphs mean; it draws from vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness, and background knowledge. Also, language comprehension involves not only decoding but also vocabulary and syntax understanding, among other cognitive processes. A person might be good at decoding but poor at comprehension due to weak linguistic comprehension skills. This means that he will indeed fail to master the appropriate comprehension skills (Perfetti et al., 2005). Therefore, understanding the interplay between phonological skills and linguistic comprehension is essential for comprehensively assessing reading proficiency among Saudi university students.

D. Connectionist Model

The Connectionist Model, a prominent theoretical framework in cognitive psychology, posits reading as an interactive process involving the simultaneous activation of interconnected cognitive units, such as phonological, orthographic, and semantic processing units (Seidenberg & McClelland, 2019). Consequently, this model states that reading proficiency is a product of the dynamic interactivity among those units, wherein bidirectional information processing goes on concurrently. While the model of connectionism has added a lot to the understanding of the processes going on during reading, it is not completely congruent with the objectives of this study, which are to determine the level of phonological awareness in Saudi university students and its relation to reading ability.

First, the Connectionist Model centers much more on the neural and computational mechanisms of reading than on independent cognitive skills, such as phonological awareness, which might be related to the activity underpinning some or other neural areas. Phonological awareness is the ability to consciously perceive and reflect on the sound structure of language, an ability separable from the neural activations and computations modeled by the Connectionist model. As a result, the model does not offer the explicit focus that is necessary to inquire about the phonological awareness skills among Saudi university students.

Furthermore, though the Connectionist Model highlights that the reading processes are interactive in nature, it does not explicitly account for phonological awareness as a stand-alone capacity. Phonological awareness is thus a precursor skill that assists in reading ability because the child can perceive and process phonemes, syllables, and other elements of oral language. However, the Connectionist Model does not provide a framework for assessing or examining the role of phonological awareness in reading ability.

E. The English Phonological Awareness Among Arab Students

Phonological awareness, a crucial aspect of language acquisition, involves recognizing and manipulating sound structures in spoken language. For Arab students learning English, this skill can be particularly challenging due to the phonological differences between Arabic and English. Recent studies from 2019 to 2024 have explored various aspects of English phonological awareness among Arab students, shedding light on their specific challenges and strategies to enhance their proficiency. A study by Al-Mansouri and Al-Khaldi (2020) found that Arab students often struggle with English phonemes that do not exist in Arabic, such as the /p/ and /v/ sounds. These difficulties stem from the absence of certain sounds in the Arabic phonological inventory, leading to substitution errors and affecting their overall phonological awareness. The researchers emphasized the importance of explicit phonological instruction in helping students differentiate and produce these unfamiliar sounds.

Similarly, Alshaboul et al. (2021) examined the impact of phonological awareness training on Arab students' reading skills in English. Their findings indicated that targeted interventions focusing on phoneme segmentation and blending significantly improved students' reading fluency and accuracy. The study highlighted the need for incorporating phonological awareness activities into the English language curriculum to support Arab learners.

Another significant contribution to the field was made by Zayed and Hamad (2022), who investigated the role of first language (L1) interference in phonological awareness among Arab students. They observed that students often transferred phonological rules from Arabic to English, leading to systematic errors. For instance, the tendency to de-

emphasize short vowels in Arabic influenced their pronunciation of English words, resulting in incorrect stress patterns and syllable structures. The study suggested that raising students' awareness of these L1 influences could help mitigate their negative impact on English phonological awareness.

In addition to instructional strategies, the influence of age and exposure to English was explored by Al-Harbi and Alotaibi (2023). Their research demonstrated that younger students and those with more extensive exposure to English media exhibited higher levels of phonological awareness. This underscores the importance of early and sustained exposure to English in enhancing phonological skills among Arab learners.

Furthermore, a recent meta-analysis by Saleh et al. (2024) synthesized findings from multiple studies on phonological awareness among Arab students. The analysis confirmed that phonological awareness is a strong predictor of reading success in English and emphasized the critical role of early intervention. It also identified best practices for phonological instruction, such as using multimedia resources and interactive activities to engage students and reinforce their learning.

In conclusion, recent studies highlight the significant challenges Arab students face in developing English phonological awareness due to phonological differences between Arabic and English. However, targeted instructional strategies, awareness of L1 interference, and early exposure to English can significantly enhance their phonological skills. Educators should consider these factors to support Arab students in achieving better phonological awareness and overall language proficiency in English.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Design and Approach*

This study adopts a qualitative thematic analysis design to explore the relationship between phonological awareness and reading proficiency and also to assess the real level of phonological awareness among male students in the first year of the Languages and Translation Department at Haql College. Qualitative thematic analysis offers a systematic approach to identifying patterns, themes, and meanings within qualitative data, allowing for a rich and nuanced understanding of participants' experiences and perspectives.

B. *Participants/Sample Selection*

The participants in this study comprise 20 male students enrolled in the first year of the Languages and Translation Department at Haql College. The respondents who were selected were 18 to 20 years old. The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents based on the relevance of the study's objectives and the viewpoints of the phenomenon under study.

C. *Data Collection Methods and Instruments*

The data collection for this study will be carried out using the semi-structured group interview method with several participants from the languages and translations department at Haql College. In this study, the researcher considered 4 groups; each group contains 5 students, therefore making the participants relatively represented in the department. Group interviewing creates an interactive environment within which discussants can argue, perceive things, and build on each other's ideas. In a way, the depth and breadth of the data obtained are enriched. The semi-structured nature of the interviews will allow flexibility in questioning while ensuring that key topics relevant to the research objectives are covered. The interview protocol will be based on predetermined questions meant to explore the experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of the participants toward phonological awareness and its relation to their reading proficiency. This may involve questions such as inquiry of the awareness of the subjects about phonological sounds; inquiry of their reading habits; possible problems in reading, and their perceptions about the importance of awareness of phonological sounds in reading.

Conducting group interviews with five participants in each group offers several advantages. It will enhance peer-to-peer communication and collaboration, which can eventually unlock new views and thoughts. It will also delve into the interactions and shared experiences within the group so that collective perceptions that may be in the department can be pinpointed.

D. *Data Analysis*

Data analysis will pass through a rigorous process informed by the principles of thematic analysis. The following six phases are proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), as guidance in the analysis:

1. Familiarization with the data: The interview transcripts will be read and re-read so that the data may be known, and initial impressions noted.
2. Generating initial codes: The data and the relevant segments therein will be systematically coded in a way that identifies the principal concepts, ideas, or patterns.
3. Searching for themes: By linking related codes to one theme and exploring relationships among codes, the codes will be put into potential themes.
4. Review themes: The researcher reviews the themes making sure that they really do arise from the primary data, an iterative process of matching themes to the primary data.

5. Defining and naming themes: Clearly define what themes are there and name them in a way that the naming definition captures the content of the themes.
6. Report write-up: The final report write-up will be done with illustrative quotations from participants to support the themes and help in interpretation.

By following this systematic approach, the study aims to derive meaningful insights into the relationship between phonological awareness and reading proficiency among male students in the Languages and Translation Department at Haql College.

IV. FINDINGS

This section involves the presentation of findings from group interviews with male first-year students from the Languages and Translation Department at Haql College and an analysis of it. The research focused on how the participants perceived phonological sounds, reading habits and practices, and how they viewed phonological skills concerning reading ability.

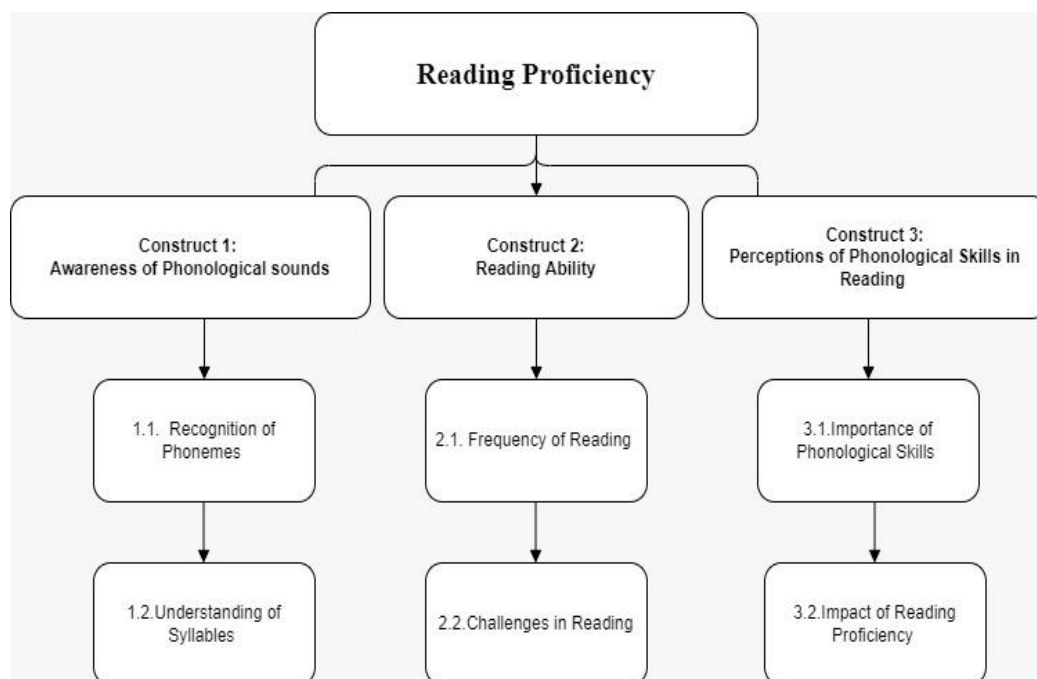


Figure 1. Main Themes and Sub-Themes for Students' Interview

Theme 1: Awareness of Phonological Sounds

Subtheme 1.1: Recognition of Phonemes

From the group discussions, it was evident that some of the respondents couldn't distinguish and identify the phonological sounds, especially with the difficulty with specific sounds. For instance, Group 1 Participant 3 stated, "I find it challenging to pronounce words with the /p/ sound because we don't have this sound in Arabic." Participant 1 stated, "The /v/ sound is difficult for me. I often confuse it with the /f/ sound because they seem very similar.

"Sometimes, I use Arabic phonemes when speaking English, like saying /b/ instead of /p/." (P2/G5). While another student stated, "In Arabic, we don't have the /ŋ/ sound, so I struggle with words like 'sing' and 'song.'" (P3/G3).

These responses from different students align with a study by Zayed and Hamad (2022), where L1 interference also plays a crucial role, with students transferring phonological rules from Arabic to English, resulting in systematic errors such as the de-emphasis of short vowels.

Due to the challenges of differentiation in some English sounds, some of the participants claimed, "When I hear words like 'ship' and 'sheep,' they sound very similar to me." (P1/G4). Also, one student added, "I often confuse the /i/ and /i:/ sounds, like in 'bit' and 'beat.'" (P4/G4)

Group 3 participant 1 stated, "We face difficulties in our reading skills, and we can't consider ourselves proficient readers because we have low awareness of English phonological sounds, which makes us fail to combine sounds or phonemes together".

Most of the participants in this research have clear challenges and low awareness of phonological sound due to multiple reasons, such as difficulty with specific sounds, challenges in differentiation, L1 interference, and recognition of phonological patterns. Previous studies have shown that Arabic-speaking students often struggle with specific English phonemes absent in Arabic, such as /p/ and /v/, leading to substitution errors and pronunciation difficulties (Al-

Mansouri & Al-Khaldi, 2020). Additionally, they face challenges in differentiating between sounds like /ɪ/ and /i:/, a difficulty stemming from the limited vowel distinctions in Arabic compared to English (Alshaboul et al., 2021).

Subtheme 1.2: Understanding of Syllables

Most of the participants in this research have clear challenges and low awareness of phonological sound due to their low knowledge and skills of understanding English syllables through some factors such as misunderstanding of the basic syllables, difficulty with syllable division, recognition of syllable stress, and the impact of L1 interference. This aligns with the participant responses, such as when (P3/G4) says, "I know that syllables are the beats in a word, but sometimes I struggle to count them in English words.

"While (P1/G3) claimed, I often have trouble dividing long English words into syllables. For example, I'm not sure where to split 'comfortable' or 'different.'"

In terms of multisyllabic words, some of the participants face challenges in breaking them into different syllables and recognizing syllable stress, like:

(P4/G5), who claimed, "Breaking down words into syllables is hard for me, especially when there are many letters.

"(P4/G4) claimed, "It's challenging to know which syllable to stress in a word. I get confused with words like 'present' and 'present,' depending on if it's a noun or a verb."

Theme 2: Reading Habits and Practices

Subtheme 2.1: Frequency of Reading

In terms of reading habits, their responses varied: some students appeared to have a steady reading habit, while others said they did not read so often. However, they all agreed to the idea of the importance attributed to reading, often for increasing reading proficiency, both academically and recreationally.

(P1/G4) added, "We try to incorporate reading into our daily routines, whether it's reading newspapers for current events or novels for enjoyment." In contrast, participants from group one claimed, "We don't read as much as we'd like to because it takes a lot of time and effort to understand the pronunciation and meaning of new words."

Increasing the reading habit among the students could improve their reading skills, but still, due to their low awareness of phonological sound and recognition of English phonemes, they don't read frequently.

Hence, **all the participants from Group 2 stated**, "We want to read more frequently, but sometimes we find it hard to understand the text and combine the sounds in multisyllabic words, and our poor reading skills make us read less frequently."

Frequent reading enhances reading proficiency among students by expanding vocabulary, improving comprehension, and reinforcing phonological skills (Sonnenschein, Stapleton, & Benson, 2020). Regular exposure to diverse texts helps learners grasp language nuances and develop fluency, ultimately boosting overall reading competence. In this regard, participants from different groups added, "Reading regularly has improved my pronunciation and helped me recognize different phonological patterns in English. **While participants from Group 2 claimed**, "When we read more frequently, we notice that our understanding of English sounds and syllable patterns gets better."

Subtheme 2.2: Challenges in Reading

Arabic-speaking students encounter various challenges in acquiring proficiency in English reading skills, including limited awareness of English phonology, infrequent engagement in reading practices, and difficulties in comprehending and parsing multisyllabic words in the English language (Al-Mansouri & Al-Khaldi, 2020; Alshaboul et al., 2021). These obstacles hinder their ability to effectively decode and comprehend English texts, impacting their overall reading competence. Despite the fact that they read, they struggle with reading, especially when dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary or complex texts. In academics, most participants find it hard to understand and define what the terminologies used in their major fields mean.

P4/G5 added opined, "Reading academic articles can be daunting, especially with technical jargon. We often need to pause and look up unfamiliar words to grasp the content fully."

P1/G1 added, "I find it hard to pronounce some English words correctly, especially those with sounds that don't exist in Arabic, like /θ/ and /ð/.

Also, P1/G2 added claimed, "Incorrect pronunciation makes it difficult to understand the meaning of sentences and paragraphs." Phonological awareness is fundamental for enhancing reading abilities among Arab students, impacting their capacity to decode words and recognize pronunciation patterns in English (Alshaboul et al., 2021). This awareness plays a pivotal role in their overall reading skill development and comprehension.

P2/G1 added, "Recognizing syllables and stress patterns in English words is challenging for me." In the same line, participant 5 from group 4 added,

Theme 3: Perceptions of Phonological Skills in Reading

Subtheme 3.1: Importance of Phonological Skills

The participants in this research realized that phonological skills are the greatest help in recognizing what is written and that phonology helps in reading smoothly and understanding any written text. They cited the relationship that exists between phonological skills and pronunciation accuracy, which is important for reading ability.

P5/G4 remarked, "Having strong phonological skills that aid in proper pronunciation will enhance our overall reading ability." All the participants in **group 4 agreed** on the importance of phonological skills and their impact on their reading ability.

P1/G3 added, *"Understanding phonological skills helps me recognize how to pronounce unfamiliar words in English."* Also, all the participants in Group 1 added, *"Phonological skills are important because they help us sound more natural when speaking and improve our reading and listening comprehension."*

Phonological skills are essential for decoding words during reading, enabling individuals to break down words into their component sounds and recognize familiar patterns, which enhances overall reading comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000). These skills are crucial for accurately pronouncing and understanding words encountered in written text. In this regard, all **the participants in Group 2** added, *"Phonological skills are essential for decoding words while reading."*

P5/G1 added, *"Mastering phonological skills helps us break down complex words into smaller parts, making it easier to understand and read texts."*

Subtheme 3.2: Impact on Reading Proficiency

Besides, participants reported that they do have less or poor phonological awareness, but mastering and knowing this skill could help them improve their reading ability, which could be through knowing word recognition, enhancing reading fluency, increasing vocabulary understanding, and improving their pronunciation. The participants in this research shared examples to show how phonological awareness or skills would help them in the various tasks of reading or understanding a language text.

P2/G1 said, *"Knowing phonological sounds will make decoding of words easy, so I will understand what I'm reading and can memorize better the material I read."* **All the participants in Group 1** added, *"Developing phonological awareness has made us faster readers."*

Another participant in group 5 added, *"Developing phonological awareness will make us faster readers."* **While all the participants in group 4** added, *"Knowing phonological patterns will help us to read and spell words correctly"*.

It is evident from participant responses that there is a clear relationship between awareness of phonological skills and reading ability among the participants in this research. Understanding phonological skills enables more accurate word recognition and pronunciation, significantly enhancing overall reading proficiency among Arabic-speaking students majoring in English.

V. DISCUSSION

This part discusses the findings reported in Part Four to answer the research questions. In general, low awareness of phonological sounds affected students' reading ability and proficiency. The analysis determined that students in the university college of Haql who major in English have clear challenges and low awareness of phonological sound due to multiple reasons such as difficulty with specific sounds, challenges in differentiation, L1 interference, and recognition of phonological patterns.

The research questions sought to assess the level of phonological awareness and examine the relationship between phonological awareness among Saudi university students. These questions are as follows:

1. What is the extent of phonological awareness among Saudi university students?
2. How does phonological awareness relate to reading proficiency among Saudi university students?

Phonological awareness is considered a critical skill in predicting the development of reading across diverse linguistic settings. Participants in this research exhibit a significant lack of phonological awareness, specifically in their ability to recognize and articulate phonemes, which has a substantial impact on their reading proficiency. For example, participants in Group 1 struggle with phonemes like /p/ and /v/, which are absent or conflated with similar Arabic sounds (/b/ and /f/, respectively). Similarly, some participants acknowledge using Arabic phonemes inadvertently when speaking English, such as substituting /b/ for /p/.

In addition, participants in Group 3 face challenges with English sounds like /ŋ/, which are not present in Arabic phonology, affecting their pronunciation of words like 'sing' and 'song'. These findings are consistent with existing literature that underscores how deficiencies in phonological awareness among Arabic-speaking learners can hinder their acquisition of English language skills (Al-Mansouri & Al-Khaldi, 2020; Alshaboul et al., 2021). Such observations underscore the necessity for targeted educational strategies aimed at bolstering phonological proficiency to enhance overall English reading competence.

On the other hand, understanding syllables is crucial for developing robust phonological awareness, which significantly influences students' reading proficiency. However, this study reveals that many participants face considerable challenges and demonstrate low awareness of phonological sounds due to difficulties with English syllables. These challenges include struggles with basic syllable concepts, accurate division of complex words into syllables, recognizing syllable stress patterns, and dealing with interference from their native language (L1). For example, Group 3 participant 4 acknowledges understanding syllables as the rhythmic beats in words but struggles with counting them accurately in English. Similarly, participant 1 mentions difficulty in dividing long English words such as 'comfortable' or 'different' into syllables.

These findings align with broader research indicating that deficiencies in syllable awareness among learners can significantly hinder their phonological and reading skills (Al-Mansouri & Al-Khaldi, 2020; Alshaboul et al., 2021). Studies consistently emphasize the pivotal role of syllabic knowledge in enhancing phonological processing abilities, which are critical for effective decoding and comprehension in reading (Ehri, 2004; Wagner & Torgesen, 1987).

Therefore, addressing these challenges through targeted instructional strategies is essential for improving overall language proficiency and reading competence among Arabic-speaking English learners.

These insights are corroborated by numerous studies emphasizing the critical link between phonological skills and reading proficiency. For example, research by Ehri (2004) highlights how phonological awareness supports word decoding and comprehension. Similarly, studies by Wagner and Torgesen (1987) underscore the foundational role of phonological processing abilities in reading acquisition. Therefore, fostering robust phonological skills through targeted educational strategies is essential for enhancing language proficiency and overall reading competence among students. This also augments the current corpus of evidence and establishes the importance of the prediction of reading by various phonological skills, such as phonemic awareness and syllable activity recognition. Indubitably, such support from the previous body of research on phonological awareness provides a basis for asserting that the current findings are consistent with existing theoretical and empirical work. This makes it possible to eventually delve into a richer discussion of the applicability of phonological awareness theory in the explanation of the reading development of Saudi university students.

Several recent studies have therefore continued to explore the link between phonological awareness and reading competence in university-level Arabic-speaking students. For instance, Al-Kharusi et al. (2021) presented a study that showed that Omani University students have a similar trend in the development of phonological awareness and orthographic awareness. The current study also has findings like the study conducted by Al-Kharusi et al. (2021) that phonological awareness is pivotal in the reading development of students who use Arabic. In addition, Al-Harthy et al. (2022) further studied the effect of an intervention for phonology on the attainment of reading in Saudi university students, and they found that phonological awareness had a positive impact after the intervention in relation to the reading skills by significantly boosting the decoding and recognition of words among the learners. The findings of this study support the effectiveness of using phonological awareness for improving reading skills, supporting the findings of Al-Harthy and colleagues (2022).

By comparing recent studies, the present findings contribute to our understanding of phonological awareness and its implications for reading instruction in Arabic contexts. The phonological awareness theory in the data analysis provided a proper framework for the conclusion of the relationship between phonological awareness and reading competence among Saudi male students. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this study contributes to our understanding of phonological awareness and its implications for reading ability.

The professional development programs must focus on the implementation of phonological awareness in the curriculum. After proper training and orientation through these programs, the teachers will be able to offer quality reading instruction to the students by enhancing their phonological awareness.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between phonological awareness and reading ability among Saudi male students at Haql College. The results extracted from the qualitative thematic analysis evidenced that participants presented robust knowledge of phonology, reinforcing the significance of phonological awareness in reading development. Again, these findings emphasized that the theory of phonological awareness is useful worldwide. Going further, the role of phonological awareness should be recognized by both the teacher and the policymaker with a keen interest. Educational institutions, therefore, need to instill activities of phonological awareness into the curricula of language teaching in their institutions as one way of advancing the reading development among the Arabic-speaking students. These activities should focus on phonological awareness, letter recognition, and other phonological skills that are important for developing proficiency in reading.

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The Relationship Between Language Learning Aptitude Beliefs and English Achievement in Students of SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi Manado

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Abstract—This research aimed to determine the level of students' aptitude beliefs and English achievement in learning. The research also examined the correlation between language learning aptitude beliefs and students' English achievement. A quantitative design was adopted, and Horwitz's (1987) questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The population comprises 86 Grade XI students from a private school in Airmadidi, North Sulawesi, all in Grade XI. The result showed that students' aptitude beliefs were high and English achievement was reasonable. Furthermore, there was no correlation between language learning aptitude beliefs and students' English achievement.

Index Terms—aptitude beliefs, students' achievement, language learning, self-management

I. INTRODUCTION

English is widely spoken globally as a first, second, or foreign language, making it one of the most commonly used worldwide (Ilyosovna, 2020; Mardiana et al., 2023). The English language is common, enabling individuals to adopt the language to obtain an international personality (Reddy, 2016; Anggrawan et al., 2019). Many individuals research languages for various purposes, such as facilitating international travel, securing employment opportunities, and making friends from foreign countries. According to previous studies, language is a communication tool that attributes internal motives, intentions, objectives, and life plans (Kuswanty et al., 2023; Kaharuddin et al., 2024). Due to its importance, English has also gained popularity worldwide, including in Indonesia. However, in learning English, students often need help with several obstacles, such as the inability to use proper pronunciation, vocabulary selection, and good grammar (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). These obstacles are commonly caused by several factors, such as intelligence, aptitude, personality, motivation, attitudes, learning preferences, beliefs, and age (Arafah et al., 2020; Kaharuddin et al., 2021; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023b). Therefore, learning English is essential for achieving mastery in today's globalized world (Arafah et al., 2024).

Previous studies show that students' beliefs about language learning can majorly impact achievement in class. Moreover, in acquiring a foreign language, the influence of each belief is significantly significant because of the ability

to change the learning direction (Iswati, 2019; Kaharuddin et al., 2023). Different language learners are universally believed to have several methods of learning language (Hasyim et al., 2023). Therefore, in language learning, beliefs are seen as an individual variable different from abilities and trait-like tendencies (Ellis, 2008; Baa et al., 2023). Beliefs affect motivation, attitude, achievement, proficiency, anxiety, success, behaviour, and learning strategy used for learning language (Hasjim et al., 2020). Any anxiety or problems frequently growing when learning a language can automatically be overcome when students have advanced beliefs (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022; Arnawa & Arafah, 2023). Beliefs significantly influence an individual's success in learning a language different from their mother tongue (Yulianti et al., 2022; Yudith et al., 2023).

An essential component of language beliefs is language learning aptitude. In this context, language learning aptitude is the ability that enables some learners to acquire new language material more quickly and with greater ease than others (Dörnyei, 2014; Asri et al., 2023). Aptitude reflects a prediction for proficiency and a potential acquisition rate by older learners. The assurance of this prediction under optimal conditions depends on the quality of instruction, opportunity, and motivation (Carol, 1981; Asriyanti et al., 2022).

Achievement is the tangible outcome of an individual's dedicated and concerted efforts (Iksora et al., 2022; Arafah et al., 2023c). Achievements can be categorized into two kinds, namely success and failure (Arifin et al., 2022; Halil et al., 2024). When students succeed, consistent motivation in learning increases (Arafah et al., 2021). As a foreign language, English can be challenging to learn due to its unique pronunciation, but this difficulty does not necessarily hinder the learner's ability to become proficient in speaking English (Arafah et al., 2020; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023a). Success in learning and mastering language depends on students' dedication, consistent practice, and commitment. The result will only be satisfactory when activities are carried out with seriousness and discipline (Kaharuddin et al., 2022; Hasyim & Arafah, 2023a). Learning achievement in a subject matter is influenced by factors from both students and the environment, and a positive self-concept can generate the correct energy within an individual (Hasyim et al., 2020; Fadillah et al., 2022). According to previous studies, students must be able to change their ways of learning and mindsets to achieve better outcomes (Dewi & Rakhmawati, 2021; Arafah et al., 2023c). Therefore, this research examined the correlation between students' beliefs and English achievement. The study also determined the level of students' learning aptitude beliefs and English achievement.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Language Learning Beliefs*

Beliefs are an individual's opinions while learning the language (Sunardi et al., 2018; Suhadi et al., 2022). Horwitz (1987) defined beliefs as an individual's opinion about language learning. According to Nikitina and Furuoka (2006), language learning beliefs are context-specific, showing different perspectives from cultures. Horwitz (1987) stated that language learners' beliefs are only sometimes obvious or well-considered. Consequently, each learner has a unique learning philosophy or beliefs concerning the nature and acquisition of language (Abraham & Vann, 1987; Sunyoto et al., 2022). According to Saminy and Lee (1997), students with higher grades had greater confidence in learning foreign languages and were more eager to practice with native speakers.

Based on these perceptions, beliefs about language learning cannot be separated from the actual learning process (Kaharuddin, 2022; Manugeren et al., 2023). Furthermore, learners' actions may be positive or negative depending on the perception and understanding of learning a language. Research has proposed several definitions of beliefs regarding language acquisition to discern students' preconceptions or ideas about various aspects of language learning. Belief aspects are then believed to be brought into the language learning process (Banya & Cheng, 1997; Arafah & Hasyim, 2019).

Tognimi (2000) defined beliefs as personal theories, presumptions, or general philosophies based on or evolved from past experiences. Beliefs are also the entirety of language learners' beliefs and understanding regarding their language acquisition process (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005; Arafah & Hasyim, 2023b). Considering these definitions, it can be deduced that these beliefs are connected to students' presumptions, ideas, opinions, thinking, understanding, philosophy, and ideology (Mutmainnah et al., 2022; Arafah et al., 2023b). Horwitz (1987) grouped beliefs into five categories: foreign language aptitude, learning difficulty, nature, strategies, motivations, and expectations. In this research, only one category was used: foreign language aptitude.

B. *Foreign Language Aptitude*

The prevailing beliefs suggest that specific individuals exhibit a distinct potential for mastering a foreign language, with this linguistic talent closely related to the capacity to learn the language (Takwa et al., 2022a). Horwitz (1987) defined language aptitude as the psychological formulation behind the institution that specific individuals have a gift for additional language learning while others seem to struggle. In other words, individuals may have different ideas or perceptions in some situations. For instance, age and gender differences can affect an individual's language learning (Takwa et al., 2022b; Usman et al., 2024). Viburphol (2004) stated that foreign language aptitude was discussed in a few research, such as Horwitz (1987). The research found that foreign language aptitude adversely affected learners' language learning. Furthermore, some individuals may question their language learning capabilities, assuming that learning a foreign language is an innate ability that cannot be improved (Siwi et al., 2022; Yudith et al., 2004).

According to Horwitz (1987), learning aptitude beliefs can be observed in various ways, namely:

- (1) Children are perceived to have an easier time learning a foreign language than adults.
- (2) Certain language is thought to be easier to learn.
- (3) Guessing is acceptable when encountering unfamiliar words in a foreign language.
- (4) There are beliefs that women excel over men in foreign language acquisition.
- (5) Some individuals have a unique, innate ability that helps in learning a foreign language.
- (6) Those who already speak a foreign language are considered to have an advantage in learning another one.
- (7) Learning a foreign language in its native country is seen as preferable for optimal results.
- (8) There is confidence in memorizing new English vocabulary quickly.
- (9) Confidence exists in the ability to grasp English grammar quickly.
- (10) Rapid English speaking proficiency development is likely achievable.
- (11) Effortless comprehension of English words when listening is perceived as possible.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Design

This research used a quantitative and qualitative approach, which was carried out by collecting numerical data and then analyzing them using specific statistical methods to answer the questions in this study, as suggested in Apuke (2017). The numerical data are then interpreted and described to give meaning and provide more in-depth information (Abidin & Kaharuddin, 2021). For this reason, this study adopted descriptive and correlational methods. Atmowardoyo (2018) defined the descriptive method as a research method that describes current phenomena accurately. A descriptive method was used to determine the level of English language learning beliefs and achievement. Furthermore, the statistical correlation method was used to determine the relationship between students' interest and speaking skills in learning English. A correlational research design aimed at determining the relationship between two variables (Afiah et al., 2022).

B. Research Subject, Period, and Location

The respondents of this research were 136 students from SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi enrolled in the 2022/2023 academic year. These respondents are considered teenagers, and Youth Access (2017) stated that 16 and 17 years old are the ages to transition into adulthood. Therefore, students of XI IPA and IPS classes were chosen because they are in the transition period between teenagers and adults. Hurlock (1990) grouped teenagers into two, namely ages 11 - 16 and 16 to 18 years, referred to as "early" and the end" categories of teenager age, respectively. The XI IPA and IPS students belong to the category of 'the end of teenager age'.

The respondents were categorized into four groups, designated as IPA for science classes and IPS for social classes: XI IPA 1, comprising 30 students; XI IPA 2, comprising 30 students; XI IPA 3, comprising 28 students; XI IPA 4, comprising 30 students; and XI IPS, comprising 18 students. XI IPA 4 was excluded as it had been used for the preliminary research conducted on March 20, 2023.

A large number of respondents is better in this research because, according to Delice (2010), the respondents should be more than 50 people. Kerlinger and Lee (2000) stated that statistical error would be negligible with an extensive total of samples.

C. Data Collection Method

This research used convenience sampling, which Etikan et al. (2016) state is Haphazard Sampling or Accidental. In this type of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling, members of the target population are included when they satisfy specific practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographic proximity, availability at a specific time, and willingness to participate (Arafah et al., 2023a; Takwa et al., 2024). In addition, available students filled out the administered questionnaire. According to Ary et al. (2010), convenience sampling is the selection of a sample based on accessibility, availability, timing, or location. In addition, the sampling method was adopted because it facilitated data collection.

D. Research Instrument

The instrument used in this research was a questionnaire to determine students' language learning aptitude. Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) questionnaire was adapted from Horwitz (1987). The instrument was translated into Indonesian and validated by three English lecturers.

BALLI contains 34 items to assess language learning beliefs, but only nine about foreign language aptitude were adopted based on the research title. The research added five items related to the theory, resulting in 14. After the pilot research was conducted, there were invalid items, which included 2, 6, 9, and 12. Ten items divided into two parts were used for the actual research. The first part is the question that did not need scale to measure, which was item number 1. The second part is the question that used Likert-Scale to measure items number 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. This questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, namely Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Undecided (3), Disagree (4), and Strongly Disagree (5).

E. Interpretation of the Data

The data were analyzed using statistical tools, such as the mean score, to determine the correlation between Language Learning Beliefs and students' English achievement. The interpretation of the data was based on the Likert Scale (Joshi et al., 2015) as follows:

1. Language learning aptitude beliefs
4.50 – 5.00 Very High
3.50 – 4.49 High
2.50 – 3.49 Medium
1.01– 2.49 Low
1.00– 1.49 Very Low
2. The grading system of Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Permendikbud) Tahun 2013 No.81A was used to determine students' English achievement as follows:

TABLE 1
GRADING SYSTEM

Grade	Value Allocation	Verbal Interpretation
A	91.60 – 100.00	Excellent
A-	83.26 – 91.50	Very Good
B+	75.10 – 83.25	Good
B	66.51 -75.00	Good
B-	58.26 – 66.50	Average
C+	50.10 – 58.25	Average
C	41.60 – 50.00	Passed
C-	33.26 – 41.50	Failed
D+	25.10 – 33.25	Failed
D	0 – 25.00	Failed

This research used .05 as the standard of significance level. McLeod (2019) reported that a p-value lower than .05 implies a statistically significant result. A positive correlation is when both variables move in the same direction, while a negative correlation is movement in the opposite direction (Nickolas, 2020).

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Question Number 1

What is the level of students' English language learning aptitude beliefs?

The result of research question number 1 was taken from the average value obtained using the Microsoft Excel application. The result showed that the mean score of students' aptitude beliefs was 3.57 (Table 2). Based on the interpretation of the Likert scale, aptitude beliefs in Grade 11 SMA Advent Unklab were **high**. Students have a high ability to learn English.

TABLE 2
MEAN SCORE OF APTITUDE

Total Average
3.57

B. Research Question Number 2

What is the level of students' English achievement?

The second question was used to determine the level of students' English achievement using the mean score.

TABLE 3
MEAN SCORE OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
English Achievement Mid	86	51	100	79.6	9.699
Valid N (listwise)	86				

The result showed that the mean score of students' English achievement was 79.6. Based on the interpretation scale (See Chapter 3), it was categorized as a **good** level with B+ as the achievement score. This was because the mean score was more significant than or equal to 70% based on Minister of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) 2013 No.81A.

C. Research Question Number 3

Correlation between Students' Language Learning Aptitude Beliefs and Students' English Achievement?

The third research question examined the correlation between learning aptitude beliefs and English achievement. The analysis results based on this third research question are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4
CORRELATION BETWEEN APTITUDE BELIEFS AND ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT

		Mid Test	Aptitude Beliefs
Mid Test	Pearson Correlation	1	.078
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.477
	N	86	86
Aptitude Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	.078	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.477	
	N	86	86

Table 4 shows a significance level of 0.477 between learning aptitude beliefs and English achievement. Since $p = .477$, which is greater than .05, the result showed no significant correlation between learning beliefs and English achievement. In other words, the alternative hypothesis was rejected, and the null hypothesis was accepted. This result is inconsistent with the report of Ray, Garavalia, and Murdock (2003), which found a weak correlation between aptitude and achievement.

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, students in grade XI at SMA Advent Unklab Airmadidi had good self-management while learning English, suggesting high aptitude beliefs. This showed that students paid attention in English learning class. These factors helped students achieve a good level of English proficiency. Another result showed that aptitude beliefs had no significant effect on English achievement.

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Trauma Ebbs and Flows in Kopano Matlwa's *Evening Primrose*

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Abstract—In consequence of the suffering endured by their country during the colonial era, South African “Born Free” authors have openly output and published their explicit writings as a socio-political critique of the brutal colonial practices. These dehumanizing, brutal actions have violently emerged along various social axes, including abusive gang-violations, slavery, starvation policies, apartheid, and education deprivation, to regard a few. In theory, these severely malicious practices controversially prone the victim, who has been affected by one of them, to trauma. But they are, as investigated by other researchers, not wholly but partly reflected in Kopano Matlwa's *Evening Primrose*. The current article, purposely, endeavors to affirm the traumatic agonies from which the fiction's central persona has been greatly suffered for a number of reasons, gang-rape being the foremost among them. To itemize trauma-agitational ordeals, the paper will referentially invoke Cathy Caruth's certain correspondent elicitations concerned with trauma and its inveterate memories to draw on. Thus, in the analysis process, the paper will methodologically set out to centralize the scope of its framework on Sigmund Freud's ‘denial’ and also Dominick LaCapra's comprehensive views on ‘acting out,’ sticking to different works by these two theorists in addition to making a reference to Caruth's contributive trauma explorations. This is to conclusively see whether the traumatized characters' memories will continue to be flowed or coped with throughout the foregoing fiction.

Index Terms—*Evening Primrose*, sexual assault, trauma, denial, acting-out

I. INTRODUCTION

In the very recent past, a new wave of intellectual authors has arisen in South African literature. These authors, generally referred to as the “born free” movement of literary thought, initially originated, or were approaching maturity, around the time of the apartheid administration's demise (Winstanley, 2018). Politically speaking, Babou Ngom (2019) finds that these authors have rationally deconstructed the uphill socio-cultural dilemmas that burdened many African indigenous peoples under the ideologies of imperialistic regimes. They have notably thematically framed their writing subjects against the chronological documentation of troubling physical abuse. They have strategically polarized the light of their production literature to such political xenophobic facts in a hopeful attempt to de-cover South Africa's “apartheid,” or as it is commonly known, “institutionalized racism” (Mamadou, 2019, p. 2063). The work in apartheid policies was formally revoked in 1994, as it was symbolically well-known. As a result, the country has been heralded with the establishment of governmental democratic institutions.

Omar M. Abdullah (2020) sees that “there is still, far reaching racial and social discrimination between the blacks and whites from one hand and the blacks themselves from the other hand in Democratic South Africa” (p. 490). These socio-political destabilizations have been sarcastically spotlighted in the outspokenly social genuine critiques of the “born free” party. True, these facts are outside the scope of the research's main goal, but they do, in one crucial way or another, have the smooth possibilities of traumatic perturbations. Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya and Ruzbeh Babae (2014) see that authors believe that it is part of their contributive patriotic duties to highlight these historical disorganizations which underscore their “cultural and political role in a traumatized society” (p. 1825). Assumedly, these aching truths must be willingly read in order for the public “to understand the political and social realities in which I am situated and which will wound me no matter how adamantly I deny it [sic]” (Caruth, 1995, p. 109).

As a “born free” member, Matlwa has narratively thematized parts of these social vices in her gynocritical fictional oeuvre, *Evening Primrose* (2018). Although it was reputedly announced by the publisher that “*Evening Primrose* explores issues of race, gender, and the medical profession with tenderness and urgency” (Quercus, 2018, para. 1), the present paper repairs to considerably reflect traumatic psychological disorders that befall victims numerously.

To express its investigative endeavor, the study is conceptually limited to identify the way a traumatic experience is tried to be denied but is abruptly reacted-out again. As so, it will take advantage of the sufferingly broken down

characters' states of mind after experiencing trauma to see in what demonstrative sense these two concepts are applicable to *Evening Primrose*.

However, Matlwa is a young South African novelist who was brought into the world in 1985, while racial segregation was at its height. Occupationally, she, noticeably, has made a name for herself in the world of literature. Matlwa is a doctor and factionalist all at once. Her writings are extensively tended to sociocultural, racial, political, and most importantly, psychological subject matters. That is why Rowan Hisayo Buchanan writes that "Matlwa's voice is one we need" (qtd. in Quercus, 2018, para. 2). Since beginning her writing career, she has fictionalized three works, including *Coconut* (2007), *Spilt Milk* (2010), and finally, *Evening Primrose* (2018), on the latter of which the current research purposely draws to coin and discuss the idea of its subject.

Evening Primrose is Matlwa's latest trauma fiction. It consecutively follows the traumatic journey of its narrator and main but most psychologically tormented character, Masechaba. In fact, it was first published in 2016 under the title *Period Pain*, but it was then renamed to the current title. According to the publisher's suggestions, this empirical change is to generalize the subjects the novel covers and not to make it understood as a feminist novel (Quercus, 2018). Masechaba dreams of being a helpful and kind doctor, hoping to treat her country's sick people and reduce the rate of frequent cases of death there. She was barbarously gang-raped during the internship. As a result, the effects of trauma have disordered her mental organization and memory until she gives birth to Mpho, the newborn female baby who will not know her real father(s). In repeated attempts to get rid of her seemingly unabated traumatic memories, Masechaba employs Freud's *denial*, a defense mechanism through which a distressed subject automatically reassures themselves that nothing has recently truly happened at all. Nevertheless, she has regrettably failed in doing so, supposedly because of the approach of LaCapra's acting-out that makes Masechaba, periodically, live with the flashback of the incident's outrageous repetitions. Based on these traumatic observations, the idea for the present study was conceptually descended.

Researchably, some researchers, however, have newly covered this work of fiction under different perspectives. For instance, before being titled as *Evening Primrose*, Laura Winstanley, in her "The Re-emergence of South African Nationalism in Kopano Matlwa's *Period Pain*" (2018) has politically viewed this trauma oeuvre as an illustrative critique against "the rise of new nationalism, and the re-emergence of old nationalisms which never fully disappeared" (Winstanley, 2018, p. 56). Critically, she believes that this fictional text was mainly purposely written to highlight global and local apartheid issues, the most prominent amongst which are, xenophobia, anti-African immigrants into European white countries. For Winstanley, the novel, contextually, attempts to dissolve colonial and dictator thoughts generally, that is on the one hand. On the other hand, it seemingly tries to completely open the doors of hopes altogether in face of South African individuals who have too long dreamt of achieving the success "of the rainbow nation – the idea that all ethnicities are welcome in South Africa, stressing the positive aspects of postcolonial nationalism – and the immediate aftermath of apartheid" (Winstanley, 2018, p. 57). However, she concludes her paper by claiming that Matlwa's fiction considers the significant possible strategies of establishing a new South Africa away from the old one that was killed by and suffered from poverty.

Moving seamlessly to the feminist perspective, this novel was examined in relation to other literary texts authored by South African writers. Manifestly, Jessica Murray, in her critical paper entitled "Violence and the Gendered Shaming of Female Bodies and Women's Sexuality" (2019), has counterfactually looked at this trauma narrative through the theoretical scope of feminism, asserting that the general traits of feminist bodies should be celebrated, not ashamed of. Along with the other text(s) the research analytically includes, Murray (2019) finds that Matlwa's aforementioned oeuvre was appropriately created on the purpose of reflecting "how discursive and epistemological constructions of gender create an environment where gender violence becomes the norm rather than an aberration" (p. 1). Eventually, through this socio-feminist article, Murray (2019) believes the real shame is to belittle women for being born with the gifted privilege of congenital PMS-ing. As a conclusion, feminist private traits should be praised by both sexes because they are naturally bestowed upon women.

Again, Omar Mohammed Abdullah has also investigated the work from a trauma perspective. In conceptualizing his "From Trauma to Recovery: Mending Wounds in Kopano Matlwa's *Evening Primrose*" (2020), Abdullah applicably uses LaCapra's *working through* to (rightly) find if Masechaba, Matlwa's traumatized heroine, transcendently recovered from her aching psychological troubles. Similar to the above reviewed works, Abdullah (2020) asserts "[t]he novel discusses trauma as a consequence of political and personal issues" (p. 494). South Africa's sociopolitical upheavals are historically established, and thus, these facts cannot be denied. In consequence of so, these turmoils become presently smoothly exposed through the expressive writings of South African authors, profusely in recent trauma literature and studies. Basing on these chronological facts, Abdullah (2020) has theoretically framed his paper, arguing that "Masechaba the heroine is subjected to traumatic experiences not only for personal reasons but also for public political reasons because of the insecurity in the country" (p. 494). Thus, he is right to claim that Masechaba's trauma was mainly stemmed from the gang-rape she had been bodily and further psychologically affected by. But through her employment of LaCapra's *working through*, Masechaba could strikingly overcome her traumas, using her female newborn, Mpho, as a helpful protector who enables her to live away from the flows of her traumatic memories (Abdullah, 2020). Despite Abdullah's detailed study from a trauma theory perspective, he also failed to explore it through Freud's *denial* or LaCapra's *acting-out*. All the above-reviewed research has researchably overlooked the

narrative's examination through the specific concepts forming the basis of this paper. Nevertheless, this is the claimed gap the current paper strives to analytically fill and demonstrate through its upcoming sections.

II. TRAUMA, DENIAL AND ACTING OUT: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A. Trauma

Due to the obvious rise in phobias and their subsequent impact on the human psyche, trauma has undeniably become a vital subject of research throughout the years, and it is now being explored in a range of aspects all over academic psychological studies. Furthermore, trauma becomes today's debate which re-narrates the world's unforgettable experiences. In this regard, Yahya and Babae (2014) write "[b]y the events such as the Holocaust and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima, trauma became (...) the experience of the second half of the twentieth century" (p. 1826). As a term, trauma was allusively derived from the Greek nomenclature of *traumatikos* (literally "wound" or an existing "physical or sexual abuse"), declares Bessel van der Kolk (2014, p. 159; emphasis added). Nick Mдика Hubert Tembo (2017) adds that term of trauma was first appeared in the late 1800s "through the works of three thinkers: Pierre Janet, Jean-Martin Charcot, and Sigmund Freud" (p. 11). These three expert individuals have developmentally investigated hysteria's causes and its reflected consequences in their own environments (Herman, 1992). However, from a psychological approach, trauma is, as an alluded term, used on a purpose of identifying the dangers of "social and psychological injuries to the mind and spirit" (Mollica, 2009, p. 36). Similarly, Jameel Alghaberi and Sanjay Mukherjee (2022) add that "trauma, either imagined or real, is a phenomenon that abruptly and harmfully affects collective and individual identity" (p. 642). This extensively indicates that trauma fragments and further threatens not only one's psychological regulation or health but also one's sociocultural identity. This concept supports Judith Herman's belief that trauma is about various un-expected incidents that "overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning" (Herman, 1992, p. 33). Again, with certainty of her hypothetical presented point, these witnessed incidents do unmistakably have the ability to harm and "destroy (...) the belief that one can be oneself in relation to others" (Herman, 1992, p. 53). As a result, the victim did survive the experience of trauma, although the permanent influence of trauma dramatically modifies the afflicted patient's cognitive and emotional existence, according to Herman. Likewise, she denounces traumatic situations that typically include life-threatening conditions or bodily personal dignity, or perhaps even a strong interpersonal "encounter with violence and death" (Herman, 1992, p. 44). They expose humankind to the extremes of self-doubt, despondency, insecurity, and horror, eliciting disaster reactions in the sufferer's identity, society, feelings, and flashbacks, which become fragmented as a result. Hence, trauma, according to Herman (1992), "tears apart a complex system of self-protection" (p. 34) that likely operates in an improved manner.

Along with the theorists' explanations, trauma emerged as an important and active discipline of research and literary theory in the last years of the 20th century, whereas a group of theorists proceeded to make adjustments to medical suggestions about precognitive traumatic patterns and adapt these new thoughts to the assessment of written discourse, launching what is still known as literary trauma studies. Yet most importantly, Silvia Pellicer-Ortín (2015) affirms that these studies help one to "discover these wounds in the words provided by the literary texts, as well as in non-literary accounts, dealing with traumatic experiences" (p. 6). Cathy Caruth's *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* (1995), a milestone and consistent source of respect in the formation of trauma empirical studies of critical theory, remains apart from those authors, declares Tom Toremans (2003). This is particularly with regard to her other groundbreaking efforts as a researcher, such as *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (1996). Caruth expresses her assertions in each of these influential works, depending mainly on Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Moses and Monotheism*, and *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, which she influentially reviewed and cited. Her purpose is to broaden literary comprehension via an examination of harrowing traumatic experiences since "literature, like psychoanalysis," she assumedly believes, draws on "the complex relation between knowing and not knowing" (Caruth, 1996, p. 3). Accordingly, Ronald Granofsky (1995) claims that "trauma novel" appears to shed theoretical lights on these phenomenon (p. 11). To elaborate, Caruth (1996) basically initializes by defining trauma in general as "an injury inflicted on a body" (p. 3). Since then, she goes on to more accurately define trauma as an intensive reaction "to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully comprehended at the time of occurrence, but return later in flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena" (1996, p. 91).

B. Anna Freud and Denial

Sigmund Freud initially postulated 'defence mechanisms' towards the ego's real conflict with excruciatingly "painful" facts (Freud, 1953, p. 249). Following that, Anna Freud detailed these adaptive defenses in her seminal work, *The Ego and the Mechanism of Defense* (2018). An injured subject, for Freud (1953), resorts sometimes to "an energetic denial of the ailments of which the patient has complained, or in an assurance that he can do something, or in a command to preform it" (p. 111). To relieve the melancholic impact of a particular traumatic ordeal, the patient accidentally distracts himself with other thoughts or actions just to deny the traumatic event he/she has formerly been affected by. Furthermore, Freud, in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1955), finds that a patient "employs the dream to deny these stimuli" of a memorable grievous experience he or she has had in hopes of depriving "it of its reality" (p. 93). Herewith,

a patient falsifies the truth of the traumatic ailment by viewing it as a temporal dream. Like Freud, Anna Freud (2018) has meaningfully advanced the term, adding “[w]hen we find denial, we know that it is a reaction to external danger” (p. 78). As such, a traumatically victimized subject psycho-mechanically avoid thinking of or remembering the unpleasure and unwelcome stressful atrocities it has encountered before. Thus, she defines this psychological defense mechanism as “the denial of reality” (Freud, 2018, p. 63).

C. Dominick LaCapra and Acting-Out

Dominick LaCapra, in his *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (2014), describes the reliving repetition of trauma recalls as *actin-out*. Besides, he assertively announces that the various reactions of post-traumatic disorders are inseparably gathered to form a futuristic repetition or acting-out the distressful ghost of the agonized “narrator’s confused memories” (LaCapra, 2014, p. 32). In an interview with LaCapra, Amos Goldberg documents that a traumatized individual, sometimes, feels as if he becomes mentally unfastened of trauma, “but it’s especially important with respect to events (or a series of events), that are heavily charged with emotion and value, and that always bring out an implication of the observer in the observed” (LaCapra, 1998, p. 1). So, a victimized observer, advisably, entertains himself a way of a traumatic incident, otherwise, it will timely be flashbacked as long as a victim lives. To this extent, Soumaou Bouacida (2021) theoretically agrees with LaCapra’s elaborations on a traumatic memory by suggesting “that the effects of trauma may extend beyond the immediate victims” (p. 400). This implies that trauma (as an event) has futuristic consequences that may not only befall one at the time of the event but may also perpetually extend to the rest of one’s life. Nevertheless, it can practically be avoided by employing “what LaCapra describes as “empathic unsettlement” (Fernandez, 2019, p. 88). Empathic unrest necessitates a cognitive, self-reflective separation from prior personal encounters so that one can hopefully counteract the harmful impacts of obsessively reproducing (acting out) various historical troubles currently. This pivotal self-reflective displacement prevents unlimited verification with cause and consequence, allowing for new normative reactions in the “now with openings for the future” (LaCapra, 2014, p. 22). Another strategic means for transcending trauma and its memories is the narrative of an incident’s details to others. In investigating the concept, Kate Schick (2011) finds that acting-out “also prepares the way for a narrative reconstruction of what has happened; a reconstruction that should be communicated to those who did not experience the trauma(s) in order to facilitate reflection on accepted social practices” (p. 13). Thus, as a sum, acting-out is a repeatedly reliving narrative process of trauma that has befallen a victim before. Through narrative, LaCapra (1998) believes that a patient, to some extent, can diminish the severity of trauma impact that was brought about him/her.

Based on Caruth’s captions concerned with trauma (as a theory), as well as Freud and Anna’s concept of denial and LaCapra’s psycho-mental process of acting out, the framework/idea of the present paper was theoretically formulated. The study will investigate the selected oeuvre under trauma perspective to see how trauma befalls the victimized character/s after experiencing gang-rape accidents. It is also to demonstrate how the ebb of trauma memories is sometimes unconsciously declined when the sufferers turn on the key of Freud and Anna’s denial with the intention of falsifying the actualities of the heinous accidents they have endured. Finally, it is, however, to conceivably identify the abrupt flows of trauma ordeals that are intolerably re-acted out to fill the injured characters’ brains with their depressive memories.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Trauma Representation Through Matlwa’s *Evening Primrose*

This section is presented on the chief purpose of showing trauma through the words and deeds of the unfairly most traumatized figure, Masechaba. In the initial part of the current study, it is said that sexual assaults the key reasons for traumatic occurrences. Profoundly, Allen (2005) argues “[s]exual trauma, such as rape, interferes more directly with sexual arousal and pleasure” (p. 148). Hence, it is important to have in mind that trauma is not only experienced because of war veterans or the horrors of the Holocaust, but also by “a wide variety of other experiences, such as rape, child abuse auto and industrial accidents, and so on” (Caruth, 1996, p. 58).

After all, the debatable matter seems clear that rape is one of the most dangerous traumatic causes. Rape destroys the victim’s memory, and it will “repeatedly” happen “like a waking memory” despite being a long time ago after the experience (Caruth, 1995, p. 152). However, it is too sad to say that Masechaba, the most actively appeared and traumatically suffered character throughout Matlwa’s fiction, *Evening Primrose*, was savagely violated by three abusive raptures, who brought about her psychological dilemmas till her childbirth (Abdullah, 2020, p. 494).

Masechaba, the narrator of novel, opens the third part of her story with a short quote from *Jeremiah*. By doing so, Matlwa gives a pragmatic sign that Masechaba has undoubtedly been traumatized. The cited words, representatively, describe Masechaba’s state of heartbreak:

I say to myself, I will not mention His name, I will speak in His name no more. But then, it becomes like a fire burning in my heart, imprisoned in my bones. I grow weary holding it in, I cannot endure it. (Matlwa, 2018, p. 52)

In terms of language, trauma disorganizes the human psyche, making some extended traumatic experiences unforgettable even though the victim is healed from them. In other words, trauma is a memorable experience and,

further, lives throughout its patient's life. Likewise, a traumatized individual, particularly an abused woman, "stubbornly persists in bearing witness to some forgotten wound" (Caruth, 1996, p. 6). As she was raped, Masechaba was traumatized, and then, she became unable to sleep well ever since. As such, she sadly utters: "03:02 [the time at which she was raped] What is it about this time of night that drags me from sleep, pulls my eyelids open, shakes my mind awake? There were three men, and they divided me in two. Or was it three times two?" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 58). In accordance with such stately descriptive words, Masechaba's mind seems completely controlled by the incident's repetitive pursuing memories.

Herman (1992) avows that powerlessness and sleeplessness are symptomatic outcomes of traumatic horrible attack, which damages one's intellectual settlement, reaching the "points of surrendering" (p. 42) in front of trauma. It is exactly what Masechaba suffers from. Similarly, she does not find any kind of rest during her sleep, and if she sleeps, she will be attacked and waken up by the nightmares of the gang-rape she has forcedly encountered.

Again, the moment Masechaba was raped, she wished she "could look inside and see if anything's broken" loudly moaning: "I was raped" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 66). Through these implicative words, the research finds that Masechaba's trauma was unmistakably caused by the violent incident of rape. With this justified accordance, Caruth (1995) assertively adds, "[t]o be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an [injuring] image or event" (pp. 4-5). This case is also evidenced through the text, as Masechaba hugely shouts, "the thoughts in my head begin to move at an ever-increasing pace and there seem to be others threatening to start a conversation in my mind" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 50). Overall, Freud (1922) believes that the ghost of a traumatic incident will live and share the victim's life even when asleep, as he theorizes:

[T]he patients suffering from traumatic neuroses are much occupied in waking life with the recollection of what happened to them. They perhaps strive rather not to think of it. To regard it as self-evident that the dream at night takes them back to the situation which has caused the trouble is to misunderstand the nature of dreams. It would be more in correspondence with that nature if the patient were presented (in sleep) with images from the time of his normal health or of his hoped-for recovery. If we are not to go thoroughly astray as to the wish-fulfilment tendency of the dream in consequence of these dreams of the shock neuroses, perhaps the expedient is left us of supposing that in this condition the dream function suffers dislocation along with the others and is diverted from its usual ends, or else we should have to think of the enigmatic masochistic tendencies of the ego. (p. 9)

Similarly, although she resistantly tries to withstand the trauma, the strong consequences of the incident, robustly and repeatedly, cause her to fail. By turning this view to Masechaba's state, she is, of course, traumatized. The way she speaks, imagines, thinks, and behaves makes one feel that Masechaba is trying to get out of her traumatic prison. Finally, one cannot pass without noting that Masechaba's psyche is almost totally fragmented, especially when she wishes her dead brother, Tshiamo, was still alive.

To Caruth, traumatized individuals suffer from psychological and emotional disorganizations. They act unconsciously and do not know what exactly they want. What is more hurtful, they do heartlessly desire as if they can "bring back the[ir] dead" (1995, p. 73). Those who desire so, hypothetically, seek mental and emotional liberation from trauma and its depressive grip on memory. Like Caruth, Sam Durrant (2004) states that trauma patients "attempt to summon the dead and lay them to rest" (p. 9). Thus, Masechaba needs Tshiamo to be "too near him" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 75), so he may feel solace for her and then she will be amused as she was before, in spite of her knowledge of his death. So now, there is still no way to disagree with Caruth's views on traumatized individuals, whose ways of action are partly applicable to Masechaba's distressful states. Consequently, she, consequently, goes on to defensively activate what Freud has conceptually termed as denial in the hope of vanquishing her traumatic past, whose ghosts seem not to hand her off.

B. Denying a Traumatic Occurrence in Evening Primrose

A traumatic memory is the ghost that overwhelms one's past and ultimately affects their future life. A traumatized character is constantly irritated by the memory of a humanistically or environmentally traumatic event until s/he "overcomes" their reaction to that misfortune experience (Freud, 1953, p. 260). Due to the powerful psychological stress and blunt-force trauma, a tormented individual will employ a variety of strategies to overcome, forget or at least diminish the traumatic stress affecting their psychological behavior and conditions. Accordingly, Anna Freud (2018) finds that *denial* represents a massive part of these strategies. Textually, Masechaba, at the first moments of her rape, tries to misinterpret the real encounter of the incident, mistakably claiming that it was just a "bad dream" and "[e]verything will be fine" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 54). In hoping so, Masechaba seems to console herself by herself. Again, Anna Freud (2018) touches the biological fact that when a person is in depressible trouble, their psychological defenses, unconsciously, "mitigate the trouble" (p. 149). Like so, Masechaba's defence mechanism of denial is presented involuntarily, making her "pretend to forget, to be fast asleep" (Matlwa, 2018, p. 75). Yet, although she avoidably feigns forgetfulness, the living flashbacks of her traumatic past refuse to get out of her mind so she can live freely.

As a victim is sexually abused or emotionally frustrated, trauma will be his/her ultimate fate. Thus, that victim, physically, performs as if they are unaffected by trauma. Moreover, Freud (1953), through an experimental treatment of one depressed patient, observed that "the patient refused to have any further treatment" (p. 120) due to his "fear of distressing mental conflicts" (1953, p. 154). Denial is activated in a significant way to motivate the depressed individual

to become aware of being psychologically interfered with. Likewise, it helps the agonized subject get rid of any memorable traumatic experiences tentatively. That is why Masechaba believes in her false-portrait, arguing that “I wasn’t raped” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 71). She feels so because she imagines the incident has attackingly come in the form of a dream as a heavenly moral punishment for caressing herself before by “putting my fingers where I shouldn’t” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 11).

To put it theoretically, Anna Freud (2018) denotes that injured figures sometimes realize that the psychologically eating disorders of the trauma they have had will definitely end. But, to make it worse, this feeling is just to deny the or at least diminish the pains they feel. In accordance with this announcement, the study agrees that Masechaba, as part of the analysis process, tries to overcome the traumatic wounds she has had by confirming that each single/simple incident will defiantly be suspended. As an evident, she monologues herself, saying, “[i]t won’t last. Yes, from time to time there’s an incident here and there, but it’s definitely on the decline. Things are getting better (Matlwa, 2018, p. 84). This argument is to alleviate the flowing pain caused by the rape trauma she experienced by activating the defensive factor of ebb or denial.

According to Freud (1922), a forced victim of any “sexual assault” (p. 41) identifies him/herself as indigenious, powerless, and ashamed. Besides that, it feels lost emotionally and rationally. Along with these observations, Anna Freud (2018) adds, “[t]he patient himself resists these emotions and feels ashamed, humiliated, and so forth, when they manifest themselves against his will” (p. 18). Hence, Masechaba is abusively compelled to have had the trauma of rape. Ideally, she has no effective defensive means of overcoming trauma rather than denying it. Thereafter, a traumatically violated Masechaba gets her way straightforwardly “to denial in order not to become aware of some painful impression from without” (Freud, 2018, p. 89). Similarly, she monologues herself, hallucinating that if she was really deflowered, the process would take only a few minutes. So, she thinks there is no harmful, problematic complex to be worried about. In accordance with all, Bouacida (2021) affirms that “the effects of the traumatic experience are felt tardily through hallucinations, flashbacks, or nightmares” (p. 400). This is why she continually encounters with the traumatic accident of violation she has endured. Thus, she even “couldn’t sleep for days” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 22) because of the attacking flow of the traumatic memories she suffered from the moment she was forcedly deflowered (as will be explained in the upcoming section). Nevertheless, she denies the existence of the rape occurrence entirely, claiming “[t]hat these sorts of things wouldn’t happen to me” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 72). Again, she consoles herself by claiming that she has only “had a bad dream” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 60) that will end as she wakes up. Clearly, till the current point, Masechaba tries to refuse the actual event of her traumatic experience in hopes of alleviating the painful effect of its chronic memory. But, as long as she attempts, she will utterly fail, because this methodological treatment is tentative. As a final result, a traumatic flashback will repetitively re-act out.

C. Trauma Acting Out Through Masechaba’s Memory

By remarking on traumatic memories, Caruth (1995) writes that “as the memories are restored to the self-representation, and owned up to, (...) pain is experienced” (p. 87). In light of this exploration, trauma is reliving the moment the victim rethinks about. Like Caruth, Alghaberi and Mukherjee (2022) describe “the traumatic experience as a fixed and timeless photographic negative stored in an unlocatable place of the brain” and is flowed when “remembering (...) the collective past” (p. 642). Distinctly, Masechaba describes her unforgettable traumatic sufferings, saying: “when I’m forgetting, drifting into mindlessness, I’m jolted by a breath on the back of my neck, a breath like the one that breathed on me before grabbing me from behind and bringing my legs to the floor” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 57). Here, Masechaba, illustratively, re-narrates the incident of her trauma that was foremost caused by a savage sexual violation. A trauma victim sometimes seems both emotionally and intellectually fragmented by the painful stories he has witnessed or experienced before. Therefore, he will start to memorably reveal how and what he has exactly been traumatized by on the hope of “find[ing] ways and means” of recover (LaCapra, 1999, p. 696). By considering her aforesaid words, Masechaba seems to describe her traumatic experience precisely. This descriptive narration, according to LaCapra (2014), is a representation of acting out.

Like Freud and Caruth, LaCapra (2014) argues that “in a traumatic memory, the event is repeated in its comprehensible, unreadable literally” (p. 92). Through this, disordering traumatic presences influence one’s professional intellectuality, fragmenting his/her psychological regulative conditions and confusing the rational awareness. Ideally, words are capable of expressing trauma exploration, reflecting what the victim interiorly feels (Caruth, 1996; LaCapra, 2014). Alike, the re-rising memories of Masechaba’s trauma are expressively explored through the words she repeatedly hallucinates with and the ways she describes her past status, narrating: ““I was raped.” (...) I’m still being raped even now, even when I’m not. I can’t say when one stopped and the other began. I am being rape” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 66). Here, it is justifiably clear that the trauma of the gang-sexual abuse Masechaba has suffered from is workably still reacting out, “shrug[ing] my head off and inch away from me” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 75). In spite of the defence mechanism of denial she periodically activates, Masechaba’s terrifying thoughts about the time of her de-virginity snap her from the inside. These thoughts cause her new heartbreaking conflict, transporting her to the past time and place where the incident occurred.

Traumatic memories do have the capacity to kill or destroy the victim “from the inside” (Caruth, 1995, p. 66). Such a case is apparently thematized by Masechaba, who miserably laments herself, wailing, “I am dead inside” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 73). So, one can notice that Masechaba’s traumatic power of restored remembrance fragments her psychological

regulation and, besides, confuses her thoughts. Notably, it “drags me from sleep, pulls my eyelids open, shakes my mind awake” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 58). Clearly, it is not sleep that enables one to forget or overcome his traumatic past, since it is contemporary just like the matter in denial.

Acting out trauma, as LaCapra elaborates, makes the survival unable to differentiate between its past and present time(s). Most likely, this clashing conflict occurs in an iterative form, statically, busying the victim’s thoughts with the acting out of his or her traumatic ordeal. To merely describe a trauma patient’s disordering case, LaCapra (2014) adds:

[T]he person tries to gain critical dis-tance on a problem and to distinguish between past, present, and future. To put the point in drastically oversimplified terms: for the victim, this means the ability to say to oneself: “Yes, that happened to me back then. It was distressing, overwhelming, perhaps I can’t entirely disengage myself from it, but I’m existing here and now, and this is different from back then”. (pp. 143-144)

In a commentary accordance with that, a trauma victim openly narrates what he/she has witnessed. It is, perhaps, to diminish the effect of the event or to make others aware of it. However, the patients do not always inform others about the excruciating consequences of the incident unless they achingly revisit them. This continuous narrative, according to LaCapra (1999), is a restart of trauma remembrances, which means the entire details of the gang-rape “may conceivably be reactivated” (p. 700). Such a harmful case is similarly demonstrated throughout Matlwa’s currently discussed novel, certainly in her revelation to her mother, friend Nyasha, colleagues, Dr. Phakama, Dr. Haffejee, and others. Furthermore, she memorably but suddenly reports the time of her overwhelming experience to herself, insofar as she soliloquizes herself, saying:

I don’t know why I bother.

03:02 . . . 03:02 . . . 03:02

What is it about this time of night that drags me from sleep, pulls my eyelids open, shakes my mind awake?

There were three men and they divided me in Two? Or was it three times two 03:02 . . . 03:02 . . . 03:02 . . . time after time. (Matlwa, 2018, p. 58)

Here, Masechaba describes the ominous time at which she was barbarously and forcedly deflowered. She cannot completely transcend or heal all of her traumatic turmoils, owing to the capabilities of unexpected attacks related to the time of the rape, her unwanted pregnancy, and their seemingly terrifying consequences. To specify the applicable perspective of acting out and Masechaba’s trauma, which she attempts to act out, LaCapra (2014) believably declares that any form of “rape, and various forms of victimization and abuse” (p. x) takes almost a while, but it will consecutively have futuristic impacts on the sufferer. The most seriously impactful legacy of Masechaba’s traumatic sexual violation is a refusal or disobedience to free her memory from its dreary occurrence.

Again, her trauma has recklessly befallen her “in the past but may still be recaptured and reactivated, with significant differences, in the present and future” (LaCapra, 2014, p. 147). Even Masechaba herself seems intellectually confused by this fact, thinking about how not to be reminded of her malady when she sees her bastard female child, Mpho. Like so, she hardly realises that “there seem to be others threatening to start a conversation in my mind” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 57). In this sense, she understands that denial is useless, but further investigation is required. At this literarily considerable point, LaCapra’s asserted idea of acting out trauma is actualized through Masechaba’s examined words and states. Verifiably, his assertion that trauma remains and lives for a long time and sometimes continues as long as its suffered patient lives is clearly applied to Masechaba, who rightly thinks that her daughter is an observable memorial result of the gang-rape she fiercely harmed by and suffered from. Thus, she, counterfactually, fails to obliterate neither the actualities of her rape nor their extensive and progressive memories. This failure is tragically and reasonably evidenced when she utterly puts it, raising that “denial [... is a] strange word. The refusal to admit the truth” (Matlwa, 2018, p. 65) of her traumatic sexual ravishment. As a result, she submissively admits that trauma will bitterly act out throughout the rest of her conflicting life. Here, Masechaba will undeniably feel ashamed each time she looks at her daughter and vice versa. This is because she, assumedly, “remains possessed or haunted by the past” (LaCapra, 2014, p. 46).

IV. CONCLUSION

The present paper is formulated to demonstrate how the trauma of rape befell the selected fiction’s most played character, Masechaba, and how she defensively tried to go beyond it by employing Freud’s defense mechanism device of denial; however, it is also to show how she failed in doing so due to the repeatedly excessive flows and acting out of the memories of her traumatic experience. Nevertheless, it is also to find that Masechaba’s trauma is undeniable although she tries to work through/transcend. This exploration provides a pragmatic identification that her disorganizing flashbacks cannot be avoided or resolved indefinitely; rather, they will have occasionally, if not recurrently, broken into her tormented mind. Likewise, they will be flowingly acted out. This repetitive acting-out keeps Masechaba perpetually engaged in her psychologically anguishing trauma till the end of the novel/her life. The distressful memories of her shameful exaction are seemingly endless because rape, in itself, cannot be challengingly repudiated, particularly if she has viciously had an undesired baby. She did not firstly desire to be a mother due to her rightful realization that Mpho would workably but not surely be a double-edged sword that, on the one hand, relieves her traumatized past experience every time she sees her. On the other hand, Masechaba finds Mpho as a means for solace and safety, returning to her when trauma starts to act out again. This eventually represents the ebb of her conflicting traumatic memories. However,

based on what was analytically presented before, this article concludes that both Freud's denial and LaCapra's acting-out are fittingly and demonstratively applicable to Matlwa's sufferingly agonized and forcedly virginity-lost character, Masechaba. As such, this study finds that Matlwa's *Evening Primrose* is researchable and can be studied in relation to the trauma hyperarousal or hypervigilance concept, which describes how many biological disorders and changes affect one's psyche as well as physical behaviour, personality, and memory after being disordered by any traumatic experience.

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Exploring Metaphorical Cancers in Arabic

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Abstract—In Arabic, the metaphoricity of cancer disease has received some research, particularly from the perspective of a target domain. However, cancer from the perspective of a source domain awaits systematic analysis. To fill this gap, this paper has the following aims: 1) To explore the types of phenomena that correspond to cancer as a metaphor in Arabic from the perspective a source domain; and 2) To discuss the factors that might influence and/or sustain the use of cancer as a metaphor from the perspective of a source domain and its implications in Arabic. The analysis and findings of two Arabic corpora (King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology Arabic Corpus and the Arabic corpus of Brigham Young University) showed the emergence of ten topic areas and themes that correspond to cancer as a metaphor in Arabic from the perspective a source domain, ordered from the most to least frequent: ISRAEL, CORRUPTION, VIOLENCE/TERRORISM/CONFLICT, PEOPLE/GROUP(S) OF PEOPLE, IDEOLOGY/RELIGION/BELIEF, COGNITION/EMOTION/SENSATION, ARCHITECTURE/ENVIRONMENT, FINANCE/ECONOMY/POVERTY, UNCLASSIFIED, and PLACE/LOCATION/COUNTRY. The following factors might impact and/or perpetuate the use of this metaphor in the Arabic discourse: 1) the negative correspondences between cancer disease and the described phenomena as metaphorical cancers grounded in 2) the embodied and real-world experiences and shared knowledge and understandings of cancer disease, and 3) the socio-political unrest in the Middle East region and its consequences of financial pressures, health challenges, and humanitarian crises.

Index Terms—cancer, metaphor, Arabic, discourse, corpora

I. INTRODUCTION

In Arabic, there is an increasing interest to study metaphors and point out their implications utilizing the recently developed theoretical frameworks and the most up-to-date methodologies (e.g., Almaghlouth & Alotaibi, 2024; Mobarki & Alzahrani, 2024). Health and illness metaphors have received some scholarly attention in Arabic (Mobarki & Alzahrani, 2024), and metaphors of cancer disease as well (Abaalalaa & Ibrahim, 2022; Almegewly & Alsoraihi, 2022). However, the focus was primarily on cancer metaphors from the perspective of a target domain (e.g., CANCER IS WAR/JOURNEY; Abaalalaa & Ibrahim, 2022). As such, investigating cancer as a metaphor in Arabic from the perspective of a source domain (i.e., SOMETHING IS CANCER) awaits systematic analysis using data that represent actual use of language. This paper is an attempt to address this gap guided by the following research aims:

- To explore the types of phenomena (i.e., topic areas and themes) that correspond to cancer as a metaphor in Arabic from the perspective a source domain (i.e., SOMETHING IS CANCER);
- To discuss the factors that might influence and/or sustain the use of cancer as a metaphor from the perspective of a source domain (i.e., SOMETHING IS CANCER) and its implications in Arabic.

The paper addresses the following research questions:

- What are the types of phenomena (i.e., topic areas and themes) that correspond to cancer as a metaphor in Arabic from the perspective of a source domain (i.e., SOMETHING IS CANCER)?
- What are the factors that might influence and/or sustain the use of cancer as a metaphor from the perspective of a source domain (i.e., SOMETHING IS CANCER) and its implications in Arabic?

The next section provides a background of research on metaphor in discourse and cognition. Section 3 illustrates the data and methods utilized in this research. The fourth section presents the analysis and findings. Section 5 is a discussion and section 6 concludes the paper.

II. BACKGROUND

In the past three decades, research on metaphor has expanded to spark several theoretical and empirical developments. These theoretical and empirical developments have advanced our understanding of metaphors and their significance and functions in cognition, communication, and discourse.

With the publication of their seminal book *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) established an important movement in the research tradition and scholarship of metaphor. Their publication initiated the so-called Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). Within this paradigm, typical patterns of metaphorical linguistic items in language (e.g., the expression ‘go places’ in ‘she’ll go places in life’) are seen as reflections and therefore evidence of typical patterns of metaphorical thinking or conceptual metaphors (e.g., LIFE IS A JOURNEY). Conceptual metaphors are comprised of a set of conceptual correspondences or systematic mappings between a source domain (e.g., JOURNEY) and a target domain (e.g., LIFE). Source domains are more concrete and tangible whereas target domains

are more complex and abstract. CMT, however, received critique (e.g., Deignan et al., 2013). Therefore, some scholars (e.g., Kövecses, 2015, 2020) attempted to develop CMT while others (e.g., Cameron et al., 2009; Steen, 2017) proposed relevant theoretical frameworks. Investigations of metaphors under the lens of cognitive science and discourse analysis are currently remarkable.

From the side of cognitively-oriented research, several experimental studies (Hendricks et al., 2018; Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011; Thibodeau et al., 2017) highlighted the impact of metaphors on people's ideas, understanding, attitudes, reasoning, and evaluations. More precisely, such studies pointed out that metaphorical frames produce more effectiveness when they include the following characteristics: 1) source domains are more image-rich, easily described, and easy to understand (i.e., tangible and concrete), 2) target domains are more complex and abstract, and 3) systematic mappings between source domains and target domains are clearly delineated and relevant.

From the side of discourse analysis research, investigations are featured with particular attention to the usage and frequencies of metaphors and metaphorical frames in various types of discourse, using several frameworks and methods (see for example, Deignan, 2005; Cameron et al., 2009; Steen et al., 2010). Such investigations underscored the discursive significance and functions of metaphors related to ideas, attitudes, evaluations, persuasion, and ideologies. For instance, Potts and Semino (2019) investigated cancer as a metaphor in contemporary English utilizing methods of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis on both corpora: the Corpus of Contemporary English (COCA) and the Oxford English Corpus (OEC). Potts and Semino (2019) highlighted the following: 1) the persistence and wide applicability of using cancer as a metaphor, and 2) the use of this metaphor to motivate negative assessments of uncontrollability, danger, and damage. These assessments induce legitimizing and practicing severe actions as solutions. Such assessments and actions implicate negative emotional reactions of, for example, frustration and hopelessness. In the light of this, it is apparent that disease/illness metaphors, particularly those of cancer, have received considerable scholarly treatments.

III. DATA AND METHODS

Data and Corpora

Two Arabic corpora offered the data for this study: 1) King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology Arabic Corpus (KACSTAC), and 2) the Arabic corpus (or arabiCorpus) of Brigham Young University. KACSTAC is a promising project that aims to enhance Arabic content and knowledge by creating a rich Arabic corpus through strategic effort. KACSTAC has a word count of almost one billion. Numerous factors have been taken into account in its creation, including genre, text type, geography, and chronology/history. KACSTAC does not currently include spoken materials; it only includes written materials in their entirety. Numerous corpus analysis techniques are available through KACSTAC, such as frequency distribution, concordance, collocation, and general and specialized searches (e.g., by location/country, time period, topic, field, or text type/genre).

The College of Humanities at Brigham Young University initiated and is maintaining arabiCorpus. The total number of words in arabiCorpus is 173,600,000. Five main categories or genres constitute arabiCorpus: Newspapers, modern literature, nonfiction, Egyptian colloquial, and premodern. arabiCorpus provides several corpus analysis tools such as: general search, specialized search (e.g., by text type/genre and part of speech), collocates, concordance, and frequency distributions. The corpus analysis tools in arabiCorpus are limited; however, they served the research aims and questions with which this study was concerned.

Analytical methods and procedures

The analytical methods and procedures of this study were informed by the methodology of Potts and Semino (2019). Initially, the author collected and documented a number of forms of the Arabic word سرطان *saraṭan*, which were found frequently used in the corpora. Table 1 presents a set of the identified forms used in the corpora.

TABLE 1
CANCER DISEASE/ILLNESS EXPRESSIONS FOUND IN THE CORPORA

Arabic form/word	Transliteration	Meaning/Translation
سرطان/السرطان	<i>saraṭan/?assaraṭan</i>	Cancer disease/illness expressions
مسرطن/مسرطن	<i>musarṭan/musarṭin</i>	
مسرطنة/مسرطنة	<i>musarṭanah/musarṭinah</i>	
سرطن/يترسطن	<i>sarṭan/yatasarṭan</i>	
سرطين/سرطانات	<i>saraṭiin/saraṭanat</i>	
سرطانة	<i>saraṭanah</i>	
سرطانية/السرطانية	<i>saraṭaniyah/?lsaraṭaniyah</i>	

A total number of 46228 instances was the overall outcome of the initial and basic search for the forms of the Arabic word سرطان *saraṭan* in both corpora. Then, the author searched all the instances discovered for each form of the Arabic word سرطان *saraṭan* in both corpora in order to determine the range of metaphoricity in all of the occurrences. The search constraints and parameters of both corpora (e.g., location/country, times period, topic, field, or text type/genre) were disregarded as the main aim of this study is to explore the topic areas and themes that can be metaphorically associated with forms of the Arabic word سرطان *saraṭan*. In this stage, the process benefited from the Pragglejaz Group's metaphor identification procedure (MIP: Pragglejaz Group, 2007) and Steen et al.'s (2010) method for identifying linguistic metaphors which was developed at Vrije University (MIPVU).

The methods and procedures continued with investigating all the collected and documented form of the Arabic word سرطان *saraṭan* in the corpora. Only two forms appeared the most productive for metaphorical instances: سرطان *saraṭan* and السرطان *ṣassarāṭan*. The other forms have not produced any metaphorical tokens. Note that by searching the forms سرطان *saraṭan* and السرطان *ṣassarāṭan* in the corpora (i.e., KACSTAC and arabiCorpus) and in معجم المعاني *Muḥjam Ṣalmaṣaanii* 'the Dictionary of Meanings,' both forms showed the following meanings in Arabic: 1) Cancer disease/illness, 2) crab/marine creature, 3) astrological sign, and 4) tropic of cancer. As the main aim of this study was to investigate the types of phenomena that can metaphorically be associated with cancer disease/illness in Arabic, metaphoric expressions of cancer disease/illness were identified and considered for analysis; other forms and meanings were ignored in this process of analysis.

During the data analysis, a group of topic areas and themes were developed using a bottom-up approach while noticing and observing the systematic patterns of the metaphoric expressions. The metaphoric expressions of cancer disease/illness were classified semantically by putting them under one of the topic areas and themes which evolved from the data and the process of data analysis. Duplicate metaphoric usage was identified and counted so as to determine the final frequency of metaphoric expressions informing the analysis and findings. The researcher had many consultation sessions with native speakers of Arabic holding PhDs in discourse analysis, rhetoric, and critical studies in order to gain inter-raters' perspectives, which would assure consistency upon the identification, coding, and classification of metaphoric expressions, topic areas, and themes.

IV. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The analytical methods and procedures led to the emergence and evolvement of ten topic areas and themes which can be associated with the identified metaphorical instances of the Arabic سرطان *saraṭan* and السرطان *ṣassarāṭan* 'cancer disease' (see Table 2). Table 2 presents the total frequency and percentage of the Arabic سرطان *saraṭan* and السرطان *ṣassarāṭan* 'cancer disease' metaphoric expressions (Total). The table also shows the frequency and percentage of duplicate tokens (Duplicates) and the final frequency and percentage for metaphoric expressions included in the findings and analysis after removing the duplicates (De-duped). The topic areas and themes are ordered according to the usage from the most to least frequent.

TABLE 2
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE OF TOPIC AREAS/THEMES OF METAPHORICAL CANCERS IN ARABIC

Topic area/theme	Total	Duplicates	De-duped
ISRAEL	274 (25.84%)	54 (33.12%)	220 (24.52%)
CORRUPTION	174 (16.41%)	19 (11.65%)	155 (17.27%)
VIOLENCE/TERRORISM/CONFLICT	152 (14.33%)	20 (12.26%)	132 (14.71%)
PEOPLE/GROUP(S) OF PEOPLE	138 (13%)	15 (9.20%)	123 (13.71%)
IDEOLOGY/RELIGION/BELIEF	113 (10.66%)	32 (19.63%)	81 (9%)
COGNITION/EMOTION/SENSATION	77 (7.26%)	9 (5.52%)	68 (7.58%)
ARCHITECTURE/ENVIRONMENT	53 (5%)	11 (6.74%)	42 (4.68%)
FINANCE/ECONOMY/POVERTY	33 (3.11%)	3 (1.84%)	30 (3.34%)
UNCLASSIFIED	27 (2.54%)	0	27 (3%)
PLACE/COUNTRY/LOCATION	19 (1.78%)	0	19 (2.11%)
Total	1060 (100%)	163 (100%)	897 (100%)

The following subsections provide a detailed demonstration of the topic areas and themes that correspond to metaphorical cancers in Arabic. Examples are organized as the following: The original Arabic text is presented in the

first line; a transliteration of the original Arabic text is shown in the second line; glossings of the transliteration are reflected in the third line; a translation is presented in the fourth line.

ISRAEL

ISRAEL came on the top as the most frequent topic area and theme which corresponds to cancer metaphors in Arabic. The process of analysis and classification showed that a variety of Israel-relevant linguistic expressions revolved around several words or phrase forms of the following primary key words: اسرائيل 'Israel', الاحتلال 'occupation', الاستيطان 'settlement(s)', الصهيونية/الصهيوني 'zionism/zionist(ic)', and اليهودية/اليهود 'judaism/jewish/jews'. These keywords carried the following references: 1) the reference to Israel as a country or political entity (e.g., Israel), 2) the reference to Israeli activities and actions (e.g., occupation and settlement(s)), and 3) the reference to descriptions of relevance to Israel or Israeli people (e.g., zionism/zionist(ic), judaism/jewish/jews). Examples (1) and (2) are illustrative:

Example (1)

إسرائيل السرطان الخبيث في المنطقة

Israel ṭassaraṭn ṭalxabiṭh fi ṭalmantiqah

Israel the.cancer the.malignant in the.region

Israel is malignant *cancer* in the region.

Example (2)

سرطان الاستيطان الصهيوني يلتهم مدينة القدس

saraṭan ṭalṭistiṭan ṭaṣṣuhyuni yaltahim madinat ṭalquds

cancer the.settlement the.zionist eat up city Jerusalem

The *cancer* of *zionist settlement* is eating up Jerusalem city.

CORRUPTION

CORRUPTION is the second frequently used topic area and theme which is associated with metaphorical cancer. The analytical procedures revealed the recurrent use of the Arabic word الفساد 'the corruption' in various contexts and texts containing metaphorical cancer. In a number of cases, some specifying terms accompany the word الفساد 'the corruption' to indicate the type of corruption such as: اجتماعي 'social,' إداري 'administrative,' حكومي 'governmental,' أخلاقي 'moral,' and سياسي 'political.' Metaphorical cancer is also used in the contexts of expressions referring to the activities and actions related to corruption; such expressions are employed in many occasions and they include, but not limited to, the following: الرشوة 'bribery,' الغش 'cheating,' التزوير 'forgery,' and الواسطة 'nepotism.' Examples (3) and (4) are representative:

Example (3)

سرطان الفساد ينهش مؤسساتنا التعليمية

saraṭan ṭalfasad yanhaṣ muṭassasatina ṭattaṣlimiyah

cancer the.corruption tearing institutions.our educational

The *cancer* of *corruption* is tearing our educational institutions.

Example (4)

الواسطة سرطان يهدد المجتمع

ṭalwasṭah saraṭan yuhaddid ṭalmujtamaṣ

the.nepotism cancer threatening the.society

Nepotism is *cancer* threatening society.

VIOLENCE/TERRORISM/CONFLICT

VIOLENCE/TERRORISM/CONFLICT is another topic area and theme which contained linguistic expressions; these expressions were closely linked to cancer metaphor(s) in the data. Nearly, all instances are related to the actions and activities of violence, terrorism, conflicts, military, revolution(s), and regional security in the Middle East (see also Potts & Semino, 2019, p. 91). Examples (5) and (6) are elucidative.

Example (5)

الإرهاب تحول إلى سرطان عالمي

ṭalṭirhab taḥawwal ṭila saraṭan ṣalami

the.terrorism turned into cancer international

Terrorism turned into international *cancer*.

Example (6)

الحرب سرطان الحضارة الغربية

ṭalḥarb saraṭan ṭalḥazarah ṭalḡarbiyyah

the.war cancer the.civilization the.Western

War is the *cancer* of Western civilization.

PEOPLE/GROUP(S) OF PEOPLE

This category involves individuals or group(s) of individuals with specific negative traits, behaviors, and/or influence. Concerning individuals, both *Saddam Hussein and his system* and *Muammar al-Gaddafi* sit on the top of the frequently used expressions in the contexts of metaphorical cancers. Other individuals appear, however, with very low frequencies such as: *Osama Bin Laden*, *Barazani*, and *al-Zawahiri*.

Concerning group(s) of individuals or people, *al-Qaeda*, *Ba'ath Party*, and *Hezbollah* showed prominent patterns in the data. Other references were identified with varied frequencies such as: *Houthis*, *Kharijites*, *secularists*, *Kurds*, *Shishanis*, *betrayers*, *socialists*, and *looters*. The instances in (7) and (8) are exemplary.

Example (7)

من يخلص ليبيا من سرطان القذافي؟
man yuxallis Libya min *saraṭan al-Gaddafi*
who free Libya from *cancer al-Gaddafi*
Who frees Libya from *al-Gaddafi cancer*?

Example (8)

مقاتي يصف حزب الله بالسرطان
Mikati yaṣif *Hezbollah biṣsaratan*
Mikati describe *Hezbollah as.cancer*
Mikati describes *Hezbollah as cancer*.
IDEOLOGY/RELIGION/BELIEF

Metaphorical cancer is also linked with linguistic expressions that capture human thought and the general systems of beliefs. Such human thought and systems of beliefs are seen in terms of ideologies, religions, and other types of beliefs which are shared and practiced by considerable groups of people found in the world. الطائفية 'sectarianism' is the most frequently used in the data. The appearance of other items is patterned and noticeable, however, with relative frequencies: الشيوعية 'secularism', العلمانية 'nazism', النازية 'marxism', الماركسية 'freemasonry', الماسونية 'sufism', الصوفية 'communism', البيروقراطية 'democracy', الديمقراطية 'socialism', الاشتراكية 'capitalism', الرأسمالية 'liberalism', الليبرالية 'bureaucracy', الديكتاتورية 'dictatorship', العنصرية 'racism', التمييز 'discrimination', and الحداثة 'modernism.' The following cases (9) and (10) are typical.

Example (9)

الطائفية تنتشر في البلاد مثل مرض السرطان
ṭaṭṭaṭiyyah tantašir fi ṭalbilad *mithl* maraḏ *ṣssraṭan*
the.sectarianism spreading in the.country *like* disease *cancer*
Sectarianism is spreading in the country *like cancer* disease.

Example (10)

حذار من سرطان الديمقراطية
ḥaḏar min *saraṭan ṭddimuqraṭiyyah*
beware from *cancer the.democracy*
Beware the *democracy cancer*.

COGNITION/EMOTION/SENSATION

A group of expressions are referenced with metaphorical cancer under this category. Emotions, specifically negative ones, presented a significant pattern and frequency in the data. This pattern of emotions involved typical affective states such as: الكراهية 'hate' and الغرور 'vanity.' Other expressions pertain to the type of affective dispositions: اليأس 'hopelessness', الإحباط 'frustration', تأنيب الضمير/الندم 'remorse/regret', الشك 'doubt/distrust', الكبت 'repression', القهر 'oppression', and تضخم الذات 'self-inflation.' Additionally, the data contained expressions related to cognitive states and processes: الغفلة 'heedlessness', التخلف 'retardation', الجهل 'ignorance', الأمية 'illiteracy', and النسيان 'forgetting.' Examples (11) and (12) show metaphorical cancer expressions associated with COGNITION/EMOTION/SENSATION.

Example (11)

سرطان الإحباط يشكل مقارباً خطيراً
saraṭan ṭalṭiḥbaṭ yuṣakkil muqaraban xaṭīran
cancer frustration forms approach dangerous
Frustration cancer forms a dangerous approach.

Example (12)

الشك هو السرطان القاتل لكل علاقة
ṭaššak huwa *ṭsssraṭan ṭalqatil* likul ṣalaqah
distrust is *cancer* killing for every relationship
Distrust is the killing *cancer* for every relationship.

ARCHITECTURE/ENVIRONMENT

The interrelationships between the aspects of architecture and environment prompted classifying those under one category here. For example, metaphorical uses of cancer are employed to describe the environmental issue of التلوث 'pollution.' Such an environmental issue might be an outcome of architecture issues such as انتشار المعامل المهنية 'the spread of professional laboratories (or industrial facilities/factories) and/or التمدد العمراني/الصناعي 'urban/industrial expansion.' Even both the later instances of architecture issues are described in terms of metaphorical cancer. التآكل 'corrosion' is another example of an environmental issue which could be related the architecture issue of انتشار مخالفات البناء 'the spread of architecture violations.' Of course, architecture violations should include actions and activities to manipulate architecture requirements which lead to the consequence of corrosion. Expressions indicating architecture

outweigh the ones referring to environmental issues. (13) and (14) are examples of metaphorical cancer expressions that correspond with ARCHITECTURE/ENVIRONMENT.

Example (13)

سرطان التلوث يمكن أن يهدد الجميع
saraṭan ṭattalawuth yumkin ṭan yuhaddid ṭaljamiʕ
cancer pollution could to threaten everyone
 The *cancer* of *pollution* could threaten everyone.

Example (14)

الانتشار السرطاني لمخالفات البناء في معظم المدن والبلدان
 ṭalṭintiṣar ṭassarṭani limuxalafat ṭalbina? fi muṣzam ṭalmudun wa ṭalbuldan
 the.spread *the.cancerous for.violations the.architecture* in most the.cities and the.countries
 The *cancerous* spread of *architecture violations* in most cities and countries.
 FINANCE/ECONOMY/POVERTY

Cases involving references to الفقر 'poverty,' البطالة 'unemployment,' and الدين 'debt' as metaphorical cancers are the least frequent. Meanwhile, linguistic items referring to the problems related to financial processes and economic systems are the most frequent: الأزمة/الخسارة/الانهيار/الإفلاس الاقتصادية 'financial crisis/loss/collapse/bankruptcy' and التضخم 'inflation.' In addition, the corpora involved linguistic items describing الكثافة/النمو/التزايد السكاني 'population density/growth/increase.' The following instances (15) and (16) are demonstrative.

Example (15)

فسيستحيل الفقر بمتالياته إلى سرطان مجتمعي
 fasayastahil ṭalfaqr bimumtaliyatih ṭila *saraṭan* mujtamaʕi
 so.FUT.turn *the.poverty* with.its.consequences into *cancer* social
 so *poverty* with its consequences will turn into social *cancer*.

Example (16)

أدت إلى انتشار سرطان التضخم حتى في السلع
 ṭaddat ṭila ntiṣar *saraṭan ṭatttaṣaxxum* ḥatta fi ssilaʕ
 it.led to spread *cancer inflation* even in the.commodities
 It led to the spread of *inflation cancer* even in commodities.

UNCLASSIFIED

This category includes instances of metaphorical cancer expressions which could not be associated and classified with any of the topic areas and themes. The absence of their references in the texts, concordance lines, and contexts is the primary reason for classifying them here. Such an absence of references in the data is caused by corpora limitations as the corpora include incomplete and truncated texts. The following examples (17) and (18) are illustrative.

Example (17)

...سرطان ينخر في اقتصاد الوطن...
saraṭan yanxar fi ṭiqtiṣad ṭalwaṭan
cancer rotting in economy the.country
 ...*cancer* rotting the country's economy...

Example (18)

...ذلك الكائن النجس داخلها وكأنه سرطان...
 ḍalik ṭalkaʔin ṭannajis daxilaha wa *kaʔannahu saraṭan*
 that object dirty inside.it and *like.it cancer*
 ...that dirty object inside it and it is *like cancer*...

PLACE/LOCATION/COUNTRY

Instances of metaphorical cancer connected to a place, location, or country provide the least frequent patterns in the data. References to أمريكا 'America/USA' and إيران/طهران 'Iran/Tehran' are regularly found in the data with only one instance referring to الفلوجة 'al-Fallujah.' The following examples (19) and (20) are demonstrative.

Example (19)

وصف النيجيري أمريكا بأنها سرطان
 waṣafa ṭannijiri *America* biʔannaha *saraṭan*
 describe the.Nigiri *America* that.it.is *cancer*
 The Nigiri described *America* that it is a *cancer*.

Example (20)

ووصف الجنرال توماس ميتز الفلوجة بأنها سرطان
 wa waṣafa ṭaljīniral Thomas Mitz *al-Fallujah* biʔannaha *saraṭan*
 and describe the.general Thomas Mitz *al-Fallujah* that.it.is *cancer*
 The general Thomas Mitz described *al-Fallujah* that it is a *cancer*.

V. DISCUSSION

The analysis and findings have shown so far the regular use of metaphorical سرطان *saratan* ‘cancer’ and السرطان *ʔassaratan* ‘the cancer’ in Arabic. This metaphoricity is systematically linked with the following most to least frequent topic areas and themes as evoked and evolved throughout the bottom-up process of analysis:

- ISRAEL;
- CORRUPTION;
- VIOLENCE/TERRORISM/CONFLICT;
- PEOPLE/GROUP(S) OF PEOPLE;
- IDEOLOGY/RELIGION/BELIEF;
- COGNITION/EMOTION/SENSATION;
- ARCHITECTURE/ENVIRONMENT;
- FINANCE/ECONOMY/POVERTY;
- UNCLASSIFIED;
- PLACE/LOCATION/COUNTRY.

The findings concerning the topic areas and themes in this study significantly align with the ones reported in the available literature (cf. Potts & Semino, 2019). Metaphors of disease/illness, in general, and metaphors of cancer, in particular, are typically used to depict “intrinsically negative” (Potts & Semino, 2019, p. 93) phenomena. Such intrinsically negative phenomena include themes and topics which can be classified under the following: negative emotions (Kövecses, 2000), technical problems (Isaeva & Burdina, 2019), financial dilemmas and economic crisis (Brugman et al., 2022; Charteris-Black, 2004; Negro, 2016), health challenges (Balteiro, 2017; Cotter et al., 2021; Olza et al., 2021), sociopolitical issues (O’Brien, 2003; Zibin, 2020), societal problems (Pelosi et al., 2014; Woodhams, 2012), and political disorder and unrest (Charteris-Black, 2011; Musolff, 2016; Wehling, 2016).

Before moving further in the discussion, of course, we need to unpack several (some focal) aspects of the real and literal سرطان *saratan* ‘cancer’ and السرطان *ʔassaratan* ‘the cancer’ so as to understand the use and persistence of metaphorical cancers in the Arabic discourse. Cancer is reported as the second major cause of death around the world (WHO). As a disease, cancer is usually described with the following characterizations: 1) It grows uncontrollably and vastly spreads from one part into other parts of the body; 2) it is mysterious in terms of causes, symptoms and medical evaluations, treatments, and interventions; 3) treatments of cancer are either chemically and/or surgically conducted and often accompanied with risks and negative side effects. Some medical treatments are rarely effective and successful with specific types or intensity of cancers; 4) it costs a lot of financial burdens on the world’s economies; 5) descriptions of cancer come with packages and patterns of negative emotions and evaluations such as: danger, fatality, destruction, suffering, struggle, hopelessness, and frustration. It is also expressed as lethal, malignant, cursed, incurable, and drug resistant. Overall, cancer as a disease is significantly packaged with negativity.

In addition to the negatively-valenced topic areas and themes mentioned above, the negativity of cancer in and of itself encourages the initiation and persistence of negative evaluations which could be connected with negative emotional reactions even with phenomena which is not related with positive or negative polarity (e.g., America/USA). Closer looks into the data and findings show that the negativity of cancer encodes negative connotations for phenomena which could be seen through a wide range of perspectives (e.g., democracy, bureaucracy, and modernism). Therefore, such negativity associated with the instances of metaphorical cancer seems overarching as well as imported from the characterizations and connotations of the real cancer disease. This later point triggers the potential relationship between the emergence and persistence of metaphorical cancer and human shared embodied or cultural experiences.

Metaphorical cancer can also be related to embodied understanding and real world knowledge and shared experiences of cancer disease. Cancer is among the most commonly known and the most widely reported diseases. The world’s populations are now familiar with the descriptions, characteristics, and consequences of cancer. Such popularity and familiarity establish “shared embodied or cultural experiences” which “are more likely to be able to establish common ground and resonate” (Thibodeau et al., 2017, p. 859). The reflection of embodied understanding and real world knowledge and shared experiences of cancer disease can be evidenced by the descriptions, characteristics, or consequences of the real world cancer disease which were discovered with the metaphorical cancer frames and expressions, for instance: *malignant* in example (1), *uncontrollably spreading* in examples (2, 14, 16), *dangerous* and *life-threatening* in examples (4, 11, 13), *rotting* in example (17), and *killing* in example (12).

The influence of the surrounding contextual forces, factors, or pressures on the emergence and persistence of metaphorical cancer in the Arabic discourse should receive some commentary here. Arabic is the first and the mother language for nearly all countries in the Middle East. Throughout the decades up till now, this region has been characterized by political unrest, uprisings, and revolutions accompanied by societal changes, financial challenges, health problems, and humanitarian crises. These contextual forces found in the region motivate the development of negative emotional reactions. Therefore, metaphorical cancer found in the investigated Arabic corpora seems to satisfy the production and consumption of discourse texts that reflect the events and aspects mentioned earlier. The frequencies (Table 2) and references grounded in the analysis and findings are indicative: *Israel*, *sectarianism*, *terrorism*, *war*, *Saddam Hussein and his system* and *Muammar al-Gaddafi*, *Osama Bin Laden*, *Barazani*, *al-Zawahiri*, *al-Qaeda*, *Ba’ath Party*, *Hezbollah*, *America/USA*, *al-Fallujah*, and *Iran/Tehran*.

VI. CONCLUSION

This paper showed that the metaphorical frames of cancer from the perspective of a source domain are widely used across different types of Arabic discourse and texts. The phenomena that correspond to metaphorical cancers are mostly characterized by negative valence and negative implications (e.g., CORRUPTION and TERRORISM). Other two factors might seem to influence the use and persistence of this metaphor: 1) The embodied and real-world experiences and shared knowledge and understandings of cancer disease, and 2) the socio-political disorder in the Middle East region and its related consequences of economic burdens, health problems, and humanitarian crises.

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Couplet as a Translation Procedure of *Realia* in Jordanian Novels Into Spanish: *Cuadernos del Diluvio* as a Case Study

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Abstract—Translating *realia* from Jordanian Arabic into Spanish has tremendous challenges and requires a culturally sensitive approach to preserve authenticity and contextual meaning. *Realia*, which encompass material elements of Jordanian culture, represents a rich and a complex layer of the language that goes beyond words. This study focuses on the importance of understanding the cultural and contextual nuances associated with Jordanian *realia* and offers specific strategies for its translation into Spanish. There is a real need to consider not only linguistic equivalences, but also cultural, social and emotional load of these elements in the target language to ensure full or at least enough comprehension. Through a detailed analysis of specific examples of Jordanian *realia*, (food and dress), this study shows how translators can meet the challenges of transferring these elements effectively. The decisions, taken during the translation process to maintain cultural authenticity, are explored, considering the linguistic diversity and regional nuances present in Jordanian Arabic. The need for cultural sensitivity and linguistic flexibility is emphasized to capture the essence of Jordanian *realia* in the target language without losing its underlying cultural meaning. Ultimately, this study highlights the importance of choosing the suitable procedure when translating *realia*. Based on the discussion of the selected examples to conduct the study, a couplet consisting of transliteration and footnotes is the recommended translational procedure to have a deep understanding of the source culture and the need to maintain a balance between preserving source text cultural values and accessibility for Spanish-speaking readers.

Index Terms—*realia*, transliteration, footnoting, translation, novel

I. INTRODUCTION

Translation is the process of reproducing a text written in one language by another text in another language. It can help in bridging gaps between languages and cultures and has over time contributed in transferring knowledge and thoughts between nations. There are different ways and forms of translation and this depends on text-type, the intention of the author, and the readership among other things. Translation is not only a linguistic activity but also a cultural one, where the cultural aspect forms a considerable part of the text, which should be highly considered in translation.

Culture, which is the cornerstone of this study, is defined by Burgess and Gold (2016, p. 21) as "particular ways of life whose socially constructed meanings are expressed in the widest possible range of institutions, behaviors, practices and artifacts". Terms which are culturally exclusive have been given different conceptualizations and names; cultural words (Newmark, 1988, p. 94), culture-specific concepts (Baker, 1992, p. 21), *realia* (Robinson, 1997, p. 222), culture-bound phenomena and terms or culture-specific items (Schäffner & Wiesemann, 2001, p. 32), and *culturem* (Lungu-Badea, 2004, p. 27).

In this study, the authors have chosen *realia* that reflects the material culture such as food and dress in the Jordanian novel *Cuadernos del Diluvio* (*Notebooks of Deluge*). According to Qulmamatova (2022, p. 429) *realia* is defined as "lexemes denoting objects or phenomena of material culture, ethno-national features, customs, rituals, as well as historical facts or processes and usually do not have lexical equivalents in other languages. "The concept *realia* as a plural form include according to Lewandowska (2010, p. 96) "items specific to a given cultural/linguistic community

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(clothes, money, food and beverages)". The concept *realia* was first introduced in translation studies to describe lexis with no equivalent in other languages. According to Florin (1993, p. 123),

Realia (from the Latin *realis*) are words and combinations of words denoting objects and concepts characteristics of the way of life, the culture, the social and historical development of one nation and alien to another. Since they express local and/or historical color, they have no exact equivalents in other languages. They cannot be translated in a conventional way and they require a special approach.

Most of translation scholars agree on the untranslatability of *realia* due to their culture-specific meaning in the source culture. Such scholars confirm that the *realia* are cultural linguistic terms that are identifiable for the SL¹ audience and they are relevant to their encyclopedic knowledge; when translating them into the TL, they are converted into ambiguous and insignificant terms if the wrong translation procedure is chosen. Therefore, the translator should adopt the suitable procedure to transfer *realia* into the TL to let the readers embark on the enriching cultural meaning that they have in the ST correctly. According to Kujamaki (1998), some translators opt for deleting or reducing *realia* in the TT using omission or generalization, while others try to transfer them with all their cultural and historical meaning opting for some translation strategies like transliteration and notes.

Realia are normally limited to the literary texts rather than technical ones. According to Shuttleworth (2014, p. 144),

When seeking the most appropriate strategy, the translator should seek to retain some local color without encumbering the reader with an excess of new, frequently impenetrable lexical items, and should also be mindful of the influence, whether enriching or polluting, which the new coining may exert on TL.

As most researchers in translation studies refer to *realia* as the non-equivalent lexicons, they need a special attention of the translator to transfer them adequately to the target language. According to Ischenko (2012, p. 275),

Translation of the *realia* demands the translator to be especially careful. Although we mean the notions and objects which may be accurately described and defined, while translating them into the target language, there may occur remarkable deviations and variations. It is connected with the frequency of use, the role in the language, and the household meaning; the words naming the *realia* do not have any term coloring; they do not outstand even in the most everyday content of the source text thus being usual for the source language which is the biggest difficulty for the translator.

When translationally dealing with *realia*, the translator should have enough awareness because translating from language to another can be tricky and difficult. To put that in Bagsheva-Kolevak's (2017, p. 49) words:

The translation of *realia* has always been the most difficult and 'tricky' part in translation studies. In translating *realia*, the translator has to be fluent not only in the source language, but also in the culture, history, traditions, social order, political life, national and regional specifics of the source and target languages. Insufficient awareness of these specifics can result in erroneous translations, which can fail to be perceived by the recipient or be perceived in a wrong way. The problem arises from the fact that *realia* in most cases are 'untranslatable', i.e. they do not exist and they have no linguistic counterparts in the target language.

II. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study is descriptive qualitative which analyzes the couplet (transliteration and footnotes) as a suitable translation procedure for *realia*. *Cuadernos del Diluvio* is a Jordanian novel where all the dialogues are written in Jordanian colloquial Arabic. The Arabic version of the novel is written by Samihah Khreis, and it is translated into Spanish by Pablo Garcia Suarez.

The theoretical data of this study is derived from books, references, articles about translation and *realia* and the illustrative examples contain foods and dresses that resemble material culture in the novel. The couplet (transliteration and footnotes) is found as the best procedure among the procedures employed in the translation of the novel when dealing with *realia*.

Vlahov and Florin (1980, p. 92) suggested two main procedures to translate *realia*. In this study, the authors follow these strategies when analyzing the translation of Jordanian *realia* into Spanish. The strategies recommended by the Bulgarian translators are the following:

- 1) Transcription or transliteration of the *realia*.
- 2) Translation of *realia* (introducing neologism, approximate translation or contextual translation like omission).

III. CUADERNOS DEL DILUVIO

Cunaderno del Diluvio (English translation: *Notebooks of Deluge*) is one of the most important works of the Jordanian novelist Samiha Khreis. This novel won Abu Al-Qasim Al-Shabi Award in the nineteenth session of 2004. The first edition of this novel was published in Amman in 2003, and the second edition was published by the Egyptian Lebanese Publishing House in Cairo in 2004. The novel handles the urban life in the Jordanian capital, Amman, in the late third decade of the last century, socially, economically, and politically. It was shown in a radio drama on Amman Radio and was directed by Nasr Al-Anani on Jordanian TV and shown in 2013.

¹ SL(source language), TL(target language), ST (Source text), TT (target text), OT (original text), SPT (Spanish Translation).

This novel is selected for the study because it is considered an excellent demonstration of Jordanian culture in general and Jordanian *realia* in particular. All the dialogues in this novel are held in Jordanian Arabic, where Jordanian *realia* are profusely used.

Novels, as literary works, can be a good example and illustration of a specific culture. In novels, writers usually express their own culture to the readers, and the expression of culture is supposed to be represented in the receptive language. Translators of novels should have enough knowledge and competence of the novelist's culture in order to successfully render the cultural implications and values to TL readers.

IV. TRANSLATION AND CULTURE

Translation is a language activity that transfers a linguistic text from one language into another with its cultural context. The culture of a specific society is reflected in the language that people employ. Language and culture are inseparable, where the former expresses the latter. According to Bassnett (2002, p. 23) "language, then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy". Translation is a fundamental way to transfer one culture to foreign audiences. Culture plays a major role in facilitating or complicating translation because such a process is not only substituting words by others in different languages, but also transmitting cultures. When translating a text, translators should have in mind its cultural context, social norms, cultural reference and cultural values. The successful translator should be conscious and aware of the cultural differences between languages to produce an effective communication. According to Deka (2020, p. 1122),

A translator is a cultural mediator, who may move from the source culture to the target culture choosing as much as he/she thinks appropriate to serve the aim of the translation. He/she translates the content and the style of the source text and introduces them into the target text. Translation is necessary for the spread of information, knowledge and ideas.

When we have more distance between the source culture and the target culture, the mission of the translator becomes more difficult and more challenging. For example, the Jordanian and the Spanish cultures are entirely different and highly distant; this complicates the mission of the translator and makes it difficult to achieve. The role of the translator crosses the linguistic borders into the cultural ones, where the translator attempts to give the TT readers the same cultural conception that the native readers get from the OT. Guo (2012, p. 343) maintains that:

Translation not only involves translator's or interpreter's linguistic competence, but also calls for the acquaintance with the respective cultures. In this sense, translation means more than merely translating the words, sentences or articles from the source language into the target language. It means also transferring between cultures.

V. COUPLET AS A TRANSLATION PROCEDURE OF *REALIA*

Realia are one of the challenges that face translators when transferring a text from one culture to another. As *realia* are culture-bound in nature, they are not easy to reflect in the receptive language. Therefore, the translator should select the most appropriate procedure to transfer them, maintaining the message that they have in the ST. Thus, the selection of the accurate procedure helps the translator to correctly transfer *realia* and makes them comprehensible to his readers. *Realia* are culture-specific terms pertaining to one culture and language; translating them by employing one procedure like literal translation converts them in insignificant words that may affect the comprehension and consistency in the TT.

As *realia* are specific to one society and very alien to another, translating them requires enough knowledge and extraordinary skills from the translator to transfer them correctly to his TL readers. They form one of the most diverse and complex challenges of translation. In the authors' point of view, and as such terms do not have full equivalents in the TT, it is recommended to transliterate them in the receptive language. As transliterating them is not enough, the translator should explain them in the TT. Notes in general and footnotes in particular are a very useful supportive method in addition to transliteration, which is termed 'couplet' by Newmark (1988). According to him, a couplet is a combination of two different procedures employed by the translator, and it is considered the most effective procedure when dealing with *realia*. Islomova (2023, pp. 1648-1649) maintains that,

The most effective way of translation for *realia* is transliteration. If the word or the text given by the transliteration is not interpreted, and not explained, the reader would not understand the description of the described events and words. When the transliterated word is described and explained in context, the meaning can be given in parentheses or explained below the text.

A. Foods

Food constitutes an essential and an integral part of people's cultural heritage and national identity. It is inherited from one generation to another with all its recipes, techniques and etiquettes, and is considered a mark or a brand of each nation. For example, pasta and pizza are brands or marks of Italy. Each nation has its regional foods, which have their special preparation method and specific ingredients, depending on its local products. Food is a living form of culture that is still practiced by people all around the world and is inseparably connected to culture; it is considered one

of the most important cultural activities that is practiced and continues to evolve each day. It is used in cultural and traditional gatherings, rituals and celebrations

Food plays a key role in shaping culture through reflecting its historical traditions and social interactions. It is nowadays an excellent symbol of cultural identity of all nations. There is a very strong link between food and cultural identity, and it is a purely socio-cultural element, which marks a specific nation.

Jordanian culture has many different foods that function as a symbol of its identity. *Mansaf*, for example, is the most famous dish that summarizes the Jordanian cuisine and Jordanian generosity. In the following examples, the authors will discuss how these material cultural elements are translated into Spanish language. The analysis will show that the task of the translator in dealing with food as a cultural element is not easy. Since the food examples in this study are *realia*, rendering them into Spanish would be of a high difficulty to comprehend on the behalf of the target language readers.

(a). *Helqum*

OT: (p. 12) الطرابلسية الى عمان لأول مره وصلت الراحة (p. 12)

SPT: El *helqum* hecho en Tripoli llegó por primera vez a Amman (p. 21). (The *Helqum* made in Tripoli arrived for the first time in Amman)

In the above example, *الراحة* is a *realia* that causes a translation challenge. What is surprising here and in the novel itself is that the novelist has used this food with two different names, which are *راحة* and *حلقوم*, although they are not interchangeably used in all Arab countries. The translator has opted for the word *helqum*, which is not used by the novelist in this example. He may have opted for this choice because *helqum* is more commonly used than *راحة* in most Arab countries, Turkey, Iran and Greece.

In the first place, the translator was not faithful when he replaced *راحة* by *helqum*, a food term that is used by the novelist. In the second place, he has wrongly footnoted *helqum* when defining it as a Syrian-Lebanese sweet. Originally, this sweet was originated in Turkey and was then spread in the Arab World during the Ottoman Empire. Besides, the translator was inaccurate when he explained the ingredients of *راحة* in the footnote as “*Sirio-Libanesecho de almidon, almáciga y pistachio y bañado en azúcar*” (a Syrian-Lebanese sweet that is made of starch, pine nuts and pistachios, and then coated with sugar).

As far as translation procedure is concerned, the translator has adopted a suitable translation procedure, which is transliteration. However, he has misguided the reader when he provided wrong details about the ingredients in the footnote. It is known in translation studies that the main function of footnoting is to provide useful explanatory details that can help the reader in understanding the source culture. Transliteration as a procedure in rendering *realia* is suitable as far as it is followed by footnotes that compensate any translation loss. Since a transliterated word may seem weird, the footnotes with explanatory information permit the TL reader to be familiar with it. Therefore, a couplet of transliteration and footnotes is a recommended procedure in order to make the ST fully comprehensible by the TL readers.

As *helqum* does not have a cultural equivalent in Spain, the translator has correctly chosen the couplet of transliteration and footnotes. Although some may consider footnotes as a disadvantage in translation because of interrupting the flow of reading, it is recommended and is indispensable when dealing with a transliterated *realia*. According to Hsieh (2015, p. 145), this couplet is often used by translators to “compensate for the cultural ignorance and/or difference in perspectives of an audience unfamiliar with the cultural context of the subject matter (...) and to cross the cultural gap between the source text and the target audience”.

(b). *Kunafa, Muchabbak & Zalabia*

OT: الذين تعودوا على الكنافة النابلسية, والمشبك, والزلابيا: (p. 14)

SPT: Tan acostumbrados a *la kunafa* de Nablus, *al muchabbak* y a *la zalabia* (p. 22). (So used to the *kunafa* of Nablus, the *muchabbak* and the *zalabia*)

In the present example, there are three types of sweets which are *kunafa*, *muchabbak* and *zalabia*. Originally, these sweets are from Palestine but they have become common in the whole Levant, which includes Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. In the receptive culture, the sweets are not known and that is why the translator has opted for transliteration as a translation procedure. This procedure is suitable for *realia* conditioned that enough details be provided in a footnote.

The footnotes that the translator supported his rendition with are general, and therefore target language readers would not be able to seize the exact meaning of the three sweets mentioned in the example. Instead, he should have given more details that can help the reader in the comprehension of these transliterated sweets. For example, *Zalabia* is similar to the Spanish *churros* in terms of ingredients and taste. Had the translator included *churros* in the footnote or used it as a cultural equivalent within the text, he would have enabled the TL reader to be familiar with this Jordanian sweet. In this manner, the translator would bridge the gap between the SL culture and TL readers. Nasser (2018, p. 8) maintains that:

The translator tries to find the most acceptable word in the TL that gives the function of the SL word. This word should also be the most frequently used in the TL. If a cultural equivalent is nearer to the SL word in terms of giving the same meaning, it will be used instead.

The main goal of footnoting is to assist the reader in directly understanding the meaning of transliterated *realia*. In the current *example*, the translator has given general information about these sweets and therefore the readers would not be able grasp the exact meaning of these *realia*. The translator has adopted what Dickins (2002, p. 32) calls “Cultural borrowing translation approach” where a “SL expression is transferred verbatim into the TL.” In other words, through the cultural borrowing translation approach, we can introduce the foreign ST element into the TT. Cultural borrowing involves the rendering of a culturally specific expression by a transliteration”. The authors of the article oppose this view because transliteration is insufficient to convey the meaning of *realia* and it misguides readers. In the same vein, Wiersema (2004), suggests that when translating, the translator has the option to adopt the foreign words to the TL with or without any explanation. They partly disagree with the latter view as explanation (footnoting) is essential to guarantee the compensation of any translation loss.

(c). *Kaak, Maamul, Madluga & Samid*

OT: يكتظ المتجر بحلويات أخرى، كعك، ومعمول، ومدلوقة، وحلاوة السميد (p. 16)

SPT: La pastelería estaba llena de otros tipos como *el kaak*, *el maamul*, *la madluga*, *el samid de nata* (p. 25). (The pastry shop was full of other types, such as *kaak*, *maamul*, *madluga*, and *samid* sweet)

There are four cultural terms in the current example that are all transliterated in Spanish language without any further explanation. Transliteration is a very useful procedure to follow in translation as far as it is accompanied with notes or explanatory information. Using this technique exclusively without such notes misguides the reader and deforms the translation. Some translators may purposefully use the procedure to urge TL readers to search for the meaning of such a word. In the example under discussion, not all readers can comprehend or grasp the whole meaning of these *realia* since they are not familiar with the Jordanian culture.

In the present example, the translator has employed transliteration to deal with *realia* without footnoting or providing explanatory details. This approach not only distracts the reader and buffers the flow of the text especially in literary works, but also causes a decline of interest on behalf of the reader. This translation procedure is repeatedly noticed throughout the whole translation of *Cuadernos del Diluvio*. Nasser (2018) maintains that a translator may adopt transliteration when he feels that target language readers can understand *realia*.

Transliteration can partly be helpful when dealing with *realia* because such terms do not have cultural equivalents in the TL. In the example above, the four *realia* are alphabetically written in the TL and in such a case, they remain ambiguous and meaningless to the TL readers. The argument being so, the use of transliteration without additional information or explanatory information in the authors' point of view is not useful, making the comprehension of the source text more difficult. This contrasts the main goal of translation, which is concerned with transferring the source text in a simple and a comprehensible way to TL readers, enabling them to overcome the language and cultural barriers.

Transliteration without footnoting as in the above example orthographically but not semantically preserves the four Jordanian *realia* in Spanish. The translator has failed to relay the content of the original text as he does not support his transliteration with footnotes. According to Veckracis (2020, p. 174), the couplet of transliteration and footnotes “provides an opportunity to convey both the “culture aspect” (through the use of transcription) and the “message aspect” (through the use of descriptive footnotes)”.

(d). *Mansaf*

OT: منسف داخل، منسف طالع (p. 201)

SPT: Comida va, comida viene (p. 317). (Food goes, food comes)

One of the procedures that may be followed in cultural translation is generalization. However, this translation procedure is not always practical since *realia* have specific and peculiar cultural values. The Jordanian *realia* منسف in the current example is a case in point. *Mansaf* is a Jordanian well-known festive and traditional dish that is communally served in Jordanian' socio-cultural events. It is symbolic in the sense that it resembles the Jordanian identity and social cohesion and fabric. Jordanians' hospitality or generosity is depicted and mirrored in the provision of this luxurious dish to guests. In the novel, Mostafa is highly appreciated when he is served *mansaf* on a daily basis.

In the current example, the translator has generally rendered *manaf* into Spanish as *comida* (food). This general translation of the *realia* resulted in a real translation shortcoming since the target text lacks illuminating details that uncover any misunderstanding. The translator should have opted for another procedure that suits the rendition of such a *realia*. The couplet (transliteration and footnotes) can be a suitable procedure in this situation. The translator of the novel should not only understand Arabic as the language of the source text, but he should also understand the Jordanian culture to correctly convey the message of the ST into Spanish. According to Pitaloka et al. (2018, p. 66) “a good translator should not only understand the language but also the culture of both languages”.

The translator attempts to domesticate the Jordanian *realia mansaf* when he opted for generalization as a translation procedure. According to Loughridge et al. (2003, p. 67), generalization “implies that the TT expression has a wider and less specific literal meaning than the ST expression. That is, the TT is more general, omitting details that are given by the ST”. In the authors' point of view, generalization is inappropriate when dealing with *realia* because it results in a translation loss. This loss lies in failing to display the Jordanian social culture which is implied in hosting Mostafa with *mansaf* on a daily basis, which is a symbol of luxurious lifestyle. Dickins et al. (2002, p. 57) maintain that “Generalizing translation is not acceptable if the TL does offer suitable alternatives, or if the omitted details are

important in the ST but not implied or compensated for the TT context". Therefore, transliterating *mansaf* with a compensation in form of a footnote can convey the social value of *masaf* that the novelist tries to convey to the reader. When dealing with specific *realia* like *mansaf*, it is highly recommended not to opt for generalization because the *realia* in this case has a special significance in the original text. Tomaszczyk (2010, p. 97) maintains that:

If the ST *realia* have no function in the text, i.e. it makes no difference what a given character eats, drinks or wear, then it can be either generalized or omitted, while if for some reason it has special significance, translators generally give explanatory additions (explicitation) or provide a descriptive translation.

(e). *Mlabas & Quthamah*

OT: يتركني صاحب المكتبة الى جوار قطر ميزات الملبس والقضامة (p. 34)

SPT: Lo suele colocar junto a los tarros de almendras bañadas en azúcar y de los garbanzos torraos (p. 50). (He usually places it next to jars of almonds dipped in sugar and roasted chickpeas)

There are two culture-bound foods in this example, which are *mlabas* and *quthamah*. The two foods are served to children as well as to adults. The first food, *mlabas*, is a typical Jordanian sweet, which is usually served on happy occasions and gatherings; it is made of an almond that is coated with colored sugar. The second food, *quthamah* is served for children as a salted snack and was, on the time of writing the novel, a daily demand for children in Jordan.

As far as translation is concerned, the translator has adopted two procedures, one is descriptive and another is cultural. The descriptive procedure is not recommended since it lengthens the text and stretches it further. Besides, co-text translation distracts the reader and obstructs the flow of the text, which consequently affects its comprehension and understanding in the receptive language. The translator here failed to convey the meaning using a wrong procedure. Therefore, the couplet is highly recommended especially when the translator ignores the meaning of the *realia* or its equivalent in his own culture.

In the case of *mlabas*, the translator provides a descriptive equivalent, which is according to Newmark (1988, p. 67) "the meaning of the cultural words explained in few words". The failure of the translator is the ignorance of the Jordanian *realia*'s meaning, because the Spanish culture has the same snack *peladillas*, defined in the *Dictionary of the Real Spanish Academy* as "*Almendra confitada con un baño de azúcar*" (candied almonds with a sugar coat). In this special case, it seems that the translator is not enough acknowledged in the two cultures involved in this study, the Jordanian as well as the Spanish.

Opting for the descriptive equivalent is a strong evidence of the translator's ignorance of his own culture, which has the exact equivalent of the Jordanian *realia* *mlabas*. According to Gijón, Inés and Beeby (2009, p. 110), the translator should not only have a linguistic competence in both languages, but also a "cultural competence, which provides the necessary knowledge of source and target languages' cultures".

Unlike his wrong rendition of *mlabas* into Spanish in this example, the translator has succeeded in translating *quthamaeh* as *garbanzo torraos* (toasted chickpeas) which is the accurate Spanish cultural equivalent of the Jordanian *realia*.

(f). *Harisa*

OT: الهريسة التي تصل محمضة من الشام (p. 57)

SPT: La Harisa que llegaba de Siria (p. 91). (The Harisa that arrived sour from Syria)

Harisa is one of the Jordanian popular sweets that are served more noticeably in cold times. It is made of semolina, yogurt, butter, sweet syrup and adorned with almonds or peanuts. It was locally made in Jordan, and the good quality was imported from Syria. For such cultural *realia*, transliteration can be a suitable translation procedure, which is adopted by the translator. In order to ensure preserving the cultural implications of *harisa*, it is recommended that additional information be provided. The translator has succeeded when he supported the transference of *harisa* with footnotes where he explains its ingredients. Footnotes are very useful to explain hidden meanings of cultural terms. However, the problem arose when he provided the target language text with completely irrelevant or wrong details. These details have not only misinformed the reader and lengthened the text, but have also deformed the original text when irrelevant ideas are supplied.

While *harisa* is typically a type of sweets in Jordan, it denotes a hot sauce in Arab Maghreb countries such as Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. The translator should be faithful to the OT and avoid imposing his personal knowledge on TT reader. He has the right to add supplementary information, conditioned that they serve the TT and its readers. What is wrong in the translation attempt here is that the translator has displaced the novel itself from the Jordanian culture into Maghreb culture.

Thus, the translator should transfer what the author means or intends in the OT and not what he wants, expects, thinks, or likes to convey. In the current example, the translator is imposing his own knowledge of the Arabic term *harisa* on his readers. According to De Carvalho (2010, p. 78),

Respecting the *desire* of the author would inspire the search for meaning and determine the degree of faithfulness of the translation with regard to the "original" discourse. Thus, translation should not only take into consideration the individual words and context of the original text, but also *the intention of the author*.

(g). *Boza*

OT: (p. 59) عقله كان منشغلا بالتفكير في مصنع البوزا

SPT: Ya su cabeza estaba completamente concentrada en la fabrica de *boza* (p. 93). (His head was already completely focused on the *boza* factory)

There is a *realia* of food in the current example which is بوزا, an ice cream mainly made of milk and pistachios. The translator has opted for transliteration as a translation procedure to render *boza* into Spanish. This procedure is suitable when dealing with a *realia* with supplementary details that can help to bridge any linguistic and cultural gaps between the ST and the TT.

In this example, the translator has provided the translation of *realia* with false information in the footnote. Footnoting *boza* as an ice cream made of cheese and pistachios has harmed the original text and wrongly displayed it in the target language. In fact, *boza* is made of milk and not cheese. Had he translated *boza* into Spanish as *helado* (ice cream), he would have successfully rendered it as the source term and the target term are totally equivalents. Therefore, generalization can be an appropriate translation procedure because *boza* is a well-known ice-cream and is not a main Jordanian traditional food like *mansaf* as shown in an above example.

Footnoting, as a target language procedure, can be helpful to target language readers in explicating the meaning of some cultural terms and unveiling any ambiguity. According to Sumarni (2020, p. 117), footnoting is “indispensable so that the foreign language readership could benefit from the text as much as the ST readers do”. However, transliteration and footnoting as a translation couplet is not necessary in this example since *helado* (ice-cream) is the accurate cultural equivalent of *boza*.

B. Dress

Realia as culture-specific material terms include dress. Every culture has its own clothing or dress and this depends on the material that exists in its regions. For example, some Jordanian dresses are made of wool, black sheep’s hair and camel’s hair. Due to dress cultural exclusiveness, a real translation challenge arises when rendering a cultural dress from one language into another. In the novel, *Tirwak*, *Abaya* and *Thoaob Ad-Dobait* are three cases in point.

(a). *Tirwak*

1. **OT:** فسمح لها بارتداء الترواك المدني (p. 21)

SPT: La permitía vestir a la última (p. 31). (He allowed her to dress the most modern dress)

2. **OT:** فنجمة لا تقصر ترواكها (p. 23)

SPT: Ya que **el vestido** de Nachma no era especialmente corto (p. 35). (Since Nachma’s **dress** was not particularly short)

Tirwak is a formal female dress that was worn in Jordan at the time of the novel’s events. It might be a one-piece dress or a two-piece dress, consisting of a top part and a skirt. This type of dress was mainly worn in cities. Jordanians living outside cities were not familiar with such a type of dress and they used to wear a long one-piece dress.

In translating *tirwak* into Spanish, the translator has followed two translation procedures. In the first case, he omitted the term *tirwak* and has descriptively relayed it in the TL as *vestir a la ultima* (dressed in most modern style). Nachma is from Maan, a city located in the far south of Jordan, where people are Bedouins, and women wear long dresses to cover the whole body. Moving to Amman, where *tirwak* was a common dress, she has abandoned her normal dress and started mingling with the new community, where people are open and wearing a shorter dress. This style of dress does not have any social opposition or social rejection in Amman.

In the second case, the translator has generally translated *tirwak* as *vestido* (dress). The case being so, the translator should be consistent and should have opted for one procedure rather than two when dealing with a repeated *realia* in the same novel. Consequently and in the case here, the translator confuses the TL readers and misguides them.

To resolve any potential confusion and misunderstanding, it is recommended that the translator opt for the translation couplet (transliteration and footnotes) in the first mention of the *realia*. In the next mention of *tirwak*, the translator does not need to add footnotes together with the transliteration as readers would be familiar with the transliterated *realia*. The importance of this recommendation springs from the fact that the omission and generalization as two translation procedures for *tirwak* deprive the ST of its Jordanian cultural identity. Enough knowledge of the Jordanian culture may facilitate the translation of Jordanian *realia* like *tirwak* in the above example. Omission and generalization in the above example inadvertently strip the source text of its Jordanian cultural identity.

(b). *Abayas*

OT: والعباءات من شتى الأصناف (p. 31)

SPT: *Abayas* de todo tipo (p. 49). (*Abayas* from all types)

Abaya is a *realia* that is used by the novelist in *Cuadernos del Diluvio*. It is a long dress that is worn by both males and females and is essentially made of wool, silk, cotton or other materials. It is dressed over other clothes and it is usually open.

Since *abaya* is a *realia*, the translator has transliterated it into Spanish as *abaya* and has footnoted it with *la abaya es una tunica de lana que visten tanto los hombres como mujeres en la zona de Oriente Medio* (a cloak made of wool and is dressed by both males and females in the Middle East). However, the *abaya* can be simply translated into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak) which is a cultural equivalent of it. What is surprising in this example is that the translator has opted for

transliteration and footnotes (as a couplet) which is recommended for *realia* that do not have equivalents in the TL. In this example, the translator should have opted for cultural equivalent as a translation procedure since *abaya* has a full counterpart in Spanish, which is *tunica*.

(c). *Thob Ad-Dobait*

OT: فرض عليها ارتداء الثوب الدوبييت (p. 20)

SPT: le impuso la obligacion de vestir una tunica (p. 31). (She was forced to wear a tunic)

Thob ad-dobait is a Jordanian black dress that is free from decorations and colors, and is dressed by Bedouins in Maan, where Nachma got married. This black dress is wrongly translated into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak). Of course, there is a big difference between these two types of dress. While the cloak can have many colors and is made of many materials, *thob ad-dobait* is always black and is made of velvet.

The translator has wrongly rendered *thob ad-dobait* into Spanish as *tunica* (cloak) as they are completely different. In the first place, the *thob ad-dobait* is not reflected in the TT and consequently there is no fidelity of such a *realia* in the TL. It seems that the translator is not fully aware of the Jordanian culture. As some *realia* have cultural equivalents in target culture, the translator should use them directly without transliteration and footnoting as is the case with *abaya* in the above example. Some *realia*, however, do not have cultural equivalents in the TL, as *thob ad-dobait* in the current example. The translator has erroneously rendered *thob ad-dobait* as *tunica*, which is not the TL correspondence. In order to avoid such translation loss, the translator should have enough cultural background of the ST culture.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study has shown that translation of Jordanian novels into Spanish is not a simple task due to the *realia* they include. It has revealed that enjoying enough cultural background is an essential requirement to ensure the correct rendition of the *realia* in the receptive language. Foods and dresses as examples of the *realia* have proved that reflecting them into Spanish cannot be made successfully by following one translation procedure. After translationally investigating the illustrative examples of *realia*, the study has made clear that translation couplet (transliteration and footnoting) is the best procedure to deal with them. In other words, one of such couplet procedures does not serve the TT without the other as in (c) of food examples where the translator transliterated the *realia* without providing any footnote. The supporting footnotes should be correctly employed to disambiguate the meaning of the transliterated *realia* as lacked in (a) and (g) of food examples, where wrong information is given and in (f) where irrelevant information is provided. Likewise, generalization is not suitable either since it does not reflect the exact cultural meaning and semantic load of *realia* as shown in example (d). As for omission, which is employed by the translator in some examples, it can be useful as long as the omitted *realia* does not affect the message conveyed by the ST. *Realia* do not have full cultural equivalents, though opting for such a procedure can help in bridging cultural gaps as in (e). Descriptive translation has failed in conveying *realia* as this procedure lengthens the text and causes some boredom to the TT readers especially in literary texts such as novels. Based on these outcomes, it is recommended that more research be made on the translation of *realia* as main elements of novels.

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Women's Bodily Redemption in Richard Yates' *Revolutionary Road*: An Analysis From the Perspectives of Body Narrative and Feminist Jurisprudence

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Abstract—This paper tries to analyze *Revolutionary Road* from the perspectives of body narrative and feminist jurisprudence. The second part, “The Pain of Childbirth”, and the third part, “The Bewilderment Between the Soul and the Body”, talk about female physical and mental health, respectively. The fourth part, “The Trespass of the Body”, promotes Reproductive Health Rights and Birthing Rights, thus further exploring how the women, as the subject of desire, trespass their heavy human bodies, how they overcome the unbearable lightness of their bodies, how they control and subdue their bodies, and how they finally gain salvation and revolution.

Index Terms—*Revolutionary Road*, body narrative, feminist jurisprudence, human right

I. INTRODUCTION

In the first half of the 20th century, the pioneer of the birth control campaign, Margaret Sanger, persevered against all odds, spreading the seeds of family planning worldwide. Her concepts of “family planning” and “birth control” eventually led the U.S. Supreme Court in 1965 to rule under the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, effectively overturning laws prohibiting abortion. This decision established reproductive choices as matters of personal autonomy, not state affairs. It marked the beginning of American women taking control and emancipating their bodies. Richard Yates' *Revolutionary Road* depicts the absurdity of middle-class American family life and the plight of women before these revolutionary reforms (set in 1955). This paper attempts to analyze the novel from the perspective of **bodily narrative discourse theory** and **feminist jurisprudence**. It focuses on women's physical and psychological health through the aspects of “The Pain of Childbirth” and “The Bewilderment Between the Soul and the Body”. Exploring the section of “The Trespass of the Body”, it examines how women, as subjects of desire, transcend the burdensome physicality, overcome the weightlessness of the body, and control and conquer their bodies, ultimately achieving redemption and liberation.

II. THE PAIN OF CHILDBIRTH

In the denouement of the story, the female protagonist in the novel tragically meets her end due to a clandestine abortion.

She had been very careful about the blood....Two heavy towels, soaked crimson, lay lumped in the tub, close to the drain....On the floor of the linen closet he found the syringe in its pot of cold water; she had probably put it there to hide it from the ambulance crew. (Yates, 2008, pp. 245-246)

What leads to this outcome? Is it due to the sense of self-loss and powerlessness experienced by middle-class American suburban women? Is it a rebellion against the rigid and conservative lifestyle of the middle class? Is it a self-terminating act borne from despair towards life? Or is it an attempt to resist the patriarchal society through self-willed actions, stripping away the husband's masculinity, seeking freedom of choice, and, in this pursuit, discovering one's essence and ultimately reconstructing female subjectivity? Nevertheless, the young protagonist, April, after enduring the arduousness of “reproduction”, treats her body as an object of exercising power, endeavoring to dismantle the ossified relationships entrenched within the patriarchal structure. However, she suffers greatly, cursed and punished whether she chooses to bear a child or not, thus paying the ultimate price in terms of health.

Before the 1960s, American women lacked control over their bodies concerning reproductive matters due to the illegality of abortion and the lack of accessible contraception. Excessive childbirth significantly compromised women's health and happiness. Feminist and human rights movements further advocated for a deepened focus on maternal health, nurturing environments for children's growth, and women's empowerment over their bodies. Prior to the 1960s, United States laws obstructed women from making decisions for reproductive health security and its associated services, prompting feminists to staunchly question and challenge these legal restrictions (Lance, 2010). Additionally, subjective

medical judgment and “conscientious objection” deprived women of equal rights in deciding on abortion, infringing upon their rights to reproductive health and access to related services (O’Rourke et al., 2012). The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes that in nations with stringent abortion laws, there exists a higher rate of induced abortions, predominantly performed under unsafe conditions, thus causing women to face frequent threats to their health and lives. Restrictive related legal frameworks instead have compelled women to resort to perilous abortion services, thereby jeopardizing their lives (Natarajan & Sarayu, 2023).

In the novel, April seeks to narrate her body and soul by exercising control over her reproductive rights. However, her agency and autonomy are not acknowledged within the moral and legal frameworks of that era. Ultimately, she endures the hardship of abortion alone, devoid of any medical assistance or familial support. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) has made significant contributions to safeguarding women’s reproductive rights, privacy, and marriage equality, among others. Article 25 stipulates, “We all have the right to enough food, clothing, housing, and **healthcare** for ourselves and our families....An expectant mother and her baby should both receive extra care and support....” (UDHR). The Reproductive Health Rights of American women witnessed substantial improvement following the enactment of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the redefinition of governmental obligations. However, globally, the plight of women in childbirth remains a persistent concern within feminist and human rights discourses. According to the World Health Organization, every two minutes, a woman dies during pregnancy or childbirth (WHO, 2023). Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), remarked, “While pregnancy should be a time of immense hope and a positive experience for all women, it is tragically still a shockingly dangerous experience for millions around the world who lack access to high quality, respectful health care” (WHO, 2023). Lack of access to professional healthcare and services during childbirth is prevalent in developing countries. The auspicious event of childbirth is tragically juxtaposed with the grievous occurrence of maternal mortality for numerous families globally. Approximately 287,000 women lost their lives during and after pregnancy in 2020, and this figure is deemed unacceptably elevated (WHO, 2024). Furthermore, women’s attempts to exercise control over their bodies through abortion often face scientific limitations due to various social and cultural constraints.

Although the novel is set in the 1960s and portrays the absurd world of post-war 1950s American middle-class women condemning the reality and calling for a revolution among women while seeking their true selves (Sun, 2013), April’s plight in childbirth and her tragic sacrifice broadly opens a window for the whole world. Through this window, observers catch a glimpse of the harrowing experiences in the history of the feminist movement in developed countries. Simultaneously, it also provides a preview of the arduous human rights path for developing nations in improving women’s reproductive conditions and advocating for **Reproductive Health Rights**. Embracing an inclusive right to women’s reproductive care may also facilitate the development of feminist constitutional ethics not only in the US but also in the world (Kavinsky, 2023), regardless of women’s race, gender, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, or any other characteristic that might lead to discrimination or marginalization.

III. THE BEWILDERMENT BETWEEN THE SOUL AND THE BODY

In the novel, a schism and opposition exist between April’s spirit and her physical self. On the one hand, as a wife, she is immersed in household chores, barely maintaining a semblance of stability in family life; she endeavors to perform in a play, seeking recognition from others to experience the spiritual essence of physical existence. However, on the other hand, the monotonous daily routine constantly challenges and undermines the authority of her “self”. The overly self-assured April finds herself “working alone”. She had “lost her grip”, “had begun to alternate between false theatrical gestures and a white-knuckled immobility”, and “you could see the warmth of humiliation rising in her face and neck”, making the fall of the stage curtain “an act of mercy” (Yates, 2008, pp. 9-10). Attempting to showcase her “talent” and assert her superior worth, April portrays similar theatrics in life, feigning superiority and uniqueness, craving recognition and admiration from others (Matek, 2011). However, unfortunately, as Vavotici Francesca says, April’s existence mirrors the limitations often found in a theatrical production (Francesca, 2020). She yearns to maintain a perpetual sense of self-satisfaction and self-actualization in social interactions, with this “self” incessantly monitoring the gradually disappointing and disillusioning exterior “I”, which means precisely her female body. She needs to control her body to maintain this sense. However, when her body is once again restrained by pregnancy and cannot achieve the lofty and uninhibited true self by fleeing to Europe or escaping reality, the body and the child within become the cause of distress, anxiety, and vexation for her spirit. The mind even exhibits symptoms of hysteria, while the body and the unborn child, like unwanted rubbish, are despised, reviled, rejected, and ultimately discarded by the soul seeking liberation (Liu, 2012). The division between spirit and body leaves the self in an awkward state, entangled between two distinct entities, enduring torment and anguish. The external “I” (the body) in the macroscopic material world and the internal “I” (the soul) of housewives, undiscovered or unfulfilled, fail to listen to each other, fail to work in tandem, but instead dissolve each other, thus burdening women with the weighty **bewilderment between the soul and body**, the spirit and the flesh.

The unrestrained practice of “conscientious objection” not only deprives women of their most fundamental right to access legitimate medical care but also confines women’s thoughts from social and cultural perspectives, such as

religious beliefs, drowning out their feeble voices in the pursuit of **birthing rights**. The choice of abortion is, in many cases, the morally responsible decision that the imposition of another's conscience should not override (O'Rourke et al., 2012). The abuse of others' "conscience" places pregnant women in a dilemma of incessantly giving birth to the next generation or being compelled to resort to clandestine, life-threatening abortions. Emergency abortions undoubtedly carry the risk of self-harm, expanding beyond surgical emergencies into the realm of **mental health** for pregnant women. In the novel, years ago, when April unintentionally conceives for the first time, she attempts abortion to return to her envisioned marital trajectory. However, her husband's choice and her sense of responsibility lead them to keep the child, firmly anchoring them in a tedious and repugnant marital life. The arrival of their second child is merely to validate their initial choice of the first child and mundane family life. Choice and responsibility cause endless **anxiety** for them (Sun, 2013). Deprived of reproductive autonomy, April is thrust into a state of emptiness and restlessness, striving through theatrical performance to rediscover her ideals, beliefs, self-esteem, and worth. Ironically, the play suffered a "miscarriage" due to April's inability to control her surrounding world amidst anxiety and anguish. The pursuit of true self or identity by her mind and soul ultimately "miscarries" in the uncontrollable and uncertain realities of the world. However, the origin of this unfortunate situation lies in April's initial deprivation, as well as that of numerous women, of the right to reproductive choice.

Frank's male mindset that follows the cultural tradition makes him unable to open his mind to accept that every individual has Personal Autonomy in determining the choice, with personal autonomy including a series of ideas, such as "right myself", "do it" my way, "defend" what I believe in, "think" of myself, and in egalitarian-gender reformulation, become "a person", which in April's case is a process from having "challenge", "self-efficacy", "self-acceptance", "self-assurance", to having "locus of control-life", and ultimately to "locus of control-Self" (Safitri, 2020, pp. 45-51). Women's autonomy to choose whether or not to bear children directly determines the size of a family and impacts the overall quality of family life, particularly for women themselves. Women aspire to have control over their bodies, and unrestricted childbirth does not always align with their true desires. The regret of mothers and the economic and emotional burden posed by numerous children become significant contributors to family tragedies. When April chooses not to have children, she asserts herself as the authority in defining her own life, prioritizing her judgment over conforming to the stereotype. Friedan often criticizes the child-like stereotyped image of the suburban housewife who believes that her husband knows what is best for her (Friedan, 1963).

For women, especially in developing or underprivileged countries, emancipation from traditional family roles becomes a crucial question. Evidently, empowering women to control reproduction through **birth control** and **family planning** is an essential avenue. Women should firmly grasp knowledge and authority over contraception to challenge the long-standing displacement of women (Kalsem, 2012). Women's reproductive rights fall within the purview of **Feminist Jurisprudence**. This field contends that to enhance women's awareness of their rights and ultimately dismantle the unequal treatment women face in family life and reproduction, widespread dissemination of women's childbirth experiences is necessary. Engaging in robust discussions on related topics is imperative to afford women the most basic rights to life and freedom (Murphy, 2010).

IV. THE TRESPASS OF THE BODY

Modern narratives have given rise to a certain symbolization of the body, paralleled by the corporealization of stories, marking the body and turning it into a subject of literary narration (Brooks, 1993). The "body" not only threads through the novel, encapsulating the individual privacy and emotions of Frank and April, but also shoulders the weighty responsibility of macro-narratives involving historical reflection and the construction of contemporary female subjectivity. The "body" assumes a significant role, extending from the exploration of the personal domain to a keen attention to urgent situations on a national and global scale. In the novel, through the choice of theatrical performance, April's body initially becomes an object "gazed upon" within the male visual domain, subject to merciless evaluations by heartless observers. The failure of the performance shatters both body and self, dismantling the self as a desiring subject and the body as an object of desire. However, how could one easily relinquish their desires? Even when coerced into satisfaction, a woman, unsatisfied with the particular revelatory moment, the gaps between extrication and the tent (Brooks, 1993), will trace her desires to the painful end. Consequently, April, ahead of her time, exercises the future legal bestowment of privacy rights (Brooks, 1993), opting for abortion. Through her body, an intricate and articulate vessel, she forcibly asserts control over her own body, expressing to the world that women have the ability to consciously and intentionally assume their identity in relation to male desire, skillfully managing this desire to achieve the destiny of their own bodies (Brooks, 1993).

However, how should the **law** assist women in transforming their bodies from passive objects of scrutiny into active scriptwriters of their own bodies? "The common law, even with its equality premise, cannot on its own guarantee women's negative liberty without an explicit embrace of women as intended beneficiaries (Inniss, 2020, p. 100)." Then, what are the intended benefits? The answers are women's **Reproductive Health Rights** and **Reproductive Rights**. In order to realize these rights, governments, especially those in developing and underdeveloped countries, should actively respond to the calls of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). They should acknowledge the various forms of affirmative obligations outlined in international human rights treaties, particularly

those pertaining to the government's responsibility to ensure women's reproductive health rights. Governments are encouraged to support the formulation of domestic laws and regulations that align with the principles of international conventions. Concerns about potential limitations on national sovereignty imposed by international laws and regulations should not lead governments to covertly reject international oversight of their actions and the positive impact of international conventions on their legislative endeavors. Acknowledging international conventions can significantly contribute to the realization of women's **right to equality** and **right to be protected**. **Reproductive health rights** and **reproductive rights** are no longer confined to the private and national domains but **extend into the public and international arenas**, assertively safeguarding the interests and advocating for justice for the laboring masses, including pregnant women, children, and caregivers.

The law should take a standpoint that prioritizes women's interests, focusing on the rights of "vulnerable groups", embracing diverse voices, fostering social inclusivity, and overseeing the availability, accessibility, and acceptability of high-quality healthcare services for a broad spectrum of women. Governments and legal frameworks must respect and safeguard women's reproductive health rights, assisting women in realizing these rights within the confines of national resource capabilities. To ensure the protection of **reproductive health rights**, the government must legislate to guarantee an ample supply of reproductive healthcare resources, such as qualified healthcare equipment, medical instruments, medications, and well-trained professionals. Barriers preventing women from accessing relevant medical equipment, medications, or services must be eliminated by governments and legal frameworks. The medical equipment, medications, and services provided by the government should align with the cultural and moral customs of the users. Simultaneously, governments and legal systems must eradicate any traditional cultural practices that infringe upon women's reproductive health rights. Governments and legal frameworks should ensure women have access to contraceptive measures, provide safe remedial measures (such as legal abortion), and assist women in preventing and treating any diseases affecting their reproductive health. Women have the right to education about contraception and reproductive health, which governments and legal frameworks must safeguard. Under legal supervision, governments should establish multi-tiered human rights protection mechanisms and systems, enabling women to assert their legitimate rights to reproductive health and reproductive rights through various channels and at different levels (Lance, 2010).

The right to reproductive choice should be considered a necessary condition for the legal endowment of women's substantive rights, extending beyond just the right to vote or access education. It is a fundamental autonomy granted by law—a right for women to determine their own destinies and establish intimate interpersonal relationships (Baer, 2012). Concerning the protection of **reproductive (choice) rights**, the law should define and recognize intentional interference with a woman's legitimate "family planning" activities as an infringement on her privacy and reproductive rights, thus categorizing it as a form of domestic violence (Trawick, 2012, p. 100). The law should stipulate that women have the power to make decisions regarding reproduction or abstention from reproduction (a particularly concerning issue in developing and underdeveloped countries). Reproductive choice rights are the foundational human rights preceding women's access to reproductive health rights and constitute the minimum guarantee for women's pursuit of equal rights, discourse rights, and autonomy. The law should prohibit employers from dismissing female employees due to pregnancy or maternity leave, ensuring paid maternity leave and other social benefits. Governments and legal systems should facilitate better coordination of family obligations, work tasks, and social responsibilities by promoting social service systems that assist parents in alleviating the burden of caring for infants and toddlers. The law should mandate government protection to ensure women promptly receive medical health information and services related to family planning, pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum care, and breastfeeding. Throughout the entire reproductive choice process, the law should safeguard women from any gender discrimination and require men to bear an equal share of marital and familial responsibilities (Baer, 2012). The case of *Whole Women's Health v. Hellerstedt* in 2016, heard by the United States Supreme Court, as the most important abortion case in the US, has marked three female justices' judicial performance as a feminist victory, which announced "The Women Take Over" (Lithwick, 2016) and declared that the three female justices had "upend[ed] the Supreme Court's balance of power" (Gibson, 2019, p. 319). Justice Ginsburg in the court pointed out the logical flaw of the Solicitor General's "women in El Paso could simply cross the border and find a (abortion) clinic in New Mexico" that the clinics in New Mexico do not meet the requirements that HB2 (Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act) demands, thus disclosing "the pretense of protection", namely "the woman-protective justification for HB2 as an empty fiction (Gibson, 2019, pp. 328-329)". The common law has achieved a stage victory in feminist jurisprudence at this time. However, in the long run, on a global scale and within the domestic laws of various other countries, how far will this path extend?

Freedom and equality are rights belonging to all humanity, and the freedom to choose whether to reproduce or not should be considered a fundamental right for women. Without the fundamental right to reproductive choice, there is no access to crucial reproductive health rights. How can women bear the burden of involuntary motherhood without the basic right to choose whether to conceive? While women as a collective possess certain shared experiences, individual men and women are irreducible entities, rational beings with inherent differences (Yue, 2014). Feminist jurisprudence respects and protects these differences by advocating for the legal endowment of reproductive choice to women. However, if the subject of freedom is deprived of the opportunity for health, the obligation of women as mothers becomes equally challenging to fulfill. Therefore, feminist jurisprudence, from a broader perspective of human care,

advocates for granting women the right to reproductive health. The freedom of women's reproduction helps reconstruct basic women's rights, while the right to reproductive health further safeguards a more liberated and dignified life status for women as individuals or as mothers. Just as in April's struggling mind, the ultimate restoration and perfection of her physical body can reflect the completeness of her female self-salvation spiritually and physically in terms of human existence. The intricate vessel of women's bodies, through the narration and control of the self, opens the door to seeking legal equality. Feminist jurisprudence aims to use women's legal equality as a starting point to achieve equality for all humanity.

V. CONCLUSION

This study into Richard Yates' *Revolutionary Road* from perspectives of body narrative and feminist jurisprudence demonstrates the disruptive potential of women's lack of **reproductive health rights** not only in the US but also globally as a feminist legal strategy and points to the significance of feminist jurisprudential criticism of literature as a platform for feminist intervention into legal construction. This study allows readers to see how the women of the United States advanced a feminist intervention through their tragical bodily performance of self-actualization and self-autonomy—serving the constructive **literary role** to radically remake the boundaries of abortion jurisprudence and encourage a diverse international readership to unite in promoting the protection of fundamental rights for women frequently overlooked, marginalized, and adversely affected by legal practices.

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Emotional Intelligence and Engagement in Language Learning: A Mixed-Methods Exploration of Their Impact on English Language Proficiency

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Abstract—This study investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and engagement in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning among 362 Saudi adult learners. Data were collected using the Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning Questionnaire (EILLQ) and the Language Learning Engagement Questionnaire (LLEQ), which were specifically developed for this study, along with semi-structured interviews and learners' reflective journals. The findings revealed that the learners exhibited moderate to high levels of EI across all its five components, with motivation receiving the highest mean score, followed by self-awareness and social skills. Self-regulation and empathy also showed moderate levels, suggesting a well-rounded emotional foundation among the learners. Similarly, the participants displayed moderate to high levels of engagement across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions, with mean scores that reflected a balanced engagement profile. Additionally, the study found a strong positive correlation between EI and engagement in EFL learning. Both EI and engagement significantly impacted English language proficiency, with engagement showing a slightly stronger influence. These findings highlight the critical role of EI in enhancing learner engagement and language proficiency, which suggests that educational strategies focused on developing EI could significantly improve EFL learning experiences and outcomes.

Index Terms—emotional intelligence, language learning engagement, EFL learning, English language proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

The role of emotional intelligence (EI) in education has been receiving increased attention in recent years (Barchard et al., 2016; Halimi et al., 2021; MacCann et al., 2020; Wood, 2020). EI, as conceptualized by Goleman (1995), involves the capacity to identify, comprehend, and regulate both one's own emotions and those of others. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning, EI plays a crucial role because it can impact learners' self-confidence, motivation, and interpersonal relationships, all of which are key components for successful language learning (Mercer & Gkonou, 2017; Oxford, 2016; Sucaromana, 2012). Moreover, given the inherent challenges of language learning, the ability to manage emotions and sustain motivation is particularly important for EFL learners (Shao et al., 2013). Previous research on EI (e.g., Ebrahimi et al., 2018a, 2018b; Farooq, 2014; Genç et al., 2016; Pishghadam, 2009; Saud, 2019; Taheri et al., 2019) demonstrated its positive impact on language skill development. Numerous studies have also explored the interplay between EI and various learner factors, such as cognitive intelligence, language learning strategies, learning styles, foreign language enjoyment (FLE), and learner autonomy (e.g., Li, 2020; Li et al., 2021; Resnik & Dewaele, 2020, 2023; Shen, 2021; Taheri et al., 2019). Furthermore, EI helps learners manage the stress and anxiety often associated with language learning, which allows them to focus on learning activities and build resilience in the face of challenges, thereby leading to greater proficiency (Li et al., 2021; Resnik & Dewaele, 2020; Shao et al., 2013). This suggests that learners with higher EI are more likely to exhibit behaviors indicative of strong engagement, such as active participation in class and persistence through difficulties. Conversely, low EI may lead to disengagement and other unfavorable outcomes, such as academic stress and burnout (McEown et al., 2024).

Engagement in language learning refers to the degree of attention, interest, investment, and effort that learners exhibit during language learning activities (Mercer & Dörnyei, 2020; Philp & Duchesne, 2016). It encompasses behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions that reflect how learners interact with learning materials, peers, and teachers (Fredricks et al., 2004). The importance of engagement in EFL learning cannot be overstated. High engagement is typically associated with increased effort, perseverance, and a positive attitude toward learning. Engaged learners are more likely to practice language skills regularly, participate in class activities, and seek out additional learning opportunities outside the classroom. This sustained effort and positive attitude toward learning can significantly enhance language development and proficiency (see e.g., Aubrey et al., 2022; Taboada Barber et al., 2020; Zhang, 2022). As such, learner engagement has become a focal point for researchers and educators who are aiming to address challenges related to motivation, attendance, and academic performance (see Fredricks et al., 2004). Previous studies on

learner engagement in EFL classrooms (e.g., Dao, 2020, 2021; Dao et al., 2021; Lambert & Zhang, 2019; Lambert et al., 2017; Philp & Duchesne, 2016) primarily focused on task-based interactions. These studies suggested that engagement is influenced by factors such as the creation of learner-generated content, task-oriented goal setting, and the implementation of interaction strategies.

A thorough review of previous studies on the roles of EI and engagement in EFL learning revealed a dynamic interplay: EI enhances engagement, and engaged learners further develop their emotional skills, which creates a richer language-learning experience. Although the significance of EI and engagement in educational settings is well recognized, there is a notable lack of research that explored their interaction within EFL contexts, with the exception of a recent study conducted by McEown et al. (2024) among Japanese learners of English. Addressing this gap is crucial because understanding how these factors interact can provide deeper insights into the processes that drive successful language learning. Moreover, understanding the role of EI and engagement in language learning can help tackle broader educational challenges. For example, fostering an emotionally intelligent and supportive learning environment can reduce attrition rates and enhance overall learner well-being. As educators become more attuned to the emotional and engagement-related needs of their students, they can adopt more inclusive instructional strategies that cater to diverse learner profiles.

This study aimed to investigate the intricate relationship between EI and engagement among EFL learners in Saudi Arabia and to explore the possible influences of these factors on English proficiency. It employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of these phenomena. Four research questions guided this research:

1. How do the different components of EI manifest among Saudi EFL learners?
2. What are the levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement among the learners?
3. How does EI relate to engagement in EFL learning?
4. How do EI and engagement influence English language proficiency?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Emotional Intelligence

EI has received significant attention over the past few decades due to its profound impact on various aspects of life, including personal, academic, and professional domains. The term “emotional intelligence” was introduced in 1990 by John Mayer, Maria DiPaolo, and Peter Salovey. They defined it as “the accurate appraisal and expression of emotions in oneself and others and the regulation of emotion in a way that enhances living” (Mayer et al., 1990, p. 772). This foundational work established the importance of EI in understanding human behavior and interpersonal relationships and laid the groundwork for further exploration and expansion of the concept. In 1995, Daniel Goleman, a prominent psychologist, popularized the concept of EI and outlined a model that consisted of five main components:

1. Self-Awareness: The capacity to identify and comprehend one’s own emotions. In EFL learning, self-awareness helps learners identify their emotional responses to different learning activities and environments, thereby enabling them to address any negative feelings that might hinder their progress.
2. Self-Regulation: The ability to control and direct one’s emotions in a constructive way. For EFL learners, self-regulation aids in maintaining motivation and dealing with frustration or anxiety related to language challenges, thus fostering a more resilient learning approach.
3. Motivation: The drive to achieve objectives with enthusiasm and persistence. Motivation is crucial for EFL learners as it affects their willingness to practice, participate, and persevere in learning.
4. Empathy: The ability to perceive and relate to the emotions of others. Empathy enhances communication skills and helps EFL learners understand cultural nuances and perspectives, which is essential for effective language use and building meaningful connections with others.
5. Social Skills: Competence in managing relationships and building networks. Social skills are vital for EFL learners to engage in meaningful interactions and practice communication in real-life contexts that enhance language development.

Goleman’s model has been widely employed in educational and organizational settings to improve interpersonal communication, leadership skills, and emotional well-being (see e.g., Aamir, 2023; Greenockle, 2010; Hess & Bacigalupo, 2011; Mayer et al., 2000; Palmer et al., 2008; Safarlı, 2021). This research adopted Goleman’s model to examine how EI was demonstrated among the participants and contributed to their learning engagement and overall English proficiency. It is important, however, to note that the literature sometimes distinguishes between two types of EI. Petrides and Furnham (2000) introduced the concept of “trait emotional intelligence” (TEI), which contrasts with “ability emotional intelligence” in terms of measurement methods. Ability EI is assessed through performance-based evaluations, while TEI is measured using self-report questionnaires. In this paper, the term EI refers specifically to TEI, which was the focus of the assessment in this research.

Research across various foreign language (FL) contexts has underscored the pivotal role of EI in shaping the emotional experiences of the learners. Higher EI was associated with reduced foreign language anxiety (FLA) and improved FLE (see Li, 2020; Li et al., 2021; Resnik & Dewaele, 2020; Shao et al., 2013). Empirical studies have also highlighted the significant impact of EI on overall language proficiency. For example, Pishghadam (2009) investigated

EI among Iranian university students and discovered that various EI dimensions were closely linked to academic success across the four language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Building on these insights, Taheri et al. (2019) explored the interplay between EFL learners' EI, cognitive intelligence, language learning strategies, and language achievement. The researchers found that certain EI subdomains, such as interpersonal relationships, optimism, and problem-solving, were significantly associated with higher language achievement. The study also revealed that higher EI correlated strongly with the use of effective language learning strategies and learning styles.

Focusing on Saudi EFL learners, Farooq (2014) observed a positive correlation between EI and English proficiency among Saudi university students. Higher EI levels positively influenced proficiency in the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Complementing these findings, Saud (2019) demonstrated that higher EI among Saudi undergraduates, especially in terms of "utilization of emotion" and "management of others' emotions," was associated with better English achievement. These studies collectively demonstrated the pivotal role of EI in enhancing various aspects of language learning and academic performance among EFL learners. By fostering positive emotional environments, reducing FLA, and improving language skills, EI proves to be an essential factor for achieving successful outcomes in FL education across diverse learner populations.

B. Engagement in Language Learning

Learner engagement, despite its relatively recent recognition, has become a fundamental factor in creating meaningful task experiences in the FL classroom (Dörnyei, 2019; Ellis, 2018). It plays a pivotal role in determining the effectiveness of language instruction, and it influences both motivation and learning outcomes (Afzali & Izadpanah, 2021; Aubrey et al., 2022; Raman et al., 2023; Taboada Barber et al., 2020; Zhang, 2022). Bygate and Samuda (2009) defined learner engagement as the combination of resources and efforts that learners utilize to achieve their language learning objectives. Understanding how engagement impacts the learning process can, therefore, aid educators in designing more interactive and effective language tasks.

The multidimensional model of engagement, developed by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris in 2004, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding learner engagement. This model identified three primary dimensions of engagement, each of which addresses a different aspect of how learners interact with their learning environment.

1. Behavioral engagement focuses on participation and encompasses involvement in academic, social, and extracurricular activities. It includes behaviors such as regular attendance, active engagement in learning tasks, participation in discussions, adherence to rules and norms, and perseverance when facing challenges. In the context of EFL learning, this translates to regularly attending English classes, actively contributing to classroom discussions, completing homework assignments, and following classroom rules.
2. Emotional engagement involves expressing feelings toward teachers, peers, and the school environment and fostering a sense of belonging within the school community. It encompasses both positive emotions, such as satisfaction, enjoyment, and excitement, and negative emotions, such as boredom, stress, and resentment. In the EFL context, this includes positive feelings toward learning English, enthusiasm for participating in language activities, satisfaction upon achievement of learning goals, and anxiety or boredom during English lessons.
3. Cognitive engagement entails a commitment to learning and a willingness to invest the effort required to understand complex concepts and develop challenging skills. It has been linked to learners' alertness and attention during the learning process (Svalberg, 2009). This dimension encompasses the use of learning strategies, self-regulation, and persistence in challenging tasks. In the context of EFL learning, this includes employing effective language learning strategies, seeking additional resources to understand difficult grammar rules, applying critical thinking in language use, and setting personal language learning goals.

These dimensions are interrelated and collectively contribute to a holistic understanding of learner engagement. High levels of engagement across all three dimensions are fundamental for academic success as well as the overall learning experience (Fredricks et al., 2004). This model has been widely employed in educational research to analyze and enhance learner engagement in various language learning contexts (see e.g., Bitrián et al., 2021; Gunness et al., 2023; Hanaysha et al., 2023; Heilporn et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2022; Martin et al., 2023). In this research, it was also adopted to explore the levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement among the study participants.

While numerous studies have explored EFL learning engagement within online environments, this review focused exclusively on research conducted in traditional, in-person classrooms to provide a specific understanding of engagement dynamics in face-to-face learning settings, which was the focus of this study. For example, the research conducted by Lambert et al. (2017) focused on the benefits of using learner-generated content (LGC) versus teacher-generated content (TGC) in FL learning tasks and revealed that LGC tasks significantly improved all aspects of learner engagement as the participants were more invested in tasks related to their own experiences. Lambert and Zhang (2019) also found that LGC tasks led to higher social and emotional engagement, which was linked to increased fluency and accuracy, although the learners' emotional responses varied based on their previous FL learning experiences. Dao (2021) explored the impact of task goal orientation on learner engagement and discovered that while cognitive and social engagement were higher during convergent tasks, emotional engagement did not significantly differ between task types, which highlighted the complex interplay between task structure and emotional involvement. In a longitudinal study on learner engagement during EFL speaking tasks, Aubrey et al. (2022) highlighted the importance of task characteristics, such as familiarity and repetition, in enhancing engagement in learning tasks.

Previous research on engagement among Saudi EFL learners revealed various influences of engagement on language learning. Alswuail (2015) observed that positive attitudes toward English, driven by practical and religious reasons, significantly enhanced student engagement, particularly when using technology and interactive activities. Similarly, Mohammed (2023) identified instructional practices, student expectations, motivation, and the curriculum as key factors influencing engagement. The study also highlighted several challenges to engagement, such as low English proficiency and a lack of supportive resources. Albahouth (2024) investigated the impact of flipped and interactive pedagogical approaches on learner engagement in grammar classes. The results indicated that the intervention group showed significant improvement in behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement, although posttest scores did not differ significantly from the control group. The study also found that factors, such as motivation, learning styles, and teacher's level of experience influenced engagement, thus suggesting the need for tailored pedagogical strategies to enhance overall learner engagement.

III. METHODS

This study employed a mixed-methods approach that combined quantitative and qualitative data to leverage the strengths of both broad statistical insights and in-depth personal experiences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie; 2004; Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2015). This approach ensured that the findings would be both generalizable and richly detailed to capture the complexity of how EI and engagement interact to influence language proficiency.

A. Participants

The participants were recruited through an online call for participation targeting Saudi adults aged 21 to 35 who were enrolled in English-learning institutions around Saudi Arabia. The call detailed the study's purpose and provided contact information for inquiries, thus enabling a broad reach and facilitating recruitment across diverse regions of the country. Eligible participants were contacted to confirm their participation and schedule data collection sessions. A total of 362 individuals enrolled in the study. They were all native Arabic speakers and had taken the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) within the past year or during their current English course. Their IELTS scores were used to assess their English proficiency. Table 1 summarizes the participants' demographic information.

TABLE 1
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Category	Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age group	21-25	192	53.04
	26-30	107	29.56
	31-35	63	17.40
Gender	Male	156	43.09
	Female	206	56.91
Region	Central	124	34.25
	Eastern	92	25.41
	Western	109	30.11
	Northern	21	5.80
	Southern	16	4.42
Educational attainment	High school	128	35.36
	Bachelor's degree	171	47.24
	Master's degree	63	17.40
Level of English proficiency (IELTS band score)	4 (Skill level: Limited)	96	26.52
	5 (Skill level: Modest)	141	38.95
	6 (Skill level: Competent)	125	34.53
Years of studying English	1-2 years	195	53.87
	3-4 years	124	34.25
	5+ years	43	11.88
Main reason for learning English	Personal interest	94	25.97
	Academic requirement	155	42.82
	Professional advancement	113	31.22

B. Instruments

The following instruments were used to collect the data needed for this research.

1. The Demographic Information Questionnaire

This was developed to collect the information presented in the "Participants" section. This data provided a comprehensive background of the participants, which aided in the contextualization of the study's findings.

2. The Emotional Intelligence in Language Learning Questionnaire (EILLQ)

This ten-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher to evaluate the EI of the EFL learners. Each pair of items assessed one of the five components of Goleman's EI model. The respondents rated each statement on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was originally developed in English and translated into Arabic to facilitate understanding. A back-translation process was

conducted to ensure equivalence, with three experts verifying the accuracy and appropriateness of the translation. Table 2 presents the EILLQ statements categorized by the EI components.

TABLE 2
EILLQ STATEMENTS

EI component	Assessment statement
Self-awareness	1. I can recognize my emotions as I experience them while learning English.
	2. I am aware of how my emotions affect my performance during English learning tasks.
Self-regulation	3. I can manage my emotions effectively when faced with challenges in learning English.
	4. I am able to stay calm and focused under pressure while practicing English.
Motivation	5. I actively seek out opportunities to practice and improve my English skills.
	6. I stay motivated to improve my English skills even when I encounter setbacks.
Empathy	7. I can understand the emotions of my classmates in English learning settings.
	8. I am sensitive to cultural differences that affect how my peers learn English.
Social skills	9. I find it easy to collaborate with my classmates during English learning activities.
	10. I am able to build positive relationships with my peers and teachers in the English classroom.

3. The Language Learning Engagement Questionnaire (LLEQ)

This questionnaire was designed specifically to provide a comprehensive assessment of the learners' engagement by evaluating their behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in the English classroom. It employed a 5-point Likert scale and consisted of nine items, with three sets of three items each assessing one of the three dimensions of Fredricks et al.'s (2004) model. Similar to the EILLQ, The LLEQ was translated from English to Arabic, back-translated for accuracy, and verified by three experts to ensure equivalence and appropriateness. Table 3 presents the LLEQ statements categorized by the engagement dimensions.

TABLE 3
LLEQ STATEMENTS

Engagement dimension	Assessment statement
Behavioral engagement	1. I regularly attend my English language classes.
	2. I actively participate in class activities and discussions.
	3. I complete my English homework and assignments on time.
Emotional engagement	4. I enjoy learning English and find it interesting.
	5. I enjoy participating in English class activities.
	6. I feel happy when I successfully understand or use English.
Cognitive engagement	7. I try to understand complex English concepts.
	8. I use various strategies to improve my English skills (e.g., note-taking, using flashcards).
	9. I stay focused and pay attention during English classes, even when the material is difficult.

4. Semi-Structured Interviews

The interviews were conducted with 30 participants (17 females and 13 males) to gather in-depth qualitative data. The interview guide was designed to elicit detailed responses about their personal experiences with EI and engagement in English language classes. It included questions related to how their emotions affected their learning and their perceived importance of the five EI components. Additionally, the questions explored the participants' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement in English learning, including attendance, participation, interaction with peers and teachers, handling of homework and assignments, and involvement in extracurricular activities.

5. Learners' Reflective Journals

The learners' journals provided qualitative data on their ongoing experiences and engagement in language learning. The participants were asked to write weekly journal entries that detailed their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to English learning. Prompts such as "Describe a significant learning moment this week" and "How did you feel about your progress in class?" were provided as needed to guide their reflections.

C. Data Collection Procedures

To ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaires used in this research, a thorough pilot study was conducted. Initially, three experts with PhDs in applied linguistics and more than 15 years of experience in EFL teaching reviewed the EILLQ and LLEQ for content validity. They examined whether the questionnaires adequately covered the constructs they were designed to measure and provided feedback for a few revisions. Following this approval process, the two questionnaires were administered to 50 participants similar to those in the main study, who were then asked to report any issues they encountered. Two weeks later, the same questionnaires were re-administered to the same participants. Cronbach's alpha values were computed to assess internal consistency; they yielded coefficients of 0.886 for the EILLQ and 0.881 for the LLEQ, which indicated high reliability for both questionnaires (as noted by Harrison et al., 2020 and Pallant, 2020). Additionally, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated between the items from both administrations. All correlations were significant at the 0.01 level, and their values ranged from 0.672 to 0.854 for the EILLQ items and from 0.645 to 0.918 for the LLEQ items, which demonstrated strong test-retest reliability (as per Cohen's 2013 guidelines).

Data collection for the main study occurred in the spring term of 2023 and commenced with obtaining informed consent from all participants to ensure they were fully aware of the study's purpose and procedures. The participants

were informed of the voluntary nature of the study, their right to withdraw at any time without consequences, and the measures taken to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Following consent, the participants completed the three questionnaires, which were administered in an online format. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 30 volunteers to gather detailed qualitative data. The interviews were conducted in Arabic to ensure comfort and clarity for the participants and were recorded with their consent. Each interview lasted between 25 and 45 minutes. Additionally, the same 30 participants maintained journals over the three-month duration of the study to document their language learning reflections. They were allowed to write in either Arabic or English to provide them with the freedom to express themselves more authentically and comfortably. A total of 281 journal entries were collected, which varied in length from 52 to 146 words, with approximately 17% of the entries written in English.

D. Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the demographic information questionnaire, EILLQ, and LLEQ were analyzed statistically as detailed in the “Results and Discussion” section. The qualitative data from the interviews and learners’ journals underwent thematic analysis, including transcription, coding, and theme development. This involved identifying significant patterns and themes through both inductive and deductive coding. The themes were then validated through data triangulation, with illustrative quotes used to enrich the quantitative findings and offer deeper insights into the participants’ perceptions and personal experiences.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Question 1

Descriptive statistics were calculated to examine how different EI components manifested among the Saudi EFL learners. The results revealed that the participants exhibited moderate to high levels of EI across all five components, as illustrated in Table 4.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE EI SCORES

Component	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Self-awareness	3.59	1.12	1.00	5.00
Self-regulation	3.52	1.17	1.00	5.00
Motivation	3.61	1.14	1.00	5.00
Empathy	3.44	1.18	1.00	5.00
Social skills	3.56	1.17	1.00	5.00
Average total score	35.44	10.09	10.00	50.00

Motivation received the highest mean score (3.61), thereby indicating that the participants were driven and persistent in their efforts to learn English. This was followed by self-awareness at 3.59 and social skills at 3.56, which reflected the participants’ ability to recognize their emotions and manage relationships effectively. Self-regulation had a mean score of 3.52, which suggested that the learners were able to manage their emotions well—a crucial element for sustaining focus and coping with the challenges of language learning. Empathy had the lowest mean score (3.44), although it still indicated a moderate level of understanding and sharing the feelings of others, which was essential for effective communication and collaboration. The standard deviation values for the EI components, ranging from 1.12 to 1.18, indicated a moderate level of variability in the participants’ EI scores, which suggested that while most participants had similar levels of EI, there were some differences in how they perceived and managed their emotions. The range of scores for each component spanned from 1.00 to 5.00, and from 10.00 to 50.00 for the total EI scores, thereby demonstrating a diverse range of EI levels among the learners. The bar chart in Figure 1 displays the mean scores for the five components of EI.

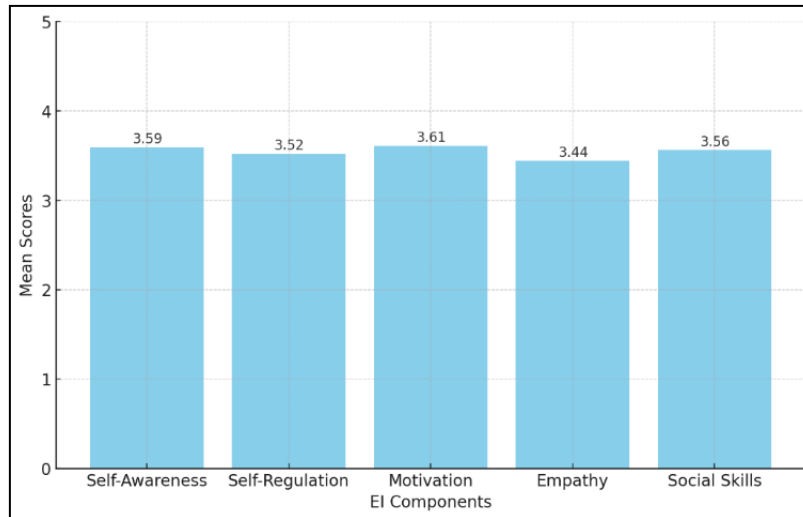


Figure 1. Mean Scores for the EI Components

These results were consistent with Shao et al. (2013) and Li (2020), who reported moderate to high levels of EI among the EFL learners in their studies. Overall, the balanced EI profile among the participants in this study suggested a supportive emotional foundation that could enhance their emotional well-being and success in learning English. This was further illustrated by the participants' own experiences shared through the interviews and reflective journals. For example, an interviewee noted, "Being aware of my emotions helps me manage stress better, especially during challenging assignments. It allows me to stay calm and focus on the tasks at hand without getting overwhelmed." Another participant reflected, "I find that staying motivated is crucial for my English learning journey. Whenever I face difficulties, I remind myself of my goals and the progress I've made, which keeps me going".

B. Research Question 2

To investigate the levels of language learning engagement among the participants, descriptive statistics were calculated for each dimension of engagement as well as the total engagement score. The results are summarized in Table 5.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE LEARNING ENGAGEMENT SCORES

Dimension	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Behavioral engagement	3.51	1.08	1.00	5.00
Emotional engagement	3.56	1.07	1.00	5.00
Cognitive engagement	3.50	1.11	1.00	5.00
Total engagement	31.72	9.11	9.00	45.00

The analysis revealed that the mean scores for behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement were fairly consistent, and they indicated that, on average, the learners exhibited moderate to high levels of engagement across all three dimensions. The total engagement score had a mean of 31.72, which reflected a balanced and overall high level of engagement among the participants. The standard deviations for the engagement dimensions ranged from 1.07 to 1.11, indicating moderate variability. This suggested that while many learners were highly engaged, there was a notable portion of them who exhibited lower levels of engagement. The range of scores for each dimension spanned from 1.00 to 5.00, and from 9.00 to 45.00 for the total engagement score, thereby demonstrating the diverse levels of engagement among the learners. The bar chart in Figure 2 illustrates the mean scores for the three dimensions of language learning engagement.

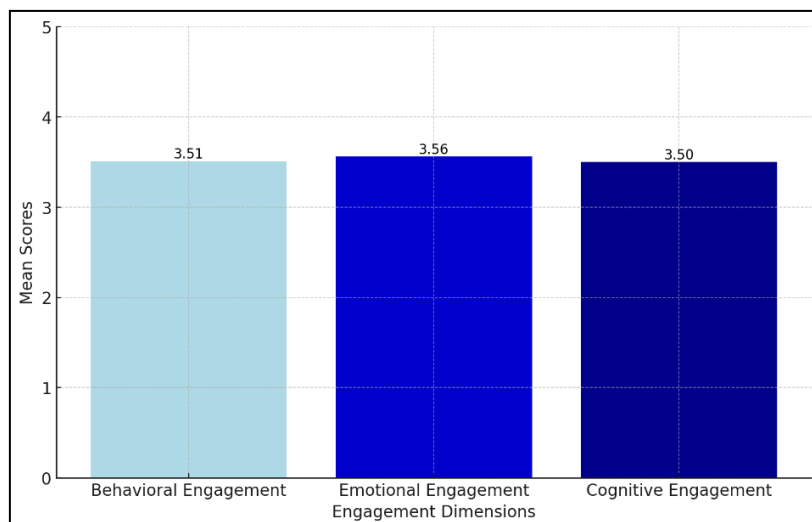


Figure 2. Mean Scores for the Learning Engagement Dimensions

These findings were consistent with Guo et al. (2023), who observed moderate overall engagement among the EFL learners in their research. The qualitative findings obtained in the current study provided support and clarification for these results. For example, one interviewee explained, “I really try to participate in all class activities because it helps me understand better and stay focused.” Another interviewee shared, “I feel more connected to the class when the teacher encourages us to share our thoughts and feelings.” Similarly, a learner reflected, “I like it when we have to solve problems or think about how to use what we learn in real life—it keeps me interested and involved.” This highlights the critical need to foster an engaging learning environment that promotes active involvement across behavioral participation, emotional connection, and cognitive effort.

C. Research Question 3

To investigate the relationship between EI and engagement in EFL learning, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The analysis used the total EI score as the predictor variable and the overall engagement score as the dependent variable. The results are summarized in Tables 6 and 7.

TABLE 6
REGRESSION MODEL OVERALL STATISTICS

Statistic	Value
R ²	0.802
Adjusted R ²	0.801
F-statistic	1,458
Prob (F-statistic)	< 0.001

TABLE 7
REGRESSION MODEL COEFFICIENTS

Coefficient	Estimate	Standard error	t-value	p-value	95% Confidence interval
Intercept	3.08	0.78	3.95	< 0.001	[1.546, 4.613]
Total EI	0.81	0.02	38.19	< 0.001	[0.767, 0.850]

The analysis showed a strong positive relationship between overall EI and engagement in language learning, with an R² value of 0.802. This indicated that 80.2% of the variance in engagement could be explained by the total EI score. The high F-statistic value (1,458) and the extremely low p-value (less than 0.001) suggested that the model was highly significant. The coefficient for total EI (0.81) indicated that for every one-unit increase in EI, there was an associated increase of 0.81 unit in overall engagement. This relationship was statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.001. The intercept of 3.08, also significant, suggested a baseline level of engagement when EI was zero. The bar chart in Figure 3 represents the regression coefficients along with their 95% confidence intervals.

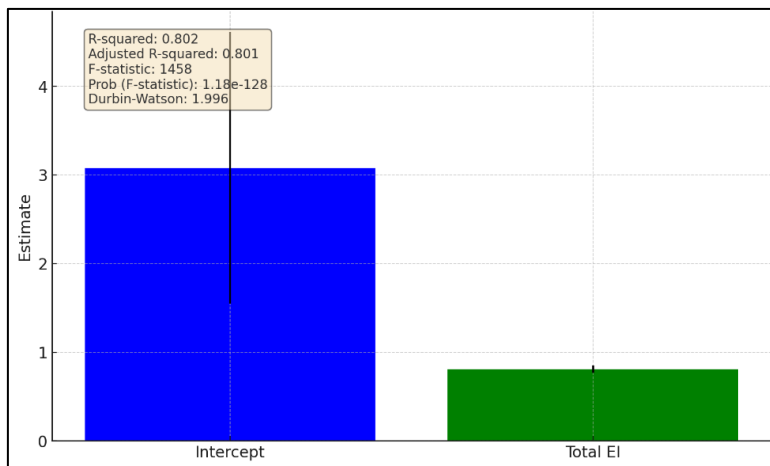


Figure 3. Regression Analysis of the Impact of EI on Language Learning Engagement

The thematic analysis of the qualitative data revealed that self-awareness helped the learners identify their emotional responses to different learning tasks and situations and to focus their efforts effectively. For example, an interviewee explained, “By reflecting on my reactions to challenging assignments, I realized I was often anxious about making mistakes. Recognizing this helped me manage my stress better and allowed me to concentrate on improving my skills rather than worrying about failure.” Self-regulation aided in managing such emotions and maintaining focus, thus preventing disruptions and enhancing behavioral and emotional engagement. Similarly, motivation drove the learners to pursue their learning objectives with energy and persistence, which was crucial for deep engagement across the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions. As one participant reflected, “When I learned to control my frustration and stay focused during difficult tasks, I noticed I could study longer and stay more engaged. My motivation to reach my language goals kept me pushing through challenges.” Furthermore, empathy improved peer interaction and collaboration, which fostered an engaging and supportive learning environment where the learners were able to understand and respond to affective cues. Social skills also enhanced communication and relationships and promoted all dimensions of engagement through effective navigation of group activities and discussions. For instance, a participant recounted, “Understanding my classmates’ feelings and working together with empathy made our group discussions more productive and enjoyable. It felt easier to participate and invest myself in the activities when everyone was supportive and communicative.” A thorough review of the literature identified only one study, McEown et al. (2024), which examined the link between these two factors. The study demonstrated that the TEI elements predicted engagement among Japanese learners of English, which aligned with the current study and underscored the critical role of EI in enhancing language learning engagement and outcomes.

D. Research Question 4

To investigate the influence of EI and engagement on English language proficiency, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The model included overall EI and overall engagement as predictor variables, with English language proficiency scores as the dependent variable. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 8 and 9.

TABLE 8
REGRESSION MODEL OVERALL STATISTICS

Statistic	Value
R ²	0.640
Adjusted R ²	0.638
F-statistic	319.1
Prob (F-statistic)	< 0.001

TABLE 9
REGRESSION MODEL COEFFICIENTS

Coefficient	Estimate	Standard error	t-value	p-value	95% Confidence interval
Intercept	2.8695	0.092	31.231	< 0.001	[2.689, 3.050]
Overall EI	0.1328	0.055	2.420	< 0.05	[0.025, 0.241]
Overall engagement	0.4937	0.055	9.022	< 0.001	[0.386, 0.601]

The analysis showed that both overall EI and overall engagement significantly influenced English language proficiency, although engagement appeared to have had a stronger impact compared to EI. The R² value of 0.640 indicated that 64.0% of the variance in proficiency scores could be explained by the model, which suggested a strong fit. The F-statistic of 319.1, with a p-value less than 0.001, confirmed that the model was statistically significant. The coefficient for overall EI was 0.1328, which meant that for every one-unit increase in overall EI, the proficiency score increased by approximately 0.133 units. This relationship was statistically significant, with a p-value less than 0.05. The

coefficient for overall engagement was 0.4937, which indicated that for every one-unit increase in overall engagement, the proficiency score increased by approximately 0.494 units. This relationship was highly significant, with a p -value less than 0.001. The bar chart in Figure 4 represents the regression coefficients for the intercept, overall EI, and overall engagement and highlights their impact on English language proficiency.

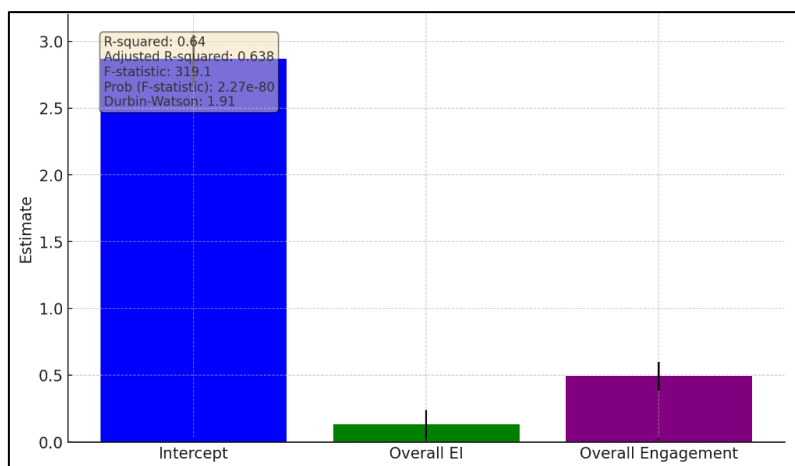


Figure 4. Regression Analysis of the Impact of EI and Engagement on English Proficiency

The qualitative findings corroborated and explained the statistical findings by highlighting the critical role of these two factors in English learning. First, the participants reported that self-awareness helped them identify their emotional needs and responses, which allowed them to address any negative feelings that might hinder their progress. For example, an interviewee noted, “By being self-aware, I could tell when I was feeling anxious about a particular assignment, and I took breaks or changed my learning approach to manage that anxiety better.” Self-regulation also enabled the learners to manage their emotions and maintain focus, which enhanced both their persistence and overall performance in language tasks. Additionally, motivation drove the learners to pursue their language learning goals with energy and persistence and contributed to greater learning success. As one interviewee shared, “Learning to control my frustration and stay focused helped me not give up when the lessons got tough, and my motivation kept me pushing forward to achieve my English learning goals.” Furthermore, empathy enabled the learners to understand and respond to each other’s emotional needs. This empathetic atmosphere enhanced mutual support and facilitated effective communication, which ultimately led to better learning outcomes. Similarly, social skills enhanced language learning by improving interactions, fostering collaboration, and creating a more supportive learning environment. As one participant reflected, “Understanding my classmates’ struggles and working together with them not only made the learning process more enjoyable but also helped me improve my language skills through better communication and cooperation”.

In terms of language learning engagement, behavioral engagement provided more practice and exposure, which led to better language skills. For instance, an interviewee explained, “Being actively involved in class discussions and language exercises gave me more opportunities to practice and improve my English, making me feel more confident in my abilities.” Additionally, emotional engagement enhanced the learning process by increasing the learners’ interest and enthusiasm about the material. This positive emotional connection helped sustain motivation and focus and led to better performance. As one participant reflected, “When I enjoyed the activities and felt excited about what I was learning, I found myself more engaged and willing to put in extra effort, which really boosted my progress.” Finally, learners who invested effort in understanding and applying language concepts, which exemplified cognitive engagement, reported achieving better learning outcomes. As one participant recounted, “Taking the time to deeply understand the grammar rules and apply them in different contexts helped me grasp the English language more thoroughly, resulting in significant improvement in my language skills.” These findings, which demonstrated a positive impact on language learning and proficiency, were consistent with previous research on EI (e.g., Ebrahimi et al., 2018a, 2018b; Farooq, 2014; Genç et al., 2016; Goleman, 1995; Pishghadam, 2009; Saud, 2019; Taheri et al., 2019) and language learning engagement (e.g., Aubrey et al., 2022; Fredricks et al., 2004; Taboada Barber et al., 2020; Zhang, 2022). These results further validated the importance of integrating EI strategies to foster better engagement and language learning outcomes.

V. CONCLUSION

This study explored the intricate relationship between EI and engagement among Saudi EFL learners by addressing four key research questions. The findings provided significant insights into how these constructs interacted and influenced English proficiency. First, the study revealed that the learners exhibited moderate to high levels of EI, with particular strengths in motivation, self-awareness, and social skills. The above-average scores in motivation highlighted the learners’ consistent drive to achieve their language learning objectives, while their self-awareness and social skills indicated a solid competence in terms of recognizing their emotions and effectively managing interpersonal

relationships. These findings aligned with previous research that suggested that EI significantly contributes to learning outcomes by enhancing learners' ability to navigate emotional challenges and build supportive networks. Pedagogically, these results underscore the importance of creating a learning environment that supports emotional development. For instance, educators could integrate reflective practices and discussions that encourage students to explore their emotions and understand their impact on learning. Additionally, workshops focusing on emotional regulation and social skills could be incorporated to further enhance EI in language learning.

Second, the learners demonstrated moderate to high levels of engagement across the behavioral, emotional, and cognitive dimensions. Behavioral engagement, evidenced by consistent attendance and active participation, reflected a steady commitment to the learning process. Emotional engagement, characterized by enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning activities, revealed a positive connection to the learning environment. Cognitive engagement, which involved effortful investment in understanding complex concepts, underscored a solid commitment to mastering the language. These findings suggested that a multifaceted approach to engagement is essential for effective language learning. For example, educators could incorporate project-based learning, which stimulates behavioral and cognitive engagement by requiring active participation and analytical thinking. Simultaneously, fostering a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere can enhance emotional engagement, thereby encouraging learners to become more invested in their language learning.

Third, the study found a strong positive correlation between EI and engagement in EFL learning, with higher EI associated with greater engagement across all dimensions. This relationship suggested that emotionally intelligent learners were better equipped to handle the emotional demands of language learning, which led to increased participation, enjoyment, and cognitive effort. For instance, self-regulation helped the learners manage anxiety and stay focused, while empathy and social skills enhanced collaborative learning. These insights emphasized the importance of integrating EI development into EFL instruction. Educators could leverage social-emotional learning frameworks to teach students how to understand and control their emotions, pursue and accomplish objectives, and build and sustain positive relationships.

Finally, both EI and engagement were found to significantly impact English language proficiency, with engagement showing a slightly stronger influence. The learners with higher EI were more likely to be engaged in their learning, and this engagement translated into better language proficiency. For example, the motivated learners (a component of EI) were more likely to engage in practice and to seek out additional learning opportunities, thereby improving their proficiency. Similarly, the learners who could manage their emotions effectively (self-regulation) were better able to persist through challenges, which led to better learning outcomes. These results suggested that fostering both EI and engagement should be a priority in EFL instruction.

The present study, while providing valuable insights into the relationship between EI and engagement in EFL learning, has a few limitations that warrant consideration. First, the use of self-reported measures may have introduced response bias, as the participants might have overestimated their EI and engagement levels. Additionally, although the sample exhibited demographic diversity, it was culturally specific, comprising solely Saudi EFL learners, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. The cross-sectional design of the study also restricts the ability to infer causality between EI, engagement, and language proficiency, as it captured data at a single point in time.

In order to mitigate these limitations, it is recommended that future research incorporate more objective measures of EI and engagement to reduce the likelihood of response bias. Additionally, expanding the sample to include learners from diverse cultural backgrounds would enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine the long-term impact of EI and engagement on English language proficiency, thereby providing deeper insights into how these constructs evolve and influence learning outcomes over time.

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The Use of Scaffolding Strategies to Enhance the Writing Development of EFL Students

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Abstract—The current study examined how scaffolding techniques can affect the writing skills of Thai students who are learning English as a foreign language (EFL). The study utilised purposive sampling to select participants, who were divided into two groups: five experts and five novice learners. The study employed a collection of instructional materials consisting of five lesson plans implemented at different stages of the writing process. In addition, a writing rubric was used to assess the quality of written outputs. It was found that implementing scaffolding strategies during the writing process significantly improved the writing abilities of ten EFL students. The scaffolding technique can create a supportive environment where educators can offer guidance and motivation to students as they write. On the other hand, the writing process can be divided into two parts: collaborative efforts that encourage group participation and individual work that promotes independence by gradually reducing the need for help and guidance. Thus, it can be inferred that offering scaffolding strategies during the writing process leads to more substantial enhancements in the writing skills of EFL learners.

Index Terms—scaffolding strategy, writing process, L2 writing development, EFL writing

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing plays a vital role in language acquisition for students who learn English as a foreign language (EFL). It is considered essential to develop this skill to achieve language proficiency. As Wonglakorn and Deerajviset (2023) assert, writing is crucial to cognitive processes and educational development. In addition, writing acts as a means of communication that enables the sharing of ideas, expressing opinions, and displaying emotions among learners. According to Wonglakorn and Deerajviset (2023), enhancing writing skills can boost learners' self-confidence in communicating through written English, paving the way for potential career prospects and enabling learners to assume novel roles as community members. Writing necessitates proficiency in multiple aspects of the language and the capacity to convey ideas through suitable language and communicative techniques effectively. This assertion is supported by the studies of Nguyen (2018) and Kampookaew (2020). Therefore, writing has evolved into a medium of instruction, a language of research, and a mechanism for transferring meaningful knowledge within academic circles.

Nevertheless, most Thai EFL learners have encountered challenges in writing in English. The writing proficiency of these EFL learners remains inadequate. EFL learners' limited ability to construct complex sentences is a significant challenge, as they rely on copying provided sentence samples. This writing problem is due to their insufficient understanding and familiarity with expressing and communicating their emotions and ideas through language and their lack of proficiency in crafting well-structured sentences. These EFL students are also instructed to fill in the gaps in sentences with English words and solve verb tenses according to proper grammatical structure. Hence, these limitations give rise to challenges in the field of EFL writing pedagogy that are problematic to overcome (Tarin & Yawiloeng, 2023). Writing problems have been noted in various studies, including those conducted by Seensangworn and Chaya (2017), Selvaraj and Aziz (2019), and Wonglakorn and Deerajviset (2023). Furthermore, it has been observed that educators often prioritise the final written products of EFL learners. This emphasis primarily centres on mechanics, spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure. However, there is a tendency to overlook the importance of the learners' writing processes, development, and individual writing styles (Derakhshan & Shirejini, 2020; Toba et al., 2019). As a result, Thai learners of English as a foreign language have not received adequate support. The individual in question experiences difficulty effectively conveying their ideas, expertise, comprehension, and personal encounters to finalize their written work.

Recent studies have proposed implementing scaffolding strategies during writing processes to improve writing development among EFL learners (Ikawati, 2020; Selvaraj & Aziz, 2019; Wonglakorn & Deerajviset, 2023). Extensive research has been conducted on the impact of different scaffolding approaches in improving writing skills. A study by Piamsai (2020) explored the effects of scaffolding instruction in a higher education environment that emphasised

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academic writing. The study specifically focused on students who struggled with writing proficiency. The results indicated a noteworthy enhancement in the writing proficiency of the students. The authors have the potential to enhance the clarity of their positions and central concepts, as well as comprehensively and distinctly engage with the subject matter. However, there has been limited investigation into how scaffolding approaches affect the growth of EFL learners' writing abilities when scaffolding is employed during the writing process. Consequently, the ongoing study investigates how integrating scaffolding strategies into the writing process can enhance EFL writing skills.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. *Scaffolding Strategy*

Scaffolding is a valuable tool that supports learners in their journey toward gaining new skills, understanding concepts, or reaching higher levels of comprehension. According to Gibbons (2015), scaffolding refers to the temporary support an educator offers students to enable them to complete a comparable task autonomously. The concept of scaffolding, which is associated with the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), is a commonly acknowledged term that pertains to how guidance facilitates the advancement of learning. Teachers and peers can enhance learners' learning development and performance in a scaffolded learning environment. Subsequently, the degree of support diminishes progressively as the learner acquires more excellent proficiency and autonomy in completing tasks. According to Wood et al. (1976), the learner has reached a stage where they can perform at a level that previously required assistance or scaffolding. In summary, the relationship between scaffolding strategies and the ZPD is that scaffolding offers personalized assistance that aligns with the learner's ZPD. The implementation of a scaffolding strategy has been observed in EFL writing classrooms to enhance the English writing proficiency of EFL learners, as evidenced by the studies of Ikawati (2020), Kamil (2017), Piamsai (2020), Sidky (2019), and Taheri and Nazmi (2021). Therefore, using a scaffolding strategy is crucial in facilitating the acquisition of writing skills among learners who receive guidance from educators and peers to gradually develop the ability to write independently.

(a). *Teacher Scaffolding*

Teacher scaffolding is a crucial process for the pedagogical approach. This is because teachers are required to possess substantial pedagogical and content knowledge, as noted by Taheri and Nazmi (2021). According to Taheri and Nazmi (2021), teacher scaffolding is personalized for students with diverse prior knowledge and abilities and is adjusted and revised for each student throughout the task duration. In other words, student needs are considered when a teacher helps them through scaffolding strategies. Teacher scaffolding facilitates the provision of academically rigorous instructions to language learners. Through implementing various practical strategies and tasks, learners can gain knowledge that is challenging, deep, responsible, and conducive to conceptual, academic, and linguistic development. In educational settings, instructors must comprehensively understand the subject matter to provide students with scaffolding to facilitate their learning. Consequently, educators must act as scaffolders and guide students toward assuming accountability for their learning while also adapting their support strategies to the unique requirements of each student (Wang & Sneed, 2019).

(b). *Peer Scaffolding*

Peer scaffolding refers to a form of assistance provided by peers that is guided by a scaffolding framework (Belland, 2014). Peer scaffolding enables learners to engage in and develop competencies in tasks they could not accomplish independently. In addition, it is seen as small groups of students being allowed to learn new information or overcome learning difficulties during educational activities (Taheri & Nazemi, 2021). In learning language, peer scaffolding is a crucial aspect of EFL classrooms as it aids learners in resolving issues encountered during collaborative learning tasks (Yawiloeng, 2021). In addition, scaffolding is employed within a peer learning framework to give learners appropriate learning resources and occasions to establish mutually advantageous associations with their peers (Chun & Cennamo, 2022). Peer learning involves mutual assistance among learners in acquiring new skills and knowledge by exchanging perspectives and information. Moreover, it is interesting to note that expert and novice learners can support each other by sharing their knowledge and skills, as they may advance in different areas of writing. It is worth noting that peer scaffolding can be a valuable tool for learners at all levels of English proficiency, as it offers practical and beneficial instructions to help them complete tasks (Chairinkam & Yawiloeng, 2021). Using peer scaffolding can facilitate the acquisition of learning opportunities for students in collaboration with their teacher or peers. As a result, individual learners can ultimately attain independent learning development. Engaging in peer scaffolding facilitates collaborative learning and allows learners to receive support from peers with more knowledge or skills, thereby promoting independent knowledge acquisition.

The concept of peer scaffolding has been broadened to encompass an expert-novice dynamic and a relationship of equivalent knowledge, as exemplified by collaborative group work on a common objective (Walqui, 2006). Van (2004) asserted that learners have diverse learning opportunities within participation contexts. As a result, learners have access to at least four distinct sources of scaffolding. Initially, with the aid of a proficient individual or a higher-achieving peer, a learner can encounter effective learning paradigms or engage in intricate communal undertakings. Furthermore, through collaborative efforts with fellow learners, knowledge is co-constructed. Collaborative learning fosters discovery

and joint construction among learners, whereby one learner's discovery of novel information is shared with their partner, resulting in a mutual discovery experience. Thirdly, providing support to a less proficient learner presents learning opportunities. When instructing a less skilled peer, a learner must arrange their thoughts and actions and attain optimal clarity of communication. Consequently, individuals can internalize teaching and learning strategies, rely on their inner resources, and engage in self-directed experimentation when they work independently and incorporate internalized practices and strategies, inner speech, inner resources, and experimentation.

B. Previous Studies

Recent studies have highlighted the significance of scaffolding techniques in L2 writing processes for enhancing writing skills. Sidky's (2019) study aimed to examine how scaffolding methods affected students' writing abilities in a workshop environment. According to Sidky's (2019) study, scaffolding techniques significantly improved students' writing abilities, specifically in genre, register, discourse, grammar, and graphic features. These aspects are considered the primary evaluation criteria.

To better understand how teacher and peer scaffolding affects EFL students' ability to write persuasively, Taheri and Nazmi (2021) undertook a study. The findings indicate that the writing proficiency of EFL learners experienced a noteworthy enhancement after the provision of scaffolding intervention. Improvements in overall organization and linguistic precision characterized the enhanced argumentative writing proficiency. The study results indicate that the group that received teacher scaffolding achieved higher mean scores than the group that received peer scaffolding. Taheri and Nazmi (2021) posited that this phenomenon could be attributed to the students' greater reliance on the teacher's expertise than their peers.

In a recent study, Kitjaroonchai and Phutikettrkit (2022) conducted a case analysis to examine the scaffolding techniques employed by twelve Asian EFL learners while utilizing Google Docs as a writing platform. The study's findings showed that participants used scaffolding and non-scaffolding dialogues to help them develop their online collaborative writing (OCW) projects while working in small groups. This writing activity was achieved through providing guidance, recommendations, responses to inquiries or appeals, posing questions, or elucidating concepts. The study's findings indicate that individuals who engaged in more scaffolding negotiations while undergoing the OCW procedures were more likely to generate a superior writing standard in their subsequent evaluation. Significantly, the results of this study suggest that individuals within small groups derived advantages from scaffolded and unscaffolded negotiations, as these processes facilitated task revisions.

In their present study, Sundari and Febriyanti (2023) explored how collective scaffolding in virtual collaborative writing can enhance learners' ability to complete writing tasks. Furthermore, the study examined the responses of undergraduate students who were learning English as a foreign language to this instructional activity. The study employed a qualitative case study design framework involving 43 EFL university students who willingly took part in an academic writing course. The results indicate that the collaborative writing process involved collective scaffolding in the co-construction of the written text. Moreover, collaborative writing facilitated enhancements in second language proficiency, reciprocal assistance, and participation. Furthermore, the teacher's involvement in aiding and overseeing the group's discussions and written composition remained substantial. Despite the potential feasibility and cost-effectiveness of technology-assisted collaborative writing, some students expressed dissatisfaction due to technological limitations and unanticipated group dynamics. Certain groups could easily accomplish their tasks and establish social cohesion, whereas others required a more extended period to attain group development and textual productivity.

However, current situations in Thai EFL writing classrooms reveal a noticeable absence in implementing the writing process approach and scaffolding strategy. This observation is made despite prior research on scaffolding techniques and the writing process. This study investigates how writing scaffolding techniques affect the growth of writing abilities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This research addresses the gaps in the current literature about this domain. Therefore, this study aims to address the question: "What are the effects of scaffolding strategies on the L2 writing development of EFL learners?".

III. METHOD

The present study employed a mixed-method design to investigate the EFL writing development of 10 participants. Specifically, final written products generated by the participants were analyzed using a writing rubric.

A. Participants

A group of ten first-year English majors at the University of Phayao who were registered for an EFL writing course with different levels of English proficiency took part in the study. The written products were analyzed through a purposive sampling of participants selected as a case study for qualitative data analysis. The study classified the participants into two groups based on their performance in paragraph writing before their involvement in the research, utilizing a writing rubric. Five advanced EFL learners and five novice EFL learners made up each group. Following standard research protocols, before commencing data collection, the participants in this study, consisting of ten EFL students, were required to provide informed consent by signing a consent form. In order to address ethical concerns, pseudonyms were utilized to ensure the confidentiality of the participants. This study was approved by the ethical

approval from the University of Phayao, Thailand. The ethics number of this study is UP-HEC 2.1/008/66.

B. Research Instruments

The writing exercises were consecutive across five sessions, totaling 20 hours. The study employed two distinct research instruments, including five lesson plans and a writing rubric.

(a). The EFL Writing Activities

Through this study, the writing activity employed five lesson plans, each focused on a unique aspect of English paragraph writing. The EFL students involved in the study engaged in a writing exercise that encompasses three distinct stages of the writing process: pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing. During the pre-writing phase, the students must concentrate on their writing topic and intended audience. This pre-writing process was accomplished by holding group brainstorming sessions to generate ideas and construct a list of necessary vocabulary to ensure their ideas are well-developed and to organize their writing. According to Becky and Spivey (2006), they must also decide on the genre, target audience, and goal of their writing. To facilitate the brainstorming stage, a worksheet based on the outline proposed by Daise and Norloff (2015) was utilized to aid in the planning and organization of the paragraph. According to Faraj (2015), using an outline facilitated learners in establishing connections and gaining a fresh perspective on their topics by visually organizing the listed ideas on paper. The subsequent phase entailed beginning the process of composing a preliminary version. The EFL students used an outline worksheet to compose their initial writing draft. While this was considered an independent task, the students received writing suggestions from their peers and the teacher.

Before composing the final version of their written products, the students were instructed to collaborate with a peer to scrutinize their English written paragraphs. This writing process involved utilizing a peer review worksheet to revise and provide constructive criticism on their written products. The students were asked to finish a worksheet after reading their peers' written paragraphs to give comments on the concepts, structure, and language used within the written work. Lastly, the students engaged in the revising stage of their written paragraph by addressing mechanical errors, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammatical modifications.

The current study utilised a combination of the three stages of the writing process, as described by Laksmi (2006) and Faraj (2015), in addition to teacher scaffolding strategies, as derived from Ellis and Larkin (1988; as cited in Northern Illinois University, 2015), to support the enhancement of paragraph writing skills among the EFL students. According to Faraj (2015), implementing teacher scaffolding strategies in the writing process can aid learners who have limited experience in writing in English to transition from guided tasks to autonomous performances.

In the pre-writing stage, following instructions on the various components of paragraph composition and engaging in preparatory activities, the EFL students were assigned by the teacher to write a paragraph on a given topic. The individuals engaged in group brainstorming sessions to produce ideas and compile the necessary vocabulary for their paragraph writing. According to Faraj (2015), brainstorming allows individuals to reflect on their topic and organize their thoughts in writing. Additionally, the brainstorming process can aid in retaining prior ideas while generating new ones. The students must finalize an outline worksheet demonstrating the paragraph's structural arrangement at this juncture. During the execution of their written tasks, the teacher provided scaffolding strategies to the students by exemplifying the process of generating ideas through brainstorming techniques. Afterwards, the teacher and the students worked together to complete the English paragraph writing activities.

In the while-writing stage, following the planning phase, the EFL students individually wrote their initial drafts using the information in the outline worksheet. Additionally, they carefully considered their peers' and the teacher's feedback and comments. During this writing stage, the teacher notified the students that their primary objective was to articulate their thoughts into coherent sentences without being concerned with rectifying any mistakes. Consequently, it was typical for initial drafts of written work to exhibit imprecise concepts and technical errors. However, through the implementation of writing exercises, the preliminary and uncertain ideas can be improved during subsequent phases (Faraj, 2015). The pedagogical approach employed by the teacher during this stage was scaffolding, specifically through writing modelling. The teacher furnished a set of exemplars for composing paragraphs and exhorted the entire cohort to deliberate on the structural attributes and calibre of the samples. According to Abdollahzadeh and Behroozizad (2015), utilizing given samples can facilitate learners in enhancing their comprehension and recognizing their mistakes.

In the post-writing stage, the EFL students were encouraged to work together with their classmates during the writing activity. The students were required to peruse the written composition of their peers and undertake an evaluation sheet intended for peers to furnish constructive criticism on the presented ideas, structure, and linguistic expression. Subsequently, the students revised their written compositions again, considering the feedback provided by their peers. According to Faraj (2015), learners enhance their writing skills by adding, substituting, deleting, and rearranging material. Finally, the teacher permitted the students to compose the final version of their written work. Before submitting their written assignments to their teacher, the students self-edited to correct mechanical errors, including capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and grammar. Faraj (2015) emphasizes the importance of learners documenting their mistakes to avoid repeating them in the future.

(b). *The Writing Rubric*

The researcher used the writing rubric adapted from Servati (2012) to assess paragraph organization and identify mechanical errors in the EFL students' compositions. The final written products of the EFL students were assessed to measure their progress in their writing skills. These students were given guidance and assistance from their peers and teachers to improve their writing abilities. The reliability assessment of the writing rubric was conducted by three experts, comprising three English lecturers at a Thai university.

C. *Writing Procedures*

To explore the effects of the scaffolding strategy merged with the writing process on EFL writing development, the final written products that ten EFL students produced through the scaffolding writing processes (Table 1) in the first and the fifth sessions, a total of 20 written products were collected as a qualitative data to analyze the EFL students' writing development by using the writing rubric adapted from Servati (2012).

TABLE 1
SCAFFOLDING WRITING PROCESS

Writing Processes	Writing Activities	Scaffolding Strategy
1. Pre-writing process (45 minutes: group work)	<u>Stage 1: Brainstorming and Planning Ideas</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students brainstorm in groups to generate ideas and list the vocabulary for their paragraph writing. Students complete an outline worksheet to show the organization of the paragraph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher models how to generate ideas through brainstorming techniques. The teacher and learners work together to complete an outline worksheet.
2. While-writing process (45 minutes: individual work)	<u>Stage 2: Writing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students write the first draft individually with the information from the outline worksheet and suggestions from peers and the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher provides some samples of drafting a paragraph. The peers discuss structural features and the quality of the samples.
3. Post-writing process (30 minutes: pair work and individual work)	<u>Stage 3: Revising and Editing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students read their peers' written paragraphs and complete a peer review worksheet to give each other feedback on the ideas, organization, and language. Students revise their paragraphs again based on their peer review. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher lets students write the final draft. Students edit their mechanical errors before handing the paragraphs to the teacher. The peers work in a group with their peers to complete a peer review worksheet. The peers revise their paragraphs and write the final draft themselves.

D. *Data Collection and Data Analysis*

To collect data, the final written products which ten participants produced in different topics of paragraphs were gathered. These written products were assessed for the EFL students' L2 writing development as they were engaged in the writing processes, teacher scaffolding, and peer scaffolding. The writing assessment was conducted by the teacher and two English teachers (a Thai teacher and a native speaker teacher).

In terms of the data analysis, the research used percentages to analyze the quantitative data from the final written products by comparing the gain scores from the first and the fifth written products to evaluate the EFL students' writing development. For the qualitative data, the researcher used content analysis to analyze the EFL students' written production using criteria adapted from Servati (2012). The criteria assessed students' writing abilities in five aspects of writing competence: topic sentence, supporting details, conclusion, organization, and mechanics.

IV. RESULTS

A. *Quantitative Data of the EFL Students' Written Productions After Using the Scaffolding Strategy*

This study examines the scores of ten EFL students, consisting of expert and novice learners, enrolled in the EFL writing course at the University of Phayao. The tables presented below display the respective scores of these students. Three English teachers (the researcher, the Thai teacher, and the native-speaker teacher) evaluated the average scores. The qualitative data's findings were presented through the written work of ten EFL students, who used the scaffolding approach and writing process to improve their EFL writing abilities.

TABLE 2
SCORE OF THE FIRST AND THE FIFTH WRITTEN PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY EFL LEARNERS

EFL Students	First written products (Total 60 scores)		Fifth written products (Total 60 scores)		Gain scores	
	First written product' scores	Percentage (%)	Fifth written product scores	Percentage (%)	Scores	Percentages (%)
Expert student 1 (ES1)	36	60%	51	85%	15	25%
Expert student 2 (ES2)	21	35%	37	62%	16	27%
Expert student 3 (ES3)	30	50%	44	73%	14	23%
Expert student 4 (ES4)	33	55%	43	72%	10	17%
Expert student 5 (ES5)	26	43%	39	65%	13	22%
Novice student 1 (NS1)	32	53%	48	80%	16	27%
Novice student 2 (NS2)	21	35%	36	60%	15	25%
Novice student 3 (NS3)	25	42%	42	70%	17	28%
Novice student 4 (NS4)	25	42%	40	67%	15	25%
Novice student 5 (NS5)	28	47%	40	67%	12	20%

As shown in Table 2, the EFL students tended to improve their written products after gaining both teacher scaffolding and peer scaffolding during the writing activities. For example, the expert student (ES2) and the novice student (NS1) received the highest gain score (16 scores, 27%). However, the expert student (ES4) gained the lowest scores in the written production (10 scores, 17%).

Regarding the first written product, the expert student (ES1) gained the highest score (36 scores, 60%). However, the expert student (ES2) and the novice student (NS2) gained the lowest scores (21 scores, 35%). After engaging in using scaffolding strategies, the expert student (ES1) gained the highest scores (51 scores, 85%), whereas the novice student (NS2) gained the lowest scores (36 scores, 60%). In summary, the EFL students could improve their writing abilities after engaging in English writing activities and using scaffolding strategies with the teacher and peers.

TABLE 3
GAIN SCORES OF EACH CRITERION OF WRITING PRODUCTS PRODUCED BY 10 EFL STUDENTS

EFL Students	Topic sentences (Total 12 scores)	Supporting details (Total 12 scores)	Conclusions (Total 12 scores)	Organizations (Total 12 scores)	Mechanics (Total 12 scores)	Gain scores 60 scores
Expert student 1 (ES1)	2 (3.33%)	3 (5%)	5 (8.33%)	1 (1.67%)	4 (6.67%)	15 (25%)
Expert student 2 (ES2)	2 (3.33%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	5 (8.33%)	3 (5%)	16 (27%)
Expert student 3 (ES3)	2 (3.33%)	5 (8.33%)	2 (3.33%)	2 (3.33%)	3 (5%)	14 (23%)
Expert student 4 (ES4)	2 (3.33%)	2 (3.33%)	1 (1.67%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.33%)	10 (17%)
Expert student 5 (ES5)	1 (1.67%)	3 (5%)	2 (3.33%)	5 (8.33%)	2 (3.33%)	13 (22%)
Novice student 1 (NS1)	3 (5%)	1 (1.67%)	5 (8.33%)	5 (8.33%)	2 (3.33%)	16 (27%)
Novice student 2 (NS2)	3 (5%)	1 (1.67%)	2 (3.33%)	5 (8.33%)	4 (6.67%)	15 (25%)
Novice student 3 (NS3)	4 (6.67%)	4 (6.67%)	1 (1.67%)	3 (5%)	5 (8.33%)	17 (28%)
Novice student 4 (NS4)	3 (5%)	1 (1.67%)	4 (6.67%)	4 (6.67%)	3 (5%)	15 (25%)
Novice student 5 (NS5)	1 (1.67%)	3 (5%)	4 (6.67%)	1 (1.67%)	3 (5%)	12 (20%)

Table 3 shows that EFL students could improve their English paragraph writing performance after using scaffolding strategies. As can be seen, ten EFL students gained the highest scores of 'organizations' (34 scores, 56.66%), followed by 'mechanics' scores (31 scores, 51.66%). However, these EFL students gained the lowest scores of 'topic sentences' (23 scores, 38.33%).

When considering the L2 writing development of individual students, the results showed that novice student 3 (NS3) could improve writing performance by gaining the highest scores (17 scores, 28%). This NS3 student gained 'mechanics' scores (5 scores, 8.33%); however, the student gained a 'conclusion' score only 1 score (1.67%). In addition, the expert student 2 (ES2) and the novice student 1 (NS1) also gained identical scores of 16 scores (27%). Unexpectedly, the expert student 4 (ES4) revealed the least gain scores (10 scores, 17%). In sum, these EFL students could develop their writing performance in English paragraph writing after receiving support from peers and teachers during the writing activities.

B. Qualitative Data of EFL Novice Students' Written Productions Before and After Using Scaffolding Strategy.

(a). Expert Students' First Draft of the Written Productions

ETP1 { Practice can make my English leaning better. First, I watch
 ESD1 { English soundtrack movies every weekend with my friend. Second
 ECS1 { I always listen to universal music. Thirds, I can learn English form
 them learning English and make me spake well. So we can learn English
 from the surrouning. Beyond classroom and books.

Figure 1. Sample of the Expert Student's First Draft (Topic: The Ways to Make My English Learning Better)

(b). Expert Students' Final Draft of the Written Productions

ETP5 { These days, smart phone become a part in the student's life.
 There are a lot of advantages to learn English. They also present
 us with amazing opportunities to re-design the way we learn
 English.
 ESD5 { Firstly, Student can use the application for test. For example,
 They can do the English test to tnow their English skill on smart phone.
 Secondly, student can use smart phone to listen English
 conversation in the youtube or other application. They can use it
 everyday for better listening skill.
 ECS5 { Finally, Student can use smart phone to practice how to pronounce
 word correctly. The right pronunciation is very important in English
 languge.
 In conclusion, a growing number of schools in the world are
 turning to the smart phone as a learning too. Technology is one of
 the ways for children to success in the future.

Figure 2. Sample of the Expert Student's Fifth Draft (Topic: What Are the Advantages of Using a Smartphone in English?)

TABLE 4
 SAMPLES OF L2 WRITING DEVELOPMENT OF AN EXPERT STUDENT

Expert student' first written product	Expert student' final written product	L2 writing development (see Figure 1 and Figure 2)
<p>Topic: The Way to Make My English Learning Better</p> <p>Topic sentence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Practice can make my English leaning letter." (ETP1) 	<p>Topic: What are the advantages of using smart phone on English learning?</p> <p>Topic sentence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "These days, smart phone become a part in the student's life. There are a lot of advantages to learn English. They also present us with amazing opportunities to re-design the way we learn English." (ETP5) 	<p><u>Before using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The topic sentence is unclear/unrelated to the topic. (ETP1) <p>↓</p> <p><u>After using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A topic sentence is fairly well-developed but does not introduce the topic. (ETP5)
<p>Supporting detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "First, I watch English soundtrack movies every weekend with my friend. Second I always listen to universal music. Thirds, I can learn English form them." (ESD1) 	<p>Supporting detail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Firstly, Student can use the application for test. For example, they can do the English test to tnow their English skill on smart phone. Secondly, student...They can use... Finally, Student...The right pronunciation..." (ESD5) 	<p><u>Before using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are details, but they are either unclear or unrelated to the topic. (ESD1) <p>↓</p> <p><u>After using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are enough details to analyse the topic clearly, and each cause or effect has sufficient details. (ESD5)
<p>Concluding sentence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "So we can learn English from the surrouning. Beyond classrooms and books." (ECS1) 	<p>Concluding sentence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "In conclusion, a growing number of schools in the world are turning to the smartphone as a learning too. Technology is one of the ways for children to success in the future." (ECS5) 	<p><u>Before using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is no concluding sentence, or it does not summarize or restate the topic sentence. (ECS1) <p>↓</p> <p><u>After using scaffolding</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The concluding sentence summarizes or restates the topic sentence but does little to unify the whole paragraph. (ECS5)

According to Table 4, the expert students seemed to be able to develop the English writing performance of the topic sentence, supporting details, and concluding sentence.

Regarding writing topic sentences before using the scaffolding strategy, the expert student wrote a topic sentence that was unclear and unrelated to the given topic: "Practice can make my English leaning letter." (ETP1). After using a scaffolding strategy during writing, this expert student could write a clear and well-developed topic sentence: "These days, smart phone become a part in the student's life. There are a lot of advantages to learn English. They also present us with amazing opportunities to re-design the way we learn English." (ETP5).

In terms of supporting details, the expert student provided supporting details in the first written product, they lacked clarity and failed to establish a clear connection to the topic: "First, I watch English soundtrack movies every weekend with my friend. Second I always listen to universal music. Thirds, I can learn English form them." (ESD1). After using a scaffolding strategy, this expert student demonstrated the ability to write adequate supporting details to allow for precise analysis, and there are enough details to analyze the topic: "Firstly, Student can use the application for test. For example, they can do the English test to tnow their English skill on smart phone. Secondly, student...They can use... Finally, Student...The right pronunciation..." (ESD5). After using the scaffolding strategy, both students can compose sufficient details to support their paragraph writing.

To write concluding sentences, the expert students did not summarize the topic sentence: "So we can learn English from the surrouning. Beyond classrooms and books." (ECS1). After using a scaffolding strategy during writing, the expert student learned to use 'In conclusion' as an introductory word in the concluding sentence. However, it does little to unify the whole paragraph: "In conclusion, a growing number of schools in the world are turning to the smartphone as a learning too. Technology is one of the ways for children to success in the future." (ECS5). In the context of the first written product, the concluding sentence of the novice student summarized the topic sentence. In brief, scaffolding can enhance students' writing ability to write more precise concluding sentences.

(c). Novice Students' First Draft of the Written Productions

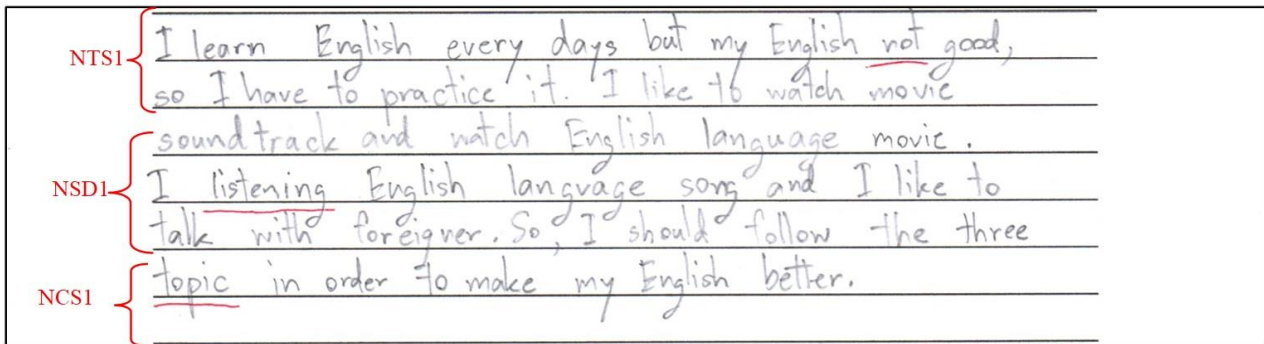


Figure 3. Sample of the Novice Student's First Draft (Topic: The Ways to Make My English Learning Better)

(d). Novice Students' Fifth Draft of the Written Productions

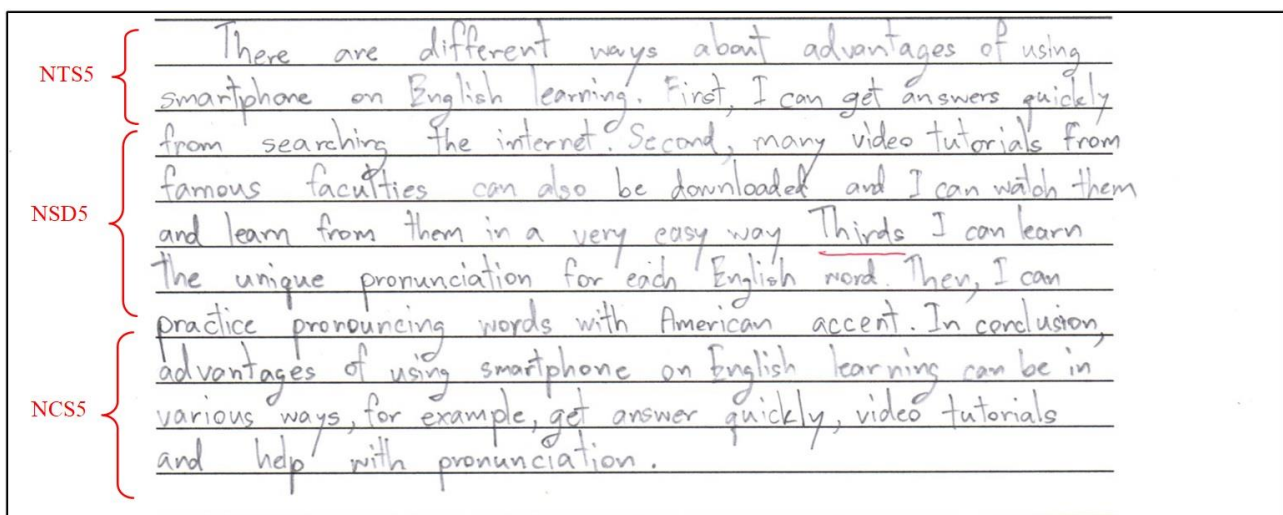


Figure 4. Sample of the Novice Student's Fifth Draft (Topic: What Are the Advantages of Using a Smartphone in English Learning?)

TABLE 5
SAMPLES OF L2 WRITING DEVELOPMENT OF A NOVICE STUDENT

Novice student' first written product	Novice student' final written product	L2 writing development (see Figure 3 and Figure 4)
Topic: The Way to Make My English Learning Better	Topic: What are the advantages of using smart phone on English learning?	
Topic sentence •"I learn English every days but my English not good, so I have to practice it." (NTS1)	Topic sentence •"There are different ways about advantages of using smartphone on English learning." (NTS5)	<u>Before using scaffolding</u> ➤ There is no topic sentence in the paragraph. (NTS1) ↓ <u>After using scaffolding</u> ➤ A topic sentence is fairly well developed but does not introduce the topic. (NTS)
Supporting detail •"I like to watch movie soundtrack and watch English language movie. I listening English language song and I like to talk with foreigner." (NSD1)	Supporting detail •"First, I can get answers quickly from searching the internet. Second, many video tutorials... Thirds, I can learn the unique pronunciation..." (NSD5)	<u>Before using scaffolding</u> ➤ Details are either wrong or lacking, or they are not related to the topic sentence. (NSD1) ↓ <u>After using scaffolding</u> ➤ There are sufficient details for the topic sentence, but they could be more apparent. (NSD5)

TABLE 5 (CONT.)
SAMPLES OF L2 WRITING DEVELOPMENT OF A NOVICE STUDENT

Novice student' first written product	Novice student' final written product	L2 writing development (see Figure 3 and Figure 4)
Topic: The Way to Make My English Learning Better	Topic: What are the advantages of using smart phone on English learning?	
Concluding sentence •"So, I should follow the three topic in order to make my English better." (NCS1)	Concluding sentence •"In conclusion, advantages of using smartphone on English learning can be in various ways, for example, get answer quickly, video tutorials and help with pronunciation." (NCS5)	<u>Before using scaffolding</u> ➤ The concluding sentence summarizes or restates the topic sentence but does little to unify the whole paragraph. (NCS1) ↓ <u>After using scaffolding</u> ➤ The concluding paragraph unifies the whole paragraph. The reason for the analysis is evident, and the results are presented as valid. (NCS5)

According to Table 5, the novice students seemed to be able to develop the English writing performance of the topic sentence. The novice student seemed to improve writing the topic sentence from lacking topic sentence to clear topic sentence: *"There are different ways about advantages of using smartphone on English learning."* (NTS5). Therefore, it appeared that the scaffolding strategy could enhance the EFL students in writing topic sentences in a paragraph.

The novice student may encounter difficulties when attempting to introduce supporting details. The sentences presented in the first written product lacked coherence with the topic sentence: *"I like to watch movie soundtrack and watch English language movie. I listening English language song and I like to talk with foreigner."* (NSD1). However, the analysis of the final written product revealed that the paragraph exhibited a notable level of development. To enhance the adequacy of the topic sentence, the novice student employed a sequential approach by incorporating transitional phrases such as 'First,' 'Second,' and so on to indicate the subsequent details: *"First, I can get answers quickly from searching the internet. Second, many video tutorials... Thirds, I can learn the unique pronunciation..."* (NSD5). After using the scaffolding strategy, both students can compose sufficient details to support.

However, it offered little to tie the paragraph together: *"So, I should follow the three topic in order to make my English better."* (NCS1). After employing a scaffolding approach, it was observed that the novice student demonstrated an ability to formulate a concluding sentence that clearly articulated the purpose of the analysis and presented the results as valid and reliable: *"In conclusion, advantages of using smartphone on English learning can be in various ways, for example, get answer quickly, video tutorials and help with pronunciation."* (NCS5). In brief, scaffolding can enhance students' writing ability to write more precise concluding sentences.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Engaging in Writing Activities With Assistance From Peer Scaffolding and Teacher Scaffolding

This study has found that the EFL students could improve writing paragraph organization after they engaged in the writing activities and gained scaffolding from their peers and the teacher. This finding implies that gaining teacher and peer scaffolding during the writing processes can offer students opportunities to enhance their knowledge and comprehension through collaborative problem-solving activities with peers and teachers. These findings counter the widely expressed view of Dewi et al. (2023) that during the learning process, learners who needed assistance were helped by knowledgeable peers or experts, and this assistance ended once the learners could learn independently. In other words, this scaffolding instruction helped a new learner progressively develop into a valuable contributor to the community.

In the context of this current study, it was observed that novice writers demonstrated an enhanced problem-solving capacity through engagement in writing activities that involved problem-solving. This improvement was attributed to the valuable guidance provided by experienced writers, which enabled the novices to address the encountered challenges effectively. Consequently, the novices exhibited an enhanced aptitude for independent problem-solving. In conclusion, it can be assumed that the scaffolding writing process reduces learners' writing anxiety because they participate in a supportive environment, are motivated to learn, and encounter fewer situations of frustration when completing the writing task (Hasan & Karim, 2019; Hashem, 2021). Therefore, the individual growth of learners is contingent upon the exchange and sharing of experiences among community members in a supportive learning environment (Hashem, 2021).

B. Using Scaffolding Strategies to Enhance L2 Writing Development

Through this study, it has been demonstrated that scaffolding can be a highly effective strategy for improving the development of EFL students' L2 writing skills. The use of scaffolding has shown positive results in enhancing writing performances. These findings suggest that using scaffolding strategies to assist EFL learners during writing processes allows them to gain sufficient help from the teachers and peers; consequently, these students could develop their writing performance. These findings align with the research conducted by Nourazar et al. (2022), which suggests that providing scaffolding to students throughout the writing process can help teachers organize writing activities systematically that adapt to students' individual needs.

C. Using Scaffolding Strategies to Enhance English Paragraph Writing

The findings of this study demonstrate how scaffolding techniques can improve the growth of EFL writers in paragraph writing, including writing topic sentences, supporting sentences, concluding sentences, mechanics, and paragraph organization. These findings correlate with a study conducted by Sidky in 2019. The study demonstrated that supporting students while writing their papers improved their writing abilities, specifically in grammar and structure. These improvements were evident in the second and third drafts of the students' papers. In addition, the findings further confirm the study conducted by Piamsai (2020), which highlighted the advantages of using scaffolding in writing instruction to enhance students' writing skills in different primary areas, including task completion, organization, lexical variety, structural variety, correctness, and affective scaffolding. Similarly, Hashem (2021) study verified that scaffolding positively impacted students' writing development and reduced writing errors. The researcher explained that the teacher's interaction with students was crucial in guiding and supporting their learning. Additionally, the teacher provided valuable support and encouragement to the students throughout the writing process. Another critical factor was the students' understanding of each step involved in the strategy and their ability to implement these steps effectively. Lastly, the teacher's gradual decrease in assistance allowed the students to develop independence in their writing.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to discover how scaffolding strategies during the writing processes affected the L2 writing development of EFL learners. The results show that using a scaffolding strategy seems to be effective for the teacher to establish a supportive and motivating learning atmosphere for EFL students while they are writing in a foreign language. The writing processes are divided into group activities that offer various experiences and individual activities that can help EFL learners become autonomous learners. It can be concluded that scaffolding the writing processes is effective in enhancing the L2 writing development of EFL students.

This study confirms Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical predictions about the advantages of scaffolding according to its theoretical conclusion. This study's potential pedagogical implications include the suggestions for educators to use scaffolding carefully. In order to improve the writing skills of novice writers and promote effective teaching methods for EFL writing, it is suggested that educators prioritise the use of the writing process approach and encourage social interactions to enhance proficiency in writing. This can be achieved by incorporating more group work activities and dedicating substantial class time to teacher and peer scaffolding.

Thus, it can be suggested that further research is necessary to investigate the impact of the scaffolding strategy on various dimensions of writing proficiency, including writing accuracy and complexity. Additional investigation can be carried out to explore the possible impacts of utilising the scaffolding strategy on enhancing English skills, including speaking, listening, and reading.

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Theory and Practice in Language Studies (TPLS) is a peer-reviewed international journal dedicated to promoting scholarly exchange among teachers and researchers in the field of language studies. The journal is published monthly.

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